

Evaluation of the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) Portfolio in Liberia

Evaluation Report

December 2017

Nordic Consulting Group A/S



Preface

The evaluation team would like to acknowledge the many individuals who have contributed with their time, knowledge, and views in support of this evaluation.

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The views expressed in this report are solely those of the evaluation team.

Copenhagen, December 2017.

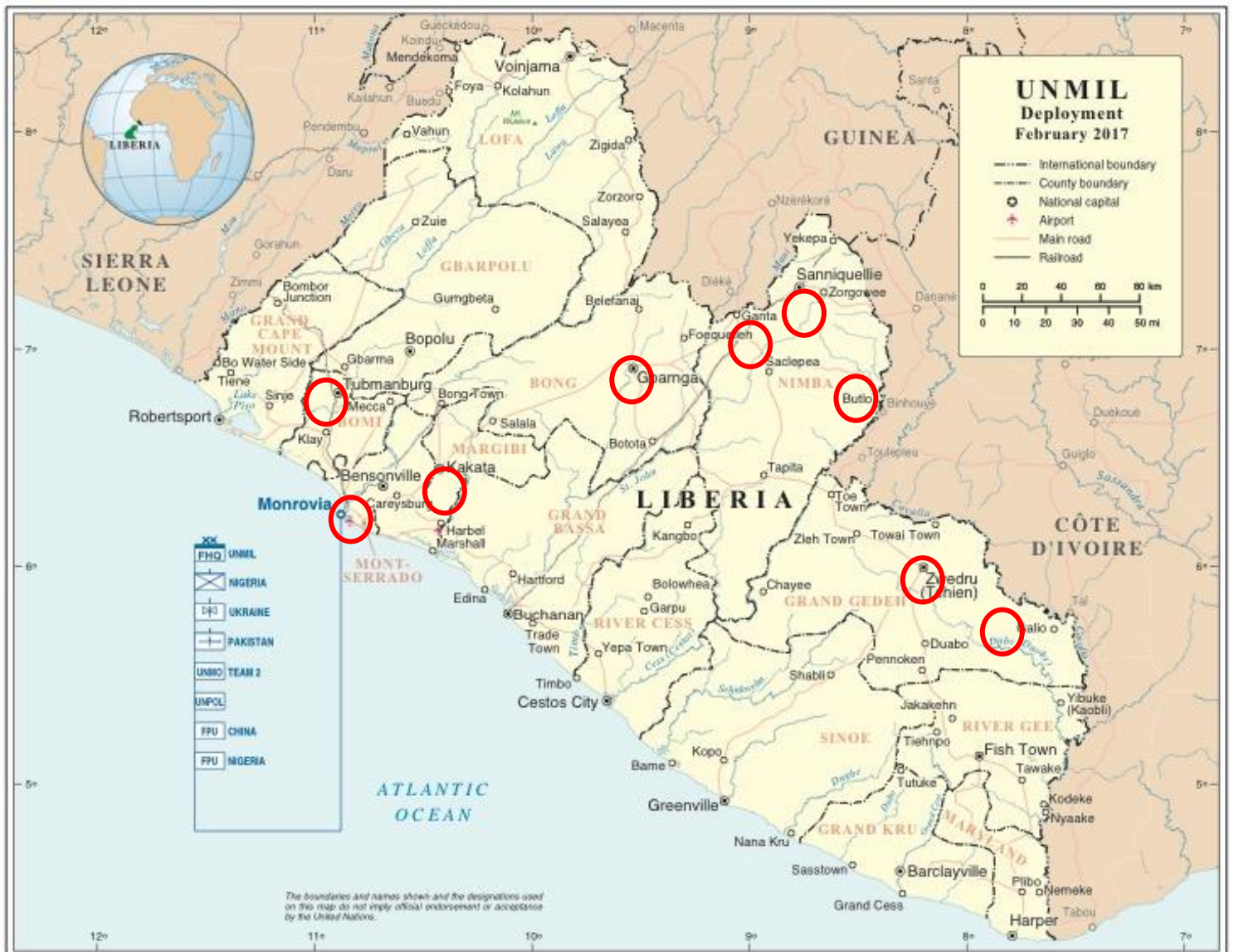
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Acronyms

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AfT	Agenda for Transformation
BIN	Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization
CO	Country Office
CPC	County Peace Committee
EVD	Ebola Virus Disease
GoL	Government of Liberia
HQ	Headquarters
IP	Implementing Partner
IRF	Immediate Response Facility
JNV	Junior National Volunteer
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
JSJP	Justice and Security Joint Programme
LC	Land Commission
LCC	Land Coordination Center
LNP	Liberia National Police
LPP	Liberia Peacebuilding Joint Program
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDTFO	Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MTPF	Medium Term Program Transfers
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NYSP	National Youth Service Program
PBC	Peacebuilding Commission
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PBO	Peacebuilding Office
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
PP	Priority Plan
PRC	People's Redemption Council
PRF	Peacebuilding Recovery Facility
PRS	Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy
RUNO	Recipient United Nations Organizations
SMC	Statement of Mutual Commitments
SSR	Security sector reform
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIL	United Nations Mission to Liberia
UNSG	UN Secretary-General

Map of Counties Visited



Map No. 4211 Rev. 43 UNITED NATIONS
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Executive Summary

Liberia is currently undergoing two significant transitions: the end of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in March 2018, and the October 2017 national elections, which will elect the first new president in 12 years. Simultaneously, the country continues to recover from the Ebola epidemic of 2014/15 and is experiencing an economic recession, caused by falling global commodity prices of its main exports, specifically iron ore and rubber. This evaluation presents an opportunity for Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) to strengthen both accountability and learning. It also demonstrates PBSO's commitment to more regularly and rigorously assess the results of its programs. The evaluation covers PBF support under the second and third Priority Plans (PPs) between 2011 and 2016.

The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is the United Nations Secretary General's (UNSG) multi-year standing trust fund. It's part of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture that was set up in 2006 at the request of the General Assembly and the Security Council. The PBF became operational in 2007 and is meant to serve as a flexible tool to support the UN's broader peacebuilding objectives in countries at risk of relapsing into conflict. It is expected to prioritize interventions that demonstrate *direct and immediate relevance* to peacebuilding, serve as a *catalyst for kick-starting* peacebuilding interventions, and engage UN agencies, funds and programs, and bilateral donors to support implementation by national entities and thereby *strengthen national capacity*.

Evaluation Background

Liberia became eligible for PBF support in December 2007, following the end of the civil war and the signing of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement in August 2003. In October of that year, the UN Security Council established UNMIL and deployed 15,000 peacekeepers across the country. The first Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PP) was approved in February 2008 with \$15 million allocated for interventions. In November 2010, a Statement of Mutual Commitments (SMC) was adopted and signed between the Government of Liberia (GoL) and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), providing the foundation for future peacebuilding support. Liberia has since received two additional allocations, in 2011 and 2013, to implement two successive PPs, totaling an additional \$35 million (\$20 million and \$15 million, respectively). The 3rd PP ended at the end of 2016, with a couple of the projects extended into 2017.

This evaluation had a dual purpose of providing (1) a summative assessment of PBF-funded peacebuilding results in Liberia, and (2) a more forward-looking analysis of gaps and opportunities to inform decision-making about future PBF investments in Liberia. Specifically, it:

1. Assessed the extent to which the PBF portfolio has made concrete and sustainable peacebuilding impact through direct action and catalytic effects (impact level).
2. Assessed the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of PBF activities (outcome and output level).
3. Identified critical remaining peacebuilding gaps.
4. Assessed the extent and effectiveness of programmatic intervention to support empowerment of women and youth.
5. Identified lessons learned for future PBF engagements both inside and outside Liberia.

Methodology

The evaluation utilized a non-experimental, ex-post evaluation design. The team followed a qualitatively dominant performance evaluation approach, based on the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. In collaboration with PBSO, the team included an additional criterion around gender. The intention was to reflect the PBSO's commitment to understanding and promoting women's active participation in peacebuilding, and to recognize the primacy that gender issues play in Liberia's ongoing transition.

As the team aimed for analytical and not statistical generalizability, the focus on qualitative methods enabled the team to better investigate and understand the context within which PBF activities were implemented. This was achieved by asking "how," "why," and "so what" questions, and to explore nuances in the experience and perceptions of different stakeholder groups. The team relied on in-depth desk review of primary and secondary documents, key informant and small group interviews, and round table discussions. The team attempted to supplement collected qualitative data with quantitative data derived from primary project documents and secondary studies.

The sampling for both data collection sites and individual interviews was hindered by both a lack of portfolio-level information on the location of project activities and a lack of information on individuals involved in project design, implementation, and oversight. The team needed to extract this information from project documents and work collaboratively with PBSO and Recipient United Nations Organization (RUNO) contacts to develop a potential sampling frame. The team then utilized a maximum variation sampling strategy to select sites, and a purposeful convenience sampling to select interviewees. The team conducted interviews in New York City, Monrovia, and Montserrado, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Bong, Margibi, and Bomi counties as well as remote interviews.

Conclusions

Relevance

PBF Liberia programs were timely and relevant, filled gaps, and addressed unmet needs. The PBF was responsible for the first tangible actions towards decentralization of governance from Monrovia to the county level. PBF activities have been aligned to national and sector plans drafted and/or endorsed by the GoL.

Furthermore, the PBF helped raise key peacebuilding priorities and to address the root causes of fragility. It made peacebuilding a national priority, raised the visibility of peacebuilding as a necessity for post-conflict recovery, and treated justice, security, and reconciliation as building blocks of resilience. Respondents nationwide believe that the PBF had a positive impact.

Efficiency

PBF provided a fast response in developing the two PPs and demonstrated a considerable degree of flexibility and adaptability in responding to major changes in its operating environment. Additionally, it showed a willingness to adapt project work plans to respond to contextual changes and to lessons learned. This was highlighted in the program's response to the Ebola epidemic, which recalibrated the work of the Junior National Volunteers (JNVs) to focus on community sensitization.

However, the portfolio was hampered by several issues that limited the efficiency of PBF project design, management, and oversight. Among the inefficiencies were: a rushed proposal approval process that hindered complementarity and linkages between projects, internal RUNO bureaucratic requirements that slowed the allocation of funds from headquarters (HQ) to country office (CO), procurement delays,

projects disrupted by unexpected shocks (Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) and economic recession), and seasonal and logistical challenges.

Key issues in the relationship, roles, and responsibilities between different actors was the most significant inefficiency across the portfolio and had considerable consequences for the coherence, oversight, and accountability of the portfolio. Respondents were critical of PBF for failing to ensure consistent and coherent messages across the different actors involved in PBF activities and for missing several opportunities for ensuring more effective oversight and accountability. Additionally, respondents thought that the roles and responsibilities of Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Joint Steering Committee (JSC), Peacebuilding Office (PBO), UN Country Team (UNCT), UNMIL and PBSO could be more clearly articulated. Respondents had wished for the PBF to ensure a higher level of coordination amongst the different actors, which would have led to improved system coherence.

Effectiveness

PBF funding helped make progress on achieving higher-level results in the priority areas and in addressing root causes of conflict. However, the root causes of conflict persist. Respondents noted though that many of the changes and reforms were structural and that progress toward addressing root causes needed to be seen as a long-term, rather than a short-term or even medium-term, effort.

PBF had catalytic effects when it came to facilitating the acceleration of peacebuilding efforts at the community level but was less effective in bringing in support from other donors. PBF took risks, was innovative, and filled important peacebuilding gaps. However, there were also several challenges that affected the portfolio's effectiveness. Support for initiatives, such as the Security and Justice hubs, community-level conflict resolution projects, and the Land Commission, are examples of PBF filling critical peacebuilding gaps, and its willingness to take risks and innovate.

Gender and Youth

PBF took steps to ensure gender mainstreaming in its portfolio and to address issues of youth and women's empowerment. Several programs targeted women, others incorporated efforts to ensure female participation in the project activities. These efforts improved women's understanding of their legal rights, and participation in community decision-making processes. They also had unanticipated positive results, such as empowering women to advocate more effectively for themselves and their children. However, too often focus was on increasing the number of female participants rather than ensuring the quality of their participation.

The PBF-funded programs sought to address the needs of youth but did not sufficiently target at-risk youth. The NYSP focused on incorporating youth into peacebuilding programming and was risk-taking, innovative and generally successful, while funding was available. However, overall, given the extensive needs of young people in Liberia, the funding for projects targeting youth was inadequate. Consequently, many at-risk youths were left out of PBF programming. Many respondents considered this a missed opportunity, especially since public opinion surveys consistently show that Liberians consider at-risk youth to be one of the key potential conflict instigators in Liberia.

Sustainability

Sustainability was not properly built into plans due to little consideration being given to the GoL's ability to absorb the many programs that commenced with PBF funding. The abrupt end of funding for projects, such as the Land Coordination Centers and the NYSP, are examples of missed opportunities to sustain the gains made by the PBF. Respondents across the UN also thought that PBF's ability to attract other donors' funding was not as effective as it should have been and this affected the sustainability of the programs.

Lessons Learned

One of the clearest and most significant lessons learned from the PBF Liberia experience relates to the placement, function, and accountability of the PBF Secretariat. PBSO followed an innovative approach of placing the PBF Secretariat within a host government ministry to promote ownership and sustainability. However, as evidenced by the 2015 PBO evaluation and subsequent relocation of the PBF Secretariat, while the general idea was sound, overlapping accountabilities, heavy staff workloads, and at times competing interests between the UN and GoL ultimately diminished the success of this initiative.

Going forward, PBSO should continue to look for ways to embed or co-locate the PBF Secretariat within an appropriate host country ministry responsible for implementing a government's peacebuilding strategy. However, PBSO needs to carefully articulate that as the PBF is a UN financial mechanism, the accountability for the use of funds ultimately rests with the UN, meaning that the PBF Secretariat should ultimately be accountable to the UN. While the Secretariat could still be led and staffed by government employees, there should be a clear and direct reporting line to the UN Country Leadership (in most cases also the JSC co-chair).

In the future, PBSO should also avoid situations where the PBF Secretariat plays a dual function of serving both an oversight and implementation function. The tasks of providing adequate preparation, facilitation, coordination, monitoring, and oversight are already strenuous enough without the added complexity, and possible conflict of interests, of also designing and implementing individual PBF projects.

Close out of projects and their sustainability need to be considered at the design stage. Too many of the PBF-supported projects ended when the PBF funding ended. The government, regardless of its commitment to the projects, did not have the financial resources to maintain the funding at levels that would allow the projects to function as intended, if at all. This contributed to frustrations among all the stakeholders and had the unintended consequence, as in the case of NYSP for instance, of inadvertently contributing to community grievances.

Project plans need to be realistic and take into account contextual challenges. For instance, the impact of the long rainy season on project activities needs to be considered in project planning. Rains impair mobility, especially given the poor state of roads, and construction, and therefore slow down project implementation.

Consultations should be incorporated into various stages of a project's life. Although consultations did take place, there was a sense among many interviewees, especially at the county level, who felt that these consultations were insufficient or more pro forma. The lack consistent consultations with implementing partners (IPs) and beneficiaries contributed to misunderstandings of project goals and a perception of the marginalization of local voices. Continuous consultations also help in maintaining staff knowledge in contexts where high staff turnover can be expected.

Inclusion of women in programming should focus less on the numbers of participants and pay attention to the quality of the participation. Although the projects exceeded the target for inclusion of women, their presence did not always translate into them having a meaningful voice in decision-making.

Programs targeting women have positive externalities and these should be considered in project planning. Projects focused on providing women with conflict resolution tools, and empowering them to participate in community decision-making processes. Women interviewed also reported that they had become more effective advocates for their children, including postponing their daughters' marriages and keeping them in school longer.

An unintended consequence can alter the course of a project. At the start of the land project, the Land Commission (LC) was meant to be a policy organization. Quickly, the implementers learned that land

conflict mediation was a pressing concern requiring immediate attention. This altered the work of the LC and created a much more impactful program. By mediating land disputes in Land Coordination Center (LCCs), policy work was also strengthened, since LC personnel had greater knowledge of the challenges faced by community members.

Recommendations

1. Decentralizing security and justice and improving outreach.

Establishing the three justice and security hubs has improved access to both security and justice to those residing outside of Monrovia. However, access remains difficult to those living in parts of the country not serviced by the hubs, as well as to citizens of counties covered by the hubs but who live in more remote rural locations. Many Liberians still do not see the justice and security sector as accessible or responsive to their needs. Supporting governance reform that would improve decentralization is therefore essential to long-term peacebuilding. At the same time, any reforms need to be accompanied by improved outreach to communities, so that citizens know what services are available and are aware of their rights.

Responsible entity: PBSO and JSC.

Priority: High

Timeframe: Continuous.

2. Programming targeting youth should be expanded.

The PBF supported the National Youth Service Program (NYSP), which sent university and technical school graduates to counties to work in education, health care, and agriculture. The volunteers were also involved in facilitating dispute resolution in communities where they were located, and female volunteers served as role models for young, rural girls. By all accounts, the program was successful while there were funds to support it. Currently, PBF is providing short-term funding to mitigate possible violence against women and youth during the upcoming October 2017 elections. Projects focused on youth should be extended following the elections. 19 percent of youth do not have formal education and 39 percent do not complete primary education, with the percentage even higher among the poorest families. Only 4 percent have completed their secondary education. Expanding programming that targets youth, through education, including vocational education, skills training or other activities, should therefore be an essential component of future peacebuilding efforts in the country. Reviving support for the NYVS should be considered

Responsible entity: PBSO should encourage applicants to develop projects specifically targeting youth, as well as include youth in projects that target other segments of society.

Priority: High

Timeframe: Immediate (0-6 months). The new 2017 Peacebuilding Plan, which will inform the future engagement of PBF in Liberia, provides an opportunity to rethink how to address the needs of youth.

3. Consider lengthening programming time-frames.

Addressing root causes of conflict are long-term, rather than short-term or even medium-term, processes. Doing so, in a context such as Liberia where the civil war was long and devastating, and where multiple peacebuilding efforts, provision of security and justice, national reconciliation, and various legal reforms, are deeply intertwined, and are logistically and politically challenging, is all the more demanding. Yet, because of delays in disbursement of funds and the country's poor infrastructure among other challenges, in effect most PBF funding is usually available for only one year. This does not provide the opportunity for many projects to show results, and as projects await renewed funding activities cease and project gains, human resources, and potential institutional knowledge are lost. Extending the programming time-frames might facilitate addressing root causes of conflict more effectively.

Responsible entity: Going forward, PBSO should consider changing the way funding time frames of Priority Plans are organized.

Priority: High

Timeframe: Immediate (0-6 months). The implementation of the new 2017 Peacebuilding Plan, which will inform the future engagement of PBF in Liberia, provides an opportunity to rethink how to support peacebuilding in post-conflict settings.

4. PBSO, working in close collaboration with JSC, should explore new ways of determining how PBF funding is awarded among RUNOs in-country.

Echoing recommendations from the 2014 Burundi evaluation, PBSO should look for ways to ensure that PBF funding is only allocated to those RUNOs with a demonstrated capacity to design, implement, and monitor peacebuilding activities. This includes having a demonstrated capacity to conduct and update conflict analyses, ability to track more qualitative peacebuilding outcomes, and tested internal procurement and reporting procedures that can efficiently procure goods and services within appropriate timeframes. JSCs could play an important role by requiring that the RUNOs do a better job of reporting on intermediary progress, challenges, barriers, and bottlenecks they are facing, and adjustments they have or plan to make in their programming.

Responsible entity: PBSO and JSC.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Immediate (0-6 months), considering the number of current internal PBSO initiatives requiring revised PBF's Business Plan, guidelines, and application documents.

5. PBSO and JSC should identify and expand on opportunities for creating synergies and greater complementarities between projects across the portfolio.

Despite being developed in response to the same PPs, the PBF projects were generally regarded as separate projects run by individual RUNOs. There was almost no joint planning across activities or systematic coordination in support. Going forward, both PBSO and the JSC should take more active steps to ensure greater linkages between PBF projects, particularly those working towards the same outcomes. PBSO could do so by requiring, and scoring, PBF project applicants on their plans for ensuring greater linkages and joint planning. JSC, supported by the PBF Secretariat, should also ensure that they have adequate time to carefully review project applications and discuss opportunities for linkages and joint work across those proposals being considered for approval.

Responsible entity: PBSO to require applicants to explain plans to facilitate synergies, complementarities, and joint work with other PBF projects. JSC to ensure it has adequate time to review proposals and explore opportunities for greater linkages across the portfolio.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Immediate (0-6 months) considering the number of current internal PBSO initiatives requiring revised PBF's Business Plan, guidelines, and application documents.

6. PBSO should critically examine how it can improve the form and function of its in-country Joint Steering Committees.

JSCs serve as a critical anchor for ensuring that PBF investments are country-led, as well as support key government peacebuilding priorities. However, evidence from this evaluation supports a recurring finding across PBF portfolio reviews and country evaluations that JSCs are inefficient decision-makers, do not adequately monitor implementation or provide guidance for improvement, and do not fully consider the synergy and strategic impact of the projects they approve. Going forward, PBSO should at a minimum ensure that Terms of References (TORs) and membership lists for JSCs are finalized at the outset of the

development of Priority Plans. PBSO should also consider limiting voting members of the JSC to government institutions, donors, and RUNOs with demonstrated commitment and capacity to sustain and oversee projects. While others can be invited as observers, PBSO needs to more clearly identify which actors are empowered to take important strategic decisions and thereby also accountable for subsequent results.

Responsible entity: PBSO and JSC.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Immediate (0-6 months), considering the number of current internal PBSO initiatives requiring revised PBF's Business Plan, guidelines, and application documents.

7. PBSO should explore ways to ensure that sustainability issues are more carefully considered during both the Priority Plan development and subsequent project designs.

PBF provided significant technical and financial support to the GoL during an important time in the country's post-conflict transition. However, this also resulted in PBF encouraging the GoL to initiate programs the country could not afford without identifying new sources of funding and developing new ideas for how to absorb the programs into the national budget. Going forward, PBSO should consider two potential steps for how this could be achieved:

1. Working with the **host government** to ensure that PBF-support priorities and the national budget are linked and supporting the Government to gradually take control financially and operationally.
2. Requiring **RUNOs** to demonstrate a commitment to support PBF investments by investing regular resources, integrating activities into regular programming, as well as clearly articulating "exit" or "close out" strategies in project proposals.

Responsible entity: PBSO, in collaboration with the host country, RUNOs and the JSC.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Continuous.

8. PBSO and PBC should clarify the role and responsibilities of the PBC in supporting PBF investments at country level, particularly in terms of how the PBC can help strengthen the catalytic nature of PBF.

PBF Liberia benefitted from active and motivated PBC Chairs dedicated to ensuring the ultimate success of the investment. However, while being beneficial for spurring discussion and interest in PBF activities, the active participation of PBC Chairs also created some confusion around who was ultimately responsible for the technical leadership of PBF. Going forward, the PBF would be better served if the technical leadership is clearly left to the JSC at country level. The PBC should in turn focus on fulfilling the role described in A/RES/60/180 and reaffirmed in A/RES/70/262 to bring sustained international attention to sustaining peace, provide political accompaniment and advocacy to countries affected by conflict; promote an integrated, strategic and coherent approach to peacebuilding; and convene relevant actors and mobilize additional funding to support the goals of the PBF Priority Plans.

Responsible entity: PBSO and PBC to discuss how to better ensure that PBC fulfills its intended role of providing catalytic support by using its convening power to raise international attention around key peacebuilding issues and mobilize additional funding to support key priorities listed in the Priority Plans.

Priority: Medium.

Timeframe: 6-12 months. While this recommendation has the potential to have significant and immediate impact on PBF projects, it will likely require repeated and high-level negotiation to clearly define the role of the PBC going forward.

Introduction

Overview of Peacebuilding Fund

PBF is the UNSG's multi-year standing trust fund designed to address immediate needs in post-conflict countries. It is part of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture that was set up in 2006 at the request of the General Assembly and the Security Council.¹ The PBF became operational in 2007. The architecture also includes the PBSO, headed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support and the PBC.

PBF's objectives are to provide critical support during the early stages of a peace process, before donor conferences are organized, and to strengthen the actors' capacities to continue the peace process. In specific instances, the PBF also extends support to countries in more advanced stages of the peacebuilding process, especially those where these efforts are underfunded or where the need for additional support emerges unexpectedly. These peacebuilding efforts are developed out of a need to fill the gap between peacekeeping and development, taking on a greater level of risk than would normally be supported in later-stage development projects, and addressing factors that could contribute directly to a relapse of conflict.

PBF's intended strength is its ability to catalyze donor support to create a pool of complementary and independent initiatives to augment nationally-owned peacebuilding efforts. It is meant to serve as a flexible tool to support the UN's broader peacebuilding objectives in countries at risk of relapsing into conflict. It is designed to be "a catalytic fund, driven by existing planning, coordination and monitoring mechanisms to support the peacebuilding strategies of in-country UN-Government leadership."²

The PBF is expected to prioritize interventions that demonstrate direct and immediate relevance to peacebuilding, serve as a catalyst for kick-starting peacebuilding interventions, and engage UN agencies, funds and programs, and bilateral donors to support implementation by national entities and thereby strengthen national capacity.

When considering a country's eligibility for funding, the PBF, as outlined in its Terms of Reference (TOR) and Application Guidelines, prioritizes:

- **Clear strategic advantage:** PBF will capitalize on its capacity to take risks where others cannot, particularly with respect to the more political aspects of peacebuilding.
- **Critical post-crisis or post-conflict transition moments:** In the earliest post-conflict stage the PBF supports the rapid reinforcement of governments and actors involved in building sustainable peace. It seeks to enable the UN's political and development actors to be responsive to national peacebuilding needs.
- **Countries in post-conflict or post-crisis peacebuilding phases where there is a strong political commitment to address the root causes and drivers of conflict:** PBF provides multi-year support to build national and community institutions to consolidate peace. In support of committed national leadership, PBF seeks to provide support to help the state increase its responsiveness to its citizens and create an environment of greater inclusivity and social cohesion.³

The PBF provides support through two funding facilities: The Immediate Response Facility (IRF), which provides funding for immediate peacebuilding and recovery needs, and the Peacebuilding Recovery

Facility (PRF), which “is driven by national ownership and stakeholder engagement in the management of PBF resources at the country level.”⁴ PBF’s TOR defines its scope as covering four priority areas of intervention:

- Activities designed to respond to imminent threats to the peace process by supporting the implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue.
- Activities undertaken to build and/or strengthen national capacities to promote coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflict, and to carry out peacebuilding activities.
- Activities undertaken in support of 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.

As identified by General Assembly resolution 60/180 and reaffirmed in resolution 70/262, the role of PBC is to bring sustained international attention to sustaining peace; to promote an integrated, strategic, and coherent approach to peacebuilding; to serve a bridging role among the principal organs and relevant entities of the UN by sharing advice on peacebuilding needs and priorities; and to serve as a platform within and outside the UN to provide recommendations and information to improve their coordination, develop, and share good practices in peacebuilding, and ensure predictable financing to peacebuilding.⁵ The PBC provides support to the development of integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery and offers strategic advice to countries under its review. The UNSG ensures the PBC is informed about the activities being financed by PBF, as well as lessons learned. The PBSO is responsible for the overall management of the PBF, while the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) is PBF’s Administrative Agent. The independent, globally-representative PBF Advisory Group, appointed by the UNSG, “provides oversight and advice on the speed and appropriateness of PBF allocations and examines performance and financial reports.”⁶

To date, PBF has supported more than 350 projects in 28 countries at an overall cost of \$530 million.⁷ More than half of the PBF funding has gone to six countries that have been on the PBC’s agenda.⁸ Although initially PBF focused on providing immediate assistance to countries emerging from conflict, over time it has also begun to strategically support countries that are emerging out of a political conflict in order “to build capacities to avoid future relapse into crisis and violence.” It has also supported a number of countries where “critical elements of peace agreements remained unimplemented, or where tensions or risk of relapse were growing.”⁹

PBF Liberia Context

The civil war in Liberia ended with the signing of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement in August 2003. In October of that year, the UN Security Council established the UNMIL, deploying 15,000 peacekeepers. In addition to the extensive UN engagement in Liberia, there are several other key donors who have been providing assistance for post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. The top multilateral donors include the European Union, the International Monetary Fund, the African Development Bank, European Investment Bank, and the World Bank. The top bilateral donors include USAID, Sweden, Norway, Japan, and Germany.¹⁰ China has also become a significant donor in recent years.

Liberia became eligible for PBF support in December 2007. The first Peacebuilding PP was approved in February 2008 with \$15 million allocated for interventions. In September 2010, in response to the GoL request, the country was placed on the agenda of the PBC. A “Country Specific Configuration for Liberia” was established. The first chairman was Prince Zeid Ra’ad Zeid Al Hussain of Jordan. In November 2010, a SMC was adopted, providing the foundation for the development of the 2nd PP. Liberia has since received two additional allocations, in 2011 and 2013, to implement two PPs totaling \$35 million. Both the 2nd and 3rd PPs ended at the end of December 2016, with a couple of projects extended into 2017.

The JSC is the coordinating body between the GoL and the international community on actions related to peacebuilding. It was designed to provide strategic guidance; ensure coordination, coherence and synergy among the components of the peacebuilding plans; make allocation decisions; and have oversight of the overall country-level management of PBF funding. However, Liberia was unique in that PBO, located within Liberia’s Ministry of Internal Affairs, initially performed the function of a traditional JSC Secretariat. In addition to the PBF accountability, the PBO also coordinated the Liberian government’s peacebuilding work and implemented several peacebuilding projects. This structure resulted in a complex system of accountability and reporting which was assessed in-depth in a 2015 evaluation of the PBO.¹¹ Because of the evaluation findings, a decision was made to “shift the responsibilities of the JSC Secretariat from the PBO to a new PBF Secretariat located within the UNMIL premises.”¹² The PBO remained an office within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The transfer was completed on January 1, 2016.

The first PP, adopted in 2008 and revised in 2009, provided funding for three priority areas:

- Fostering National Reconciliation and Conflict Management.
- Critical Interventions to Promote Peace.
- Resolve Conflict; Strengthening State Capacity for Peace Consolidation.

In May 2011, building on the first PP, the Liberia Peacebuilding Joint Program (LPP), otherwise known as the 2nd PP, was developed between the GoL, the UN, and other international partners. The PBF provided financial support for the LPP. However, the program’s scope was beyond what the PBF could fund directly and the program sought to focus on the key peacebuilding gaps within three areas: security sector reform, rule of law, and national reconciliation, which aligned with the PBC’s priority areas for its engagement in Liberia.

The LPP’s vision was that “the UN member states associated with the PBC Liberia configuration can assist in leveraging support for the implementation of those parts of the programme not covered by the PBF. Such support from UN member states and other international partners is expected because the actions outlined in this joint programme are fully in keeping with the Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and aim to directly build on what is already been undertaken by the GoL with support from international partners. This innovative approach in linking PBF support to other budgetary instruments to deliver a holistic and integrated response to peacebuilding challenges is the first of its kind and represents a step change in international engagement in post conflict countries on the PBC agenda.”¹³

The peacebuilding process as outlined by the PRS set out the GoL priorities as follows:

- To firmly establish a stable and secure environment across Liberia.
- To be on an irreversible path toward rapid, inclusive and sustainable growth and development.
- To rebuild the capabilities of and provide new opportunities for Liberia’s greatest asset – its people.

- To establish responsible institutions of justice, human rights, and governance.¹⁴

In 2012, PBO with the support of UNDP/BCPR, developed the Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation in Liberia (2013-30). The “Reconciliation Roadmap” was designed to provide the basis for future interventions by the government and other stakeholders. It defines reconciliation as “...a multidimensional process of overcoming social, political and religious cleavages; mending and transforming relationships; healing the physical and psychological wounds from the civil war, as well as confronting and addressing historical wrongs, including the root structural causes of conflict in Liberia.”¹⁵ Its 12 thematic areas were grouped into three categories: accounting for the past, managing the present, and planning for the future. Implementation of the “Reconciliation Roadmap” commenced in January 2013.

The 3rd PP was primarily aligned with the Agenda for Transformation (AfT), the GoL’s growth and development strategy (2012-2017). Pillar 1 of the AfT was especially significant, as it focused on peace, justice, security, and the rule of law. It was to “ensure long-term peace and stability through 1) managing tensions in society to reduce the risk of future conflict; 2) increasing social cohesion; and 3) ensuring that the principles of human rights are upheld.”¹⁶ The 3rd PP also provided catalytic support to 6 of 12 thematic areas identified in the Reconciliation Roadmap. Thus, PBF support was intended to help kick-start key activities to strengthen national reconciliation and social cohesion. PBF support also aimed to have “a clear catalytic effect in triggering further support from other key actors involved in reconciliation initiatives.”¹⁷ PBF funding has also been focused on “building capacity and forging linkages among local key players, to address the fragile peace and to orientate them towards using their influence towards constructive action in particular in remote ‘hot spots.’”¹⁸ In April 2016 the SMC was updated and the priority commitments were: 1) security sector reform; 2) strengthening the rule of law; 3) promoting national reconciliation; 4) peaceful and inclusive elections; and 5) human rights. Decentralization, youth and gender equity were considered as cross cutting issues in the updated SMC.

Liberia faces several major challenges in the form of two significant transitions and the aftermath of the Ebola epidemic of 2014-2015. Additionally, the country is struggling with economic downturn as a consequence of falling global commodity prices on its main exports, including iron ore and rubber.

The first transition is the coming election in October 2017. Having completed two terms in office, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf is no longer eligible to run again and a new government will be formed following the vote. The second transition is the end of the UNMIL mandate on March 30, 2018, when the UNCT will assume responsibility. In support of these transitions, capacity mapping and the development of the PP were completed in the first quarter of 2017. The capacity mapping, a result of UNSCR 2333 (2016), assessed the location and extent of the gaps that UNMIL’s withdrawal will create. The Peacebuilding Plan directs “the role of the UN system and other relevant partners in supporting the transition of Liberia during the drawdown of UNMIL and beyond, as stipulated in the resolution.”¹⁹ The Peacebuilding Plan final draft was submitted to the Security Council on April 4, 2017 following a consultative process led by UNMIL and PBO. At the core of this consultative process was the establishment of the Reference Group, which included Liberian government ministries, commissions and agencies officials, local civil society organizations (CSOs), UNMIL, the UNCT, and the broader donor community. This plan is aligned with the Liberian government’s peacebuilding priorities as articulated in the AfT and the GoL and PBC’s SMC on peacebuilding. It is expected that the new government, which will come into office in January 2018, will continue to support the plan’s implementation. This evaluation therefore takes place at a critical time when the RUNOs are drafting project proposals for its continued engagement with Liberia following the end of the UNMIL mandate.

For the upcoming election, PBF is providing support for a small grant program called “Enhancing Youth Participation in the 2017 Legislative and Presidential Electoral Process,” which aims to expand space for “youth engagement, dialogue, and civic participation to diffuse potential election prone conflict at community levels.”²⁰

Conflict Context

Throughout its history, Liberia has struggled with issues of ethnic cohesion. In the early days of the country, conflict existed between a group of freed American slaves, who forcefully established a colony in Liberia, and the indigenous people. The settlers, backed by a United States Navy vessel, could fend off attacks by the indigenous inhabitants and eventually established the Republic of Liberia in 1847. By 1867, 13,000 settlers had emigrated to Liberia and they established a new ethnic class known as the Congos or the Americo-Liberians.²¹ This group became the social, political military, and economic elite, and dominated the structures of power until 1980.

In that year, a group of indigenous non-commissioned officers of the Armed Forces of Liberia stormed the presidential palace and assassinated then-President William R. Tolbert Jr. and publicly executed members of his cabinet. The group formed a military regime known as the People’s Redemption Council (PRC), which was the first indigenous-rule government in Liberia. The PRC, led by Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe, reigned from 1980-1985. It ended with the election of Doe as president. He ruled the country until his execution in 1990.

The Doe era in Liberia ushered in the decline of the Americo-Liberian-indigenous conflict and the rise of inter-ethnic conflict amongst Liberia’s 16 tribes. Doe, a member of the Krahn ethnic group, favored his own clansman and installed them into senior positions in the military and government bureaucracy. He also began to have disagreements with other members of the PRC junta, which culminated in a 1985 coup led by Thomas Quiwonkpa, a member of the Gio tribe. Doe’s regime expunged the coup attempt and carried out reprisals against the Gio people and the affiliated Mano tribe. It is estimated that upwards to 2,000 Gios and Manos were killed as retribution. This set into motion the bloody inter-ethnic violence that underpinned the Liberian civil war in the 1990s.

Prior to the civil war, the large concessionary deals struck between the government and international firms, most prominently the Firestone Rubber Company, created an economic system that benefited primarily the Americo-Liberian political elite and foreign interests. The majority of the indigenous population, however, was marginalized politically and economically; their access to land declined while few income-generating opportunities resulted from Foreign Direct Investment. Over time, this exclusionary economic development model created deep fissures within the society, and fueled grievances that facilitated the mobilization of rural youth as armed conflict erupted and intensified.²²

Thus, the brutality and repression of the Doe regime and the continued political and economic marginalization of most Liberian population, contributed to the eruption of the first Liberian civil war in 1989 when an Americo-Liberian, Charles Taylor, heading the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), backed by Cotê d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso, and with the support of local, indigenous population, invaded Nimba county. Over the next few years, as other military factions emerged, the country was ravaged by a civil war. In 1990, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sent in military force in an attempt to stop the fighting. With the conflict finally ended, in 1997 Charles Taylor was elected president of Liberia. Peace, however, was fragile and the continued repression of the Taylor regime and the lack of an effective demobilization program led to a new round of fighting in 1999.

The civil war ended with the signing of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement in August 2003. In October of that year, the UNSC established UNMIL, deploying 15,000 peacekeeping troops. While violence has since ceased, the animosities created by ethnic divisions remain. Liberia has not reconciled the Americo-Liberian-indigenous divide nor has it carried out any meaningful efforts to reconcile tribal divisions. Added to the mix is a new rift between those who stayed in Liberia throughout the internecine years and those that sought refuge outside the country. At the same time, the 14-year civil war left the country devastated. By most estimates, 250,000 Liberians out of a population of 3.8 million died during the conflict and two million became refugees or were internally displaced.²³ Infrastructure was almost completely destroyed and there was a lack of electricity or piped water. Agricultural production, mining and manufacturing sectors, and the education and public healthcare systems were shattered. The years of conflict also had a devastating effect on the rights, participation and conditions of youth and women.

The “post-peace agreement” government’s task was enormous. Its policies were organized around four pillars: 1) expanding peace and security; 2) revitalizing economic activity; 3) strengthening governance and the rule of law; and 4) rebuilding infrastructure and providing basic services.²⁴ However, weak rule of law and a breakdown of the security sector served as impediments to national reconciliation. State security forces which played belligerent roles during the conflicts, further exacerbated these problems.

Portfolio Overview

The evaluation reviewed 16 projects funded under the 2nd and 3rd PPs between 2011 and 2016. The projects represented nearly \$35 million of PBF funding²⁵ and focused on issues related to increased access to justice and security, constitutional and legal reform, alternative land dispute resolution, community-based and traditional conflict resolution, and women’s and youth’s empowerment. The projects were implemented by five separate RUNOs, and over 25 government and civil society partners. Although 2nd and 3rd PP differed in terms of the areas they emphasized, PBF portfolio supported initiatives in four priority areas during both PPs: 1) justice and security; 2) national reconciliation; 3) management of natural resources including land; and 4) sustainable livelihoods. The 3rd PP results framework identified nine outcomes:

1. Communities in pilot locations have adequate mechanisms for dealing with the past through the Palava Huts process of truth telling, atonement and reconciliation.
2. Women participate in conflict management, peacebuilding, and local decision-making in selected communities.
3. County Peace Communities (CPCs) and Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) Mechanisms prevent and resolve local disputes in 15 counties.
4. Alternative land dispute resolution system fully operational and managed by a new national Land Agency.
5. Enhancing access to justice and security at the decentralized level.
6. Enhanced social cohesion through the empowerment and enhanced sustainable livelihoods of youth in conflict-prone areas.
7. Women in conflict-prone areas are empowered through enhanced sustainable livelihoods.
8. Constitutional and legal reform is finalized through an inclusive, participatory process.
9. Effective coordination, monitoring, reporting and evaluation and communication of all PBF-supported projects in Liberia.

A brief overview of the projects reviewed can be found in textboxes below (see Annex B for detail):

Table 1 Second Priority Plan Funding Allocation

Sector/Area	Budget
Justice and Security: Infrastructure, services and community outreach associated with the implementation of the Gbarnga Hub; contribution to the Monrovia central prison	\$6,755,000
Justice and Security: Allocation for 4 additional hubs.	\$8,000,000
Reconciliation: Support to the Land Commission and the National Youth Service Programme	\$3,000,000
Technical support for the Government PB Coordination, Policy Work and M&E	\$2,399,000
Total	\$20,154,000

Table 2 Third Priority Plan Funding Allocation

Sector/Area	Budget
National Reconciliation	\$3,500,000
Management of natural resources including land	\$3,000,000
Sustainable livelihoods	\$3,500,000
Constitutional and legal reform	\$2,500,000
Support to the Liberia PBO for coordination, technical assistance, communication and M&E	\$2,500,000
Total	\$15,000,000

Brief Overview of PBF Projects Reviewed

1. Security and Justice (~\$10.7m)

- a. Justice and Security Joint Program (UNDP and UNOPS, 2010-2016, PP2 & PP3)
- b. Enhancing Access to Security and Justice - Harper and Zwedru Hub Regions (UNDP, 2013-2016, PP3)

2. PBO/PBF Secretariat (~\$4.3m)

- a. Extension of support to PBO and PBF Secretariat (UNDP, 2012-2014, PP2 & PP3)
- b. PBO coordination, M&E, communication, and capacity-building (UNDP, 2013-2015, PP3)
- c. Peacebuilding Fund Secretariat (UNDP, 2015-Ongoing, PP3)
- d. PBO coordination of Government peacebuilding and reconciliation activities (UNDP, 2016-2017, PP3)

3. Land Disputes (\$4m)

- a. Establishment of a Land Disputes Prevention and Resolution System– Phase I and 2 (UNHABITAT, 2011-2015, PP2 & PP3)

4. Gender and female empowerment (\$3m)

- a. Women as Peacemakers and Nation Builders (UNWOMEN, 2013-2016, PP3)
- b. Women's Economic Empowerment (UNWOMEN, 2013-2016, PP3)

5. Reconciliation (\$2.5m)

- a. Community-based Truth Telling and Atonement Project (UNDP, 2013-2016, PP3)
- b. Local/Traditional Mechanisms for Peace at County and District level (UNDP, 2014-2016, PP3)

6. Youth (\$2.5m)

- a. National Youth Service Program– Phase 1 and 2 (UNICEF, 2011-2015, PP2)

7. Constitutional and legal reform (\$2.5m)

- a. Constitution Review Process (UNDP, 2013 -2016, PP3)
- b. Enhancing Access to Justice and Legal Drafting (UNDP, 2014-2016, PP3)

Evaluation Background and Methodology

Purpose and Objectives

The evaluation had a dual purpose of providing (1) a summative assessment of PBF-funded peacebuilding results in Liberia, and (2) a more forward-looking analysis of gaps and opportunities to inform decision-making about future PBF investments in Liberia.

It had a broad range of objectives covering: the overall results of PBF supported activities in Liberia since 2011, management and oversight structures, the identification of lessons learned, and higher-level recommendations. Specifically, it:

- Assessed the extent to which the PBF portfolio has made concrete and sustainable peacebuilding impact through direct action and catalytic effects (impact level).
- Assessed the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of PBF activities (outcome and output levels).
- Identified critical remaining peacebuilding gaps.
- Assessed the extent and effectiveness of programmatic intervention to support empowerment of women and youth.
- Identified lessons learned for future PBF engagements both inside and outside Liberia.

The primary intended audience was PBSO/PBF, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Peace and Consolidation/Resident Coordinator UNCT, JSC, and relevant GoL counterparts (including PBO). Secondary audiences included international and national partners supporting peacebuilding in Liberia, including regional and headquarter offices of RUNOs, as well as relevant stakeholders in other PBF support countries.

The complete list of evaluation questions can be found in Annex A. Questions were structured along the traditional OCED/DAC evaluation criteria: Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Sustainability. In collaboration with PBSO, the team included an additional criterion around gender to reflect the PBSO's commitment to understanding and promoting women's active participation in peacebuilding, and to recognize the primacy that gender issues play in Liberia's ongoing transition. The questions were developed through a collaborative and iterative process with PBSO. Given the broad and diverse audience for this evaluation report, the team struggled with finding the right balance in developing a focused list of questions, with a need to provide adequate coverage across all projects and issues related to design, implementation, and oversight. In the end, the team decided to focus their questions at the portfolio level and to bring in examples from individual activities where illustrative of the general trend across projects. This means that the evaluation was not designed to provide an assessment of each individual project in the portfolio but rather an examination of trends and lessons learned across the whole portfolio.

Overall Approach and Methodology

The evaluation followed a non-experimental, ex-post evaluation design. This was in large part due to the limited amount of baseline data available but also reflective of the limited time and resources available to review a portfolio of 16 individual projects.

As the team aimed for analytical generalizability (not statistical generalizability), the focus on qualitative methods enabled the team to better investigate and understand the context within which PBF activities were implemented by asking “how,” “why,” and “so what” questions, and to explore nuances in the experience and perceptions of different stakeholder groups. In terms of specific data collection methods, the team relied on in-depth desk review of primary and secondary documents, key informant and small group interviews, round table discussions, and unstructured site observations (mostly of infrastructure components).²⁶ The team supplemented qualitative data collected with quantitative data derived from PBF monitoring and evaluation (M&E) documents and secondary studies.

The team used both a rolling-analysis approach to identify emerging patterns and areas for further exploration during fieldwork, as well as a more in-depth thematic analysis to allow for the disaggregation and cross-tabulations of findings by sex, age, stakeholder group, and location. During their last day of fieldwork, the team presented an “Aide Memoire” to an Evaluation Reference Group to discuss, validate, and refine initial findings and identify possible areas where additional evidence was needed. The team then produced a draft evaluation report, which was shared with PBSO and an Evaluation Reference Group. A final report was then produced responding to comments received.

The evaluation was organized to fit the timelines and phases as described in the TOR, including (i) inception phase; (ii) fieldwork and data collection phase; (iii) analysis and report writing phase; and finally, (iv) dissemination phase.

Site and Interviewee Selection

The sampling of both data collection sites and individual interviews was hindered by the lack of portfolio-level information on the location of project activities and a lack of information on individuals involved in project design, implementation, and oversight. The team needed to extract this information from project documents and work collaboratively with PBSO and RUNO contacts.

The team started with a sampling frame covering activities in all of Liberia’s 15 counties. Given limited time and financial resources, the team utilized a maximum-variation sampling strategy to draw a sample of locations representative of Liberia’s diverse operating contexts. This included ensuring a mix of urban and rural, wealthy and poor, conflict-affected and historically marginalized, and ethnically diverse locations (listed as “cross-roads” in Table 3). Based on these criteria, the team selected Montserrado (both Monrovia and surrounding areas), Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Bong County, Margibi, and Bomi. A breakdown of how the team identified how each area represented the criteria is presented below in Table 3. Once the geographic locations were determined, the team sampled individual projects to ensure a selection of PBF activities across project outcomes, priority plans, RUNOs, and size of budgets.

Table 3 Sample of locations representative of Liberia's diverse operating contexts

County	Urban ¹	Rural	Wealthy	Poor	Conflict Legacy	Crossroads	Marginalized
Montserrado	✓		✓				
Nimba		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Grand Gedeh		✓		✓			✓
Bong	✓		✓			✓	
Margibi	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Bomi		✓	✓				✓

The team carefully explained the purpose and intended use of the evaluation and made sure that participants provided informed consent. The team took careful steps to ensure that confidentiality was both explained and maintained throughout the evaluation. Information from interviews was aggregated in a way that could not be tied back to specific individuals or positions.

Limitations and Mitigation Measures

Closure of most activities and relocation of staff. A significant challenge was presented by the fact that 14 of 16 projects had closed by the time the evaluation took place. This meant that most program staff were on new assignments, many outside of Liberia. In part, a consequence of the EVD outbreak but also due to the frequent turnover of international staff in Liberia, few respondents had been involved with PBF for the duration of the 2nd and 3rd PPs. The team responded by increasing the number of interviews to speak to multiple stakeholders within each organization. The team also conducted nearly two full weeks of remote interviews with former Liberia staff relocated around the world.

Rainy season and poor road network. The poor quality of Liberia’s roads and limited internal flights also posed a constraint on the areas that the team could reach during their fieldwork. The evaluation occurred during the start of Liberia’s rainy season, which caused further deterioration of roads. The team responded by dividing into sub-teams, also in part due to one team-member needing to depart Liberia earlier than the others, with one team covering the northwest by car and the other team chartering a UNMIL flight to the southeast and driving back by car.

Threats to validity. There was likely a recall bias as most respondents were asked about past activities of projects that were closed. The team sought to mitigate this bias by framing questions in ways that could help assist accurate recall (without “leading” respondents) and by triangulating where possible. The team also faced a halo bias as respondents might have underreported socially undesirable answers and alter their responses to align with what they perceive as the social norm. To mitigate this limitation, the team provided confidentiality and anonymity guarantees to all interviewees, and tried to conduct interviews in as neutral a setting as possible to help respondents feel comfortable.

¹ The “urban” and “rural” criteria refers to relative population density of various counties. The “wealthy” and “poor” criteria refers to the relative socio-economic status. The “conflict legacy” criteria refers to counties with a recent history of civil unrest. The “crossroads” criteria refers to areas of above average trade, generally involving trade with multiple neighboring counties. The “marginalized” criteria refers to areas that have generally been regarded as underserved by the central government.

Findings

The findings address the impact of PBF Liberia activities in five areas: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, gender-responsive peacebuilding and sustainability.

Relevance

Finding 1: PBF's prioritization of security, justice, and reconciliation was relevant and timely. It was largely based on community consultations and discussions with strategic peacebuilding stakeholders, and sought to fill gaps in programs and funding in areas critical to sustained peace in Liberia. Most stakeholders considered PBF Liberia to be relevant and there is a firm belief that the program was timely and targeted to the right issues. Rural respondents had a slightly higher opinion of the relevance but also felt less involved in the planning process. The program's flexibility allowed it to adapt to unforeseen challenges and local reality. The creation of the LCCs and the Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) Units are examples of the flexibility and responsiveness of the PBF Liberia that made it relevant to the context in which it operated. Where the 2nd PP had shortcomings with regards to reconciliation programs, the 3rd PP sought to address them.

Consultations with Local Communities

While the relevance of the program was applicable to most respondents, a sizable difference exists between Monrovia-based and rural respondents regarding community consultations. Respondents in Monrovia overwhelmingly felt that PBF plans were based on community consultations. For rural respondents, the perception was the opposite. Stakeholders outside of Monrovia did not feel they were properly consulted about the planning process. Nonetheless, there was a slightly higher number of rural respondents who felt the programs addressed the root causes of fragility. This discrepancy indicates that rural respondents were satisfied with PBF results even if they would have preferred greater involvement in its planning.

A review of PP documents indicated that the PBF portfolio and the PPs did reflect government priorities and strategies, such as the AfT and the Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation.²⁷ Respondents from UNMIL, RUNOs, UNCT, UNHQ and the government all agreed that the PPs were developed based on government priorities from the results of extensive nationwide consultations. GoL, however, had a broad range of priorities and therefore the PPs were not able to capture all of them. The 3rd PP for instance only captured 6 of 12 government priorities.

Trends emerging from the interviews show that GoL and UNCT respondents felt consultations were wide ranging, while community members and CSOs felt more could have been done. This aligns with the findings of *Failure and Turnaround in United Nations Peacebuilding Fund Projects*, which states, "Some interviewees additionally expressed concern that there was not greater consultation with IPs [(implementing partners)] and possible beneficiaries in the process of designing projects, both within Liberia generally and outside of Monrovia specifically."²⁸

As the PBF-funded programs progressed, greater efforts were made to ensure adequate consultations. Prior to the establishment of the Zwedru and Harper hubs, consultations were held with community

members to inform them about the project and to get their input on what types of services they needed. The decision to host community consultations was a lesson learned from the Gbarnga Hub, where pre-implementation consultations were not held. This oversight led to much confusion in Gbarnga and the spreading of a rumor that the GoL was trying to militarize the city ahead of the 2011 national elections.

Several respondents credited the Zwedru and Harper consultations for the decision to establish SGBV Units. It was a need identified through the consultation process and was retroactively added to the Gbarnga Hub's list of services.

Besides the hubs, the NYSP was developed based on broad consultation at the national (Monrovia) level and supported by a desk analysis of conflict and youth issues in the country. Under the LPP, the Government played a leading role in the program and the PBF provided funds for events to be held in the counties upon the National Youth Volunteers' (NVs) arrival, to introduce them to the community and for pre-arrival consultations.

Yet, many community members reported they were not adequately informed and/or consulted. Largely, this was due to funding and logistical constraints that made it impossible to brief all persons in every community.

Extent that the Portfolio was Based on Consultation with Other Peacebuilding Donors

PBF Liberia tried to be inclusive and involve key stakeholders working in the areas the PBF focused. Besides the GoL and the UNCT, the US Embassy, USAID, and the Swedish Embassy, among others, were consulted. International NGOs such as the Carter Center were also consulted.

During one interview, a local civil society representative stated that his and other local organizations were consulted on the development of the hubs and other PBF programs but their advice was not taken into consideration. As in other cases, here too the inclusion of civil society was viewed as a box checking exercise and not out of a true desire to seek their input. This criticism was not solely directed at PBF Liberia but was a general sentiment regarding the inclusion of CSOs in the development landscape.

In other cases, key development partners interviewed were not aware of the PBF and its activities. It is not clear to what extent this was due to their organizations not being involved in the PBF's activities or due to the routine rotation of staff, with those who were cognizant having departed Liberia.

Alignment with national/traditional models of security, justice, and reconciliation

At its inception, PBF Liberia's goal was to enhance and disseminate statutory models of security and justice. Thus, initially it did not focus on traditional models. As the program progressed, planners saw the need to include traditional models and the benefits this could have. There was also a belated effort to include reconciliation in the plans, which was emphasized most fully in the 3rd PP. Notwithstanding, it is important to note that under 'Reconciliation' programming areas in Land and Youth programs, there were more concerted efforts to engage with, and build on, more traditional systems. Early on during the design, development, and implementation of the LPP, the technical working groups were initially combined so that those with technical expertise in this area could persistently flag specific issues (consideration of customary law, as opposed to response in RoL/SSR sector). At some point the RoL/SSR and Reconciliation practitioners were split, which likely influenced programming.

Within the court system, a hybrid statutory-traditional system was emphasized as an enduring aspect of the Liberian justice system. Statutory law is used to prosecute major crimes, while traditional justice can be applied to minor offenses, such as petty theft or arguments. Respondents stated that the hybrid model

prevents the court docket from getting overwhelmed by minor offenses and allows citizens to use the traditional model to get faster and cheaper justice. Another benefit of the traditional system that was cited was the ability of the traditional system to find a compromise solution. Many citizens prefer this to the courts, where a judge renders a final verdict that cannot be challenged. Under traditional law, conversations can continue until all sides are reconciled. Furthermore, there is the option to use the formal system if an equitable solution cannot be obtained under traditional justice.

The creation of the Peace Huts and Palava Huts were responses to the need to address reconciliation more directly. These 3rd PP initiatives were meant to address an oversight in the 2nd PP. The establishment of dispute resolution mechanisms in the LCCs was also an effective means by which PBF Liberia addressed reconciliation. Respondents were disappointed by the closure of 5 of 6 LCCs due to a lack of funds required for maintenance. Citizens in the affected communities have requested that they be reestablished, as they were effective tools for conflict resolution.

Missed Opportunities

A missed opportunity for PBF Liberia was to foster the link between community policing and the formal justice sector. Respondents from within the security and justice sectors as well as community members lamented the limitations of the state to respond to security needs. Due to a lack of fuel and/or transport, police response to crimes committed in remote areas is delayed or absent. In its stead, community members either adjudicate the matter locally or carry out a citizens' arrest and wait for the police to respond. This form of community policing is commonplace in rural areas. Citizens have stated a desire for more support from the police. They would like assistance establishing community watch programs and to set up systems for contacting authorities in times of need. Had PBF Liberia considered providing such support it could have improved the implementation of justice and enhanced state-citizen relations.

Another missed opportunity for the PBF Liberia was to collaborate with other Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) stakeholders, such as Mitigating Land Disputes in Liberia and the Carter Center Access to Justice Program. Several respondents in rural communities mentioned these programs for ADR as effective tools. Synergies between the PBF and ADR-specializing organizations could have produced mutual benefits. Nonetheless, ADR was built into the NYSP. JNVs were trained in ADR and their interventions were generally respected in their respective communities.

Finding 2: PBF Liberia plans were strongly aligned to national plans. They were also in line with major international commitments to support country-owned and country-led plans. Some stakeholders differed over the appropriateness of the plans for Liberia but all agreed that they were aligned with GoL's priorities. Mostly, plans were implemented by the UNCT, which limited the use of country systems and GoL capacity building. But it must be emphasized that UNCT-led implementation was essential due to low human and institutional capacity in post-conflict Liberia. Most RUNOs had good working relationships with their GoL counterparts, but there were cases where program results were affected by a poor working relationship between a RUNO and its GoL partner.

Strengths of the Portfolio

A strength of the portfolio was its mission to enhance the capacity of the government to address peacebuilding concerns, with an emphasis on areas outside of Monrovia. In describing PBF activities in Liberia, a Government Minister said, "The idea of the hubs was to provide backup for the counties' security. The idea was to create a presence in the counties and to decentralize police services. It was also

to put all services on the same platform and they could work together and deliver more effectively. The plan was also to consider that UNMIL would leave and this would be a way to provide security in its absence. It was also to ensure that local people had access to justice in the counties. That courts would also help decrease the backlog of cases.”

The portfolio was less strong in the use of country systems. Implementation of PBF activities was largely carried out by RUNOs, and existing country systems were used sparingly, if at all. Programs were managed by the RUNOs financially and administratively. Respondents thought that government systems and capacity should have received more attention. Several GoL interviewees felt divorced from the implementation process and wished for more involvement in management. Yet, others were happy and grateful for RUNOs-led implementation because they believed their government institution lacked the capacity to implement effectively. Overall, there were significantly more GoL agencies that wanted to play a larger implementation role than they did. Greater GoL operational ownership during the program could have led to improved program sustainability after they were turned over to GoL. For example, the Land Authority was one of the few programs to be led by GoL and has been sustained in the aftermath of the program’s completion. It was also one of the few PBF programs managed by the government, with support from UN Habitat and other donors. But, GoL operational ownership would not necessarily have led to greater sustainability. The Ministry of Youth and Sports was the lead implementer of the NYSP, yet the program was never included in the national budget and the program ceased to exist once PBF support ended.

Extent that PBF Activities Facilitated/Constrained Interaction with GoL

The JSC, being a relatively open forum for interested stakeholders to attend, was problematic. Respondents from both the GoL and development partners reported a lack of consistency in membership. Particularly, as government ministers gained interest in the JSC, they were automatically welcomed into JSC and bestowed the role of co-chair, as an acknowledgement of their high rank. To be inclusive of the new minister’s priorities and cater to national ownership, the JSC agenda was adjusted, which created additional work streams and layers of bureaucracy.

There was broad support for programs being aligned to national priorities but some respondents felt that the JSC committed to the wrong priorities. By and large, the senior leadership of the UNCT agreed to support the government’s priorities but many UN program managers felt the selected priorities were improperly aligned. For instance, there was a strong feeling among UNMIL staff that the focus on hubs was misplaced. Instead of building new infrastructure, pre-existing structures should have been renovated at the local, rather than regional, level.

On a more positive note, participants reported that PBF activities improved working relationships at the sector level. Whereas some sector actors previously worked in silos, they had begun to talk with one another and share information because of PBF’s support. The relationship between RUNO managers and their GoL counterparts also improved as they worked together on PBF-funded projects’ implementation. Speaking of the benefits of the portfolio, a former UNMIL staff member said, “After early confusion amongst the local stakeholders, there was the ability to network amongst local structures. A lot of synergies were created. This was an unanticipated result.” These new synergies paid dividends beyond PBF programs.

Some RUNOs performed better than others with regards to working with the GoL. For example, multiple respondents from the GoL and the UN complained that the head of one implementing RUNO openly stated that they would substitute their own judgment over the wishes of the Government. Despite this

anomaly, most government respondents spoke favorably of their working relationship with the UNCT. The modus operandi of the collaboration is highlighted in the JSC Annual Report 2015: “National ownership and adjusting to the national context is essential, both in reconciliation and justice & security. Government along with UN Agencies and UNMIL are responsible for making sure that sufficient coordination takes place to ensure effective implementation and that sufficient support is provided to national counterparts where necessary.”²⁹

Efficiency

Finding 3: Overall, PBF Liberia provided a fast response in terms of the formulation and approval of its second and third Priority Plans. However, the portfolio experienced several inefficiencies at the project level. While some inefficiencies can be explained by external shocks, such as the EVD outbreak, and unique operating challenges of working in Liberia, several others could have been mitigated through improved planning and design. The most significant inefficiencies were related to oversight and coordination issues, and represented a shared shortcoming across a number of key PBF actors.

Speed of Response

Information collected during the evaluation indicates that the speed of PBF Liberia’s response needs to be analyzed at two levels: (1) the formulation and approval of the Priority Plans and (2) the design, approval, and start of individual projects under the Priority Plans.

Priority Plans. Both the 2nd and 3rd PPs were developed within the average 9 to twelve-month range experienced in other PBF countries utilizing the Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility (PRF).³⁰ PRF is intended to support program-based interventions following a defined strategic peacebuilding vision (compared to the more project-based Immediate Response Facility generally used to respond to immediate peacebuilding needs). PRF places a strong emphasis on national ownership and country-level decision-making. Funding is allocated against a specific Priority Plan, which should be developed under the leadership and accountability of the JSC. This involves a series of steps, including conducting an in-depth and inclusive conflict analysis, identifying priority areas of intervention and associated funding, and developing an overall framework that will guide the design, approval, implementation, and monitoring of individual projects under the PP.

Financial data indicates that once both PPs were approved, all medium-term program transfers (23 total) were made within five days of their request, and most within two to three days (see Annex D for detail). PBF also made an extraordinary effort to encourage a fast response by utilizing its “Quick Start” mechanism to provide nearly \$4 million to facilitate the commencement of work on the Gbarnga Security and Justice hub.³¹

Considering the steps and consultations needed for the “admittedly longer process”³² of the PRF, PBF Liberia provided a reasonably fast response considering the time needed to “secure strong national commitment to the broad strategic objectives of the Priority Plan.”³³

Individual Projects. At the project level, interview responses indicate that the internal fund transfer, procurement, and approval procedures of the individual RUNOs resulted in delays in project implementation. RUNO interviewees explained that the transfer of funds from RUNO HQ to Country Office was often delayed, sometimes for six months or more. This resulted in delayed project start-up with a follow-on effect of condensed project timelines. Each project’s official start date was determined by the

date of the original fund transfer, not the date the funds were received by the country office. Even once funding was received, issues related to internal procurement and approval procedures were identified in PBF periodic reports as resulting in further delays.

Project documents and interviews with RUNO, PBO, UNMIL, and implementing partners indicate that while these issues were common to all five RUNOs, they were particularly pronounced in the case of UNDP, which is significant given their large share of the portfolio (56% of the total). This finding was echoed by a June 2016 Columbia School of International and Public Affairs capstone study further highlighting the extent of these issues. UNDP subsequently undertook several steps to address these issues, including (1) hiring an outside procurement consultant to facilitate a more efficient system; and (2) providing specific trainings on UNDP's procurement procedures for government and national implementing partners. These two steps were credited in subsequent project documents with significantly aiding the procurement process, particularly in terms of improving IPs documentation of procurement requests. This has been a common reason for the initial delays.

In addition to internal delays, interviews also revealed that delays were also caused by slow government approvals. Interviewees explained that these were mostly related to government ministers wanting to personally review project documents in detail and due to the limited financial and technical capacity of Liberian civil service staff.

Efficiency of Response

Nearly all interviews (67 of 70 interviews) raised one or more issue that they felt had impeded the efficiency of the PBF Liberia portfolio. Looking across the portfolio, 13 out of 16 PBF-supported projects required at least one extension. The EVD outbreak was a critical factor in explaining these delays and affected nearly all projects supported under the 3rd PP. The disease claimed the lives of over 4,800 Liberians and devastated Liberia's already fragile post-conflict economy. Operationally, national emergency measures restricted the public gathering of people, effectively shutting down any PBF training or workshop activities.

However, the EVD outbreak was not the only reason behind the high proportion of project extensions. Interviews and project reports revealed several predictable, preventable, and relatively low-cost logistical and operational challenges that could have been mitigated with better planning. Examples include: numerous delays attributed to Liberia's long and intense rainy season resulting in delayed infrastructure construction and lack of access to remote communities; lack of basic inputs required for intended functioning (including: basic tools not provided for the vehicle maintenance workshop, lack of a functioning generator, water pump, and telecommunications network); and the most commonly cited example, the lack of vehicles and/or gas needed to implement and monitor activities. When asked about these issues, most UN (RUNO and PBSO) staff commented that in most of these cases the GoL had agreed to provide these basic inputs and failed to deliver.

While implementation issues, both within and outside the control of PBF actors, accounted for some of the efficiency issues raised, the majority related to shortcomings in oversight and coordination by a host of actors. As the evidence below illustrates, the lack of proper oversight and accountability was not the fault of any individual actor but a shared shortcoming across key stakeholders in both Liberia and New York.

In terms of initial oversight and review of project proposals, the 2015 PBO evaluation highlighted that the JSC had "only six working days to review all project proposals" under the 3rd PP, with the eventual result that "all proposals were approved without any comments or recommendations."³⁴ This meant that the

JSC did not have an opportunity to identify and potentially rectify areas of overlap between projects or identify how synergies and complementarities could be further strengthened across the portfolio. The evaluation identified a lack of preparation by PBO, “together with the eagerness of [National Implementing Partners] and RUNOs to initiate their projects meant that project proposals were reviewed too fast.”³⁵

A majority of interviewees—including with former UN leadership, RUNO program managers, former UNMIL advisors, and former PBSO staff—felt that PBO could have served a stronger oversight function. They highlighted issues related to inconsistent messaging, poor document management, incomplete and frequently changing mailing lists, and rushed invitations to JSC meetings. These examples were also covered in the 2015 PBO evaluation and thus will not be elaborated further here. Interestingly, there was a notable difference in response by location of interviewees. Interviewees based in New York tended to be largely critical of PBO and its role in leading to other inefficiencies. Interviewees in Liberia, while still acknowledging several shortcomings by PBO, generally reported inefficiencies being more widespread and caused by a range of issues and actors.

There was also a wide consensus that the JSC had not delivered as expected. One critical factor that led to other inefficiencies was that the Terms of Reference and membership list for the JSC was never finalized. Interviews with UN and PBO staff indicate that a penultimate TOR was circulated but never approved. The evaluation team reviewed this draft and confirmed that no member list was included other than identifying the Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs, Minister of Internal Affairs, and the DSRSG/RC as Co-Chairs.³⁶ One senior UNMIL interviewee explained that this resulted in “a large, large number of people sitting around the table without clear on who is decision maker...it was never clear what JSC was supposed to be doing, the TOR can be interpreted in various ways.” Another important factor during late 2015 and 2016 was the restructuring of the PBF and JSC Secretariat. The recruitment of the main coordinator took over six months, in part due to a selected applicant declining the job offer at the last minute, while all staff at the PBO were required to reapply for their positions, eventually resulting in changes in key positions throughout the office.

Interestingly, PBF’s own internal documents acknowledge deficiencies in the current JSC approach, commenting that “with some few exceptions, Joint Steering Committees are not efficient enough as decision-makers, under-value monitoring of implementation, and fail to set aside time to consider the strategic impact of the array of projects they approve.”³⁷ An independent review of nine PBF evaluations identified a common theme that “the evaluations find that JSCs have not always been effective in providing strategic guidance to the implementation of the PBF in-country, and that the functioning of the JSCs has affected the peacebuilding impact of the PBF.”³⁸ PBF appears to have acknowledged this and state in their “Guidelines” that, “importantly, the effectiveness of the JSC oversight rests to a large degree on the in-country leadership and collaboration, both within the UNCT and/or Mission and with the Government. PBF experience suggests that where this is absent, the PBF processes can become a lot more cumbersome.”³⁹

Some interviewees within RUNOs and UNMIL reported that PBSO should have taken a more assertive role and pushed back on some of the decisions of UNCT, particularly in terms of being accountable for results in areas where they accepted PBF money. As one senior UNMIL representative explained, “I think that outside JSC, PBSO didn’t step in when it could have, should have, and justifiably had the opportunity to do so. There was no rule, oversight, or accountability. It’s not that they weren’t aware, I had number of talks with [their staff] but I think their view was that it wasn’t their responsibility to intervene at country level.” Interviews with PBSO echoed part of this sentiment and explained that PBSO at times felt reluctant

to step in or overrule country-level actors for fear that it might undermine a sense of local ownership. Interviews with PBSO staff also highlighted a couple of instances where PBSO did try to assert itself but quickly received high-level pushback. “In New York, as PBSO, we felt there should have been a significant reconciliation component in the second grant. We tried to include this but were overruled by UNMIL and the SRSG.”

Several interviewees also highlighted that both UNMIL and UNCT should have taken a more assertive role to ensure oversight and accountability. As one senior UNMIL representative aptly summarized, “At the end of the day, if the buck stops anyway, the buck stops with the UN in Liberia. We are the ones with the responsibility for how much and what type of engagement is used here.”

Finally, while the size, duration, and country context of the Liberia portfolio in part helps explain the number and extent of inefficiencies raised, interviewees did also provide a couple of examples of successful efforts to improve the efficiency or “value for money” of activities. Interviewees, particularly UN (RUNO, UNMIL, and PBSO) and PBO stakeholders, generally spoke positively on the concept of the PP. Documents and interviews also highlighted the use of the “expanded Priority Plan” as particularly useful. As the PBF Business Plan explains, “While the concept of the expanded Priority Plan can be applied to any situation where additional resources will be needed, this has been particularly useful for PBC countries for maximizing linkages between PBF support and objectives of PBC engagement.”⁴⁰ This concept was identified in the 2014 “Liberia Justice and Security Final Report” which discussed the Justice and Security Joint Programme (JSJP) as an example of good practice, noting that, “The starting point of any prioritization exercise is to establish what the realistic financial envelope is so that the prioritization process does not take place in a vacuum. This should take account of all spending across the sector, not just for the JSJP.”⁴¹

While the poor quality of M&E was consistently raised during interviews as a shortcoming of the portfolio, interviewees highlighted that PBSO took concrete steps, and made incremental progress, on addressing this shortcoming. These steps included a PBF-wide practice of assigning two PBSO staff to each country, one with program officer functions and the other with M&E functions,² as well as bringing in an international M&E Specialist to work in PBO. The evaluation team also noted improvements in program M&E reporting, including the commissioning of justice and security perception baselines and revisions to the PBF portfolio results framework.

Flexibility and Adaptability of Projects and Funding

Finding 4: PBF demonstrated a willingness to be flexible and adaptive to major external shocks affecting its portfolio. However, interviewees expressed that additional flexibility to shift funds within project budgets would improve their ability to better respond to the unique challenges affecting their specific projects and result in a more adaptive project design.

Responsiveness to Contextual and Enabling Environment Challenges

Two major external shocks occurred during the period reviewed: (1) the outbreak of EVD; and (2) a global collapse of commodity prices and drop in government revenue. The effects of the EVD outbreak have

² These functions were collapsed in 2016, with each country being assigned two staff from NYHQ, a lead officer and an alternate officer.

been discussed in the section above. The drop-in commodity prices had a significant impact on government budgets and the government's ability to meet previous financial commitments. Interviews conducted during fieldwork indicate that the 2017-2018 Fiscal Year budget has been reduced by up to 12 percent as a result. This has in part directly impacted GoL's support to PBO. PBO staff mentioned that informal conversations with government staff indicate reluctance to support "new" activities, meaning activities in addition to the previous year's budget and funding were being cut for existing programs and offices.

According to 96 percent (45 of 47) of interviews, PBF demonstrated at least a partial level of responsiveness in responding to these shocks. For example, interviewees highlighted that funding within the NYSP program had been allowed to be reallocated to help support the EVD response. The most commonly cited example of PBF's flexibility related to the shift in the reconceptualization of the Justice and Security Hubs from infrastructure-based to services-based in response to lessons learned from the Gbarnga hub. Interestingly, the evaluation team noted two differences by stakeholder groups. First, government respondents were more likely to negatively view the shift in the hub conceptualization, while UN stakeholders were generally positive on this switch. Second, RUNO stakeholders were generally best able to provide specific examples of PBF flexibility or adaptiveness, however, this is likely due to their direct involvement in modifying work plans and/or shifting budgets.

A review of project documentation also demonstrates that PBSO was willing to issue a high number of no-cost extensions to respond to the disruptions in planned activities caused by the EVD outbreak. Another example of PBF flexibility is evident in the "exceptional approvals" of two activities under the 3rd PPs. The approvals extended the period of performance for the PBO and JSC Secretariat until September 2017, beyond the life of the 3rd PP (December 2016), something that is rarely done.

However, interviews also highlighted a few instances where PBF was judged to be inflexible. Examples included the lack of contingency funds, or subsequent approval to shift funds, to cover the transportation of sick and/or injured NVs under the NYSP program, as well as an inability to shift funds to respond to challenges in the construction of Women Peace Huts. Subsequent communication with a NYSP program manager clarified that UNICEF had attempted to secure health insurance for NVs across the program and ultimately ended up providing a wage supplement for individuals to purchase individual health plans, as well as the addition of a "contingency budget line" to cover medical transportation and other related costs.

Strategic and coherent response

Finding 5: While interviewees felt that PBF had the right strategic focus in Liberia, there was a strong consensus that issues related to the roles, responsibilities, and relationships between all the different actors involved in the design, management, and oversight of PBF projects in Liberia caused significant inefficiencies across the portfolio.

Alignment, Synergies, and Complementarities of Priority Plans

Nearly all respondents interviewed felt that the 2nd and 3rd PPs were aligned and complementary. Likewise, the overwhelming majority said that the three thematic focus areas—security, justice, and reconciliation—were well aligned to Liberia's peacebuilding needs. The majority felt that the 3rd PP rightly focused more on reconciliation, which had been overshadowed by security and justice issues in the 2nd

PP. They also responded that the portfolio had not been “stretched too thin,” a concern the evaluation team was asked to explore during their inception interviews.

Interviewees were, however, much more critical on the lack of complementarity between projects both within and across the PPs. As one former senior UN staff mentioned, “I’m not sure why activities were divided up among agencies, overall idea was that they would cooperate as working under Liberian Peacebuilding Program but that didn’t turn out to be the case.” This sentiment was echoed in the 2015 PBO evaluation, which found that “different PBF supported projects are not seen by the PBO as being part of the Reconciliation Programme but as individual interventions, which prevents synergies and the ability to avoid overlaps between different projects. In addition, a stronger commitment of RUNOs to the principles of Delivering as One would have helped improve synergies.”⁴²

Both interviews and project documents pointed to the thematic and geographical overlap between the Palava Hut, Peace Hut, and County Peace Committees (CPCs) as a prime example of the lack of synergy or complementarity between projects. One notable exception, however, was that several interviewees complimented PBF for at least attempting to follow a “sector-based approach” in security and justice, even if the linkages between activities could have been stronger.

Fieldwork revealed several reasons explaining the lack of complementarity between projects, including: (1) a lapse by the JSC to ensure greater linkages and complementarities when approving projects, (2) PBSO application guidelines not emphasizing complementarities and synergies enough,⁴³ and (3) the internal division of UNMIL leading projects to follow the divide between security and justice on one side and reconciliation on the other.

Issues in Relationships, Roles, and Responsibilities

A clear majority of interviews (53 of 64) speaking on the topic of roles and responsibilities felt that there had been unclear, overlapping, or shifting roles and responsibilities between the various actors involved in the design, implementation, and oversight of PBF activities. Perhaps unsurprisingly, there was a stark difference in responses depending on the stakeholder group interviewed, with stakeholders generally faulting other groups when describing shortcomings. That said, several interviewees acknowledged that their organizations could have done more and that the issues were not particular to any one group. Finding 3 (pgs. 30-31) has already covered how issues related to the roles and responsibilities of PBO, JSC, PBSO, and UNMIL led to inefficiencies in the oversight and management of the portfolio. This section will thus focus on information gathered on the role played by PBC, UNCT, and the GoL, drawing in lessons and shared experiences from other PBF evaluations.

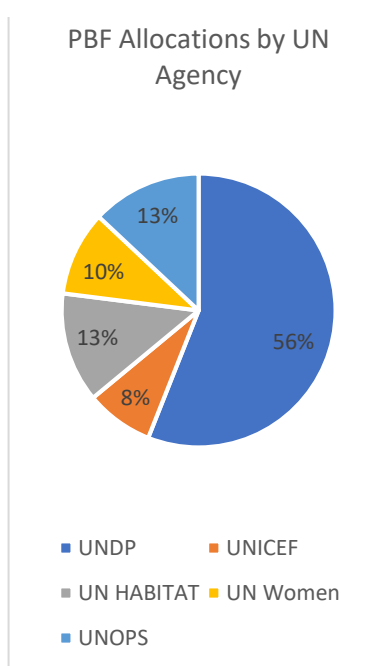
PBC. Opinion was nearly equally divided on the utility of the PBC. The evaluation team interviewed staff from PBSO, RUNOs, and UNMIL that were very supportive of the active roles played by Prince Zaid and Ambassador Tillander of the PBC. One former senior UNMIL representative was even effusive on the contribution of PBC, stating that, “Liberia is one of the few countries where the PBC actually worked out, particularly during the Second Priority Plan. Prince Zaid and Ambassador Tillander both brought good understanding and sensitivity, and traveled to the country regularly. I think those two Chairs demonstrated the added value that PBC can bring.” These accounts follow the comparative advantages identified in PBF’s Business Plan, noting that, “The Configuration has an important role to play in subsequently discussing and advocating with Governments policy changes and actions that can be taken to ensure positive impact of activities financed by the Fund.”⁴⁴

On the other hand, the evaluation team heard from interviewees that PBC did not meet its intended role of raising additional funding or using its seniority to assert political pressure in support of key political priorities. One senior PBSO staff explained, “Ambassador Tillander was very engaged, he went around talking to everyone. When things went wrong, he even went to Helen Clark and the Executive Director of UNOPS...He really tried to make things better but clearly this wasn’t intended to be his role. The result was that people started mixing up the role of PBC and PBF.” Another senior UNMIL staff reflected that “What PBC prioritizes tends to dominate what PBF support. I respect Prince Zaid’s knowledge of justice and security but feel that part of the issue with the hubs was that technical specialists weren’t listened to enough. The ‘One-Stop-Shop’ idea is nice but shows distinct lack of understanding on how the criminal justice system functions. There are distinct services for distinct phases of the process. They don’t need to be, and often aren’t, physically together.”

One area of PBC performance that interviewees agreed on was that PBC did not sufficiently meet its intended fundraising role, commenting that, “Unfortunately, the SMC has not been able to generate the political interest it deserves. One key reason for limited interest in the SMC is the PBC’s limited ability to mobilize resources, one of PBC’s commitments to the Government.”⁴⁵ A review of primary and secondary sources covering the PBF indicated that the limited fundraising effect of the PBC, or the frustrations raised in the distribution of PBF funds, have been evident in both Liberia and other contexts before. A 2014 review of the PBF found that “A major concern of many interviewees was that the PBC had not been able to systematically mobilize substantial additional resources for PBC countries. Perhaps this expectation is unrealistic in an environment where funds are scarce, especially for ‘aid orphan’ countries. However, PBC’s fundraising problems can place additional pressure on PBF to continue funding in these countries.”⁴⁶

UNCT. Several interviewees also expressed frustration at the uneven distribution of funding between the UNCT. Several interviews with RUNO expressed concern that UNDP received 56 percent of the PBF funding (\$16.7 million of \$30 million overall, see Figure 1) and demonstrated relatively little leadership in managing results or producing tangible outcomes. They felt that significant issues and documented conflict drivers, such as the youth and land, received far too little funding considering the importance and complexity of the topics for supporting Liberia’s continuing transition. Interviewees also felt that the \$4.3 million (nearly 15 percent of overall funding) which specifically focused on PBO and the JSC Secretariat could have been spent on a smaller and much more efficient office. Interviewees also explained that RUNOs are generally used to working on individual projects or with particular implementing partners, and not jointly or thematically. Some respondents also noted that the funds were sometimes channeled toward expenses that did not advance project goals as well as they could have. As one respondent explained “What happens is that people focus on buying equipment, the really visible things, but not focusing on the quality of implementation. There were big flags that the [security and justice] PBF activities weren’t going well—for example, the construction at Gbarnga or the Cheesemanberg prison—but little action was taken.”

Figure 1 Distribution of PBF Funding



A review of previous PBF evaluations and reviews indicated that the process of selecting projects and distributing funding appears to be a recurring challenge across contexts. The 2014 PBF review found that a “recurring concern was that some UN agencies were said to be forwarding proposals developed earlier that did not demonstrate much innovation or adequate peacebuilding specificity. Another was the tendency of some agencies to see the PBF as a pie for all to divide. PBF must balance between an inclusivity that draws expertise from the range of UN agencies in-country, and the desire to target agencies with the most relevant experience and the greatest chance of success.”⁴⁷ This issue was further echoed in a 2013 analysis of nine PBF evaluations: “The evaluations point to the UN system’s apparent difficulty in dividing PBF funding based on a strategic peacebuilding vision rather than taking a ‘divide the pie’ approach (i.e. dividing funds among agencies and projects).”⁴⁸ A 2014 Burundi PBF evaluation also highlighted these issues and provided a useful recommendation for PBSO to “assess the capacity of RUNOs to design, implement, and monitor this distinctive or ‘high quality peacebuilding programming’ before agreeing to provide funding for a specific project” in the future.⁴⁹

Finally, several respondents also expressed disappointment at the role played by the Government. The most common criticism, which is covered in other sections in-depth, was the limited follow-up on financial contributions promised through the 2nd and 3rd PPs. Several interviewees explained that the constant rotation of key government ministers and the lack of a capable and functional civil service significantly impacted the running of their projects. Overall, these interviewees felt that the interaction and collaboration with the Government was ultimately personality-driven and lacked more institutional level commitment, which would have ensured continuity and the sustainability of results. However, after having outlined various frustrations with the inputs provided by government, one UN interviewee reflected, “at the end of the day, I don’t think we can be too disappointed with government, honestly you wouldn’t need PBF if the government was functioning the way it should. If you take a broader view, it’s not like they were spending the money on other priorities. I’ve been here since 2004 and there’s never been an adequate budget to cover all government’s priorities.”

Effectiveness

Finding 6: The data presents a mixed picture of the PBF portfolio’s ability to achieve higher-level results in the priority areas and to address root causes of conflict. There have been some significant accomplishments across many projects. Some projects have also faced challenges in achieving their objectives. Nonetheless, root causes of conflict persist. However, addressing them is a long-term, structural process and therefore it is not realistic to expect that the PBF could resolve them during the span of the three PPs. The PPs did contribute to improving the overall context in Liberia.

The Challenge of Addressing Root Causes of Conflict

Evidence from interviews, project evaluations and reports, JSC annual reports, the current Peacebuilding Plan (prepared at the request of the UN Security Council and completed in April 2017), and other secondary data sources indicate that while progress has been made in achieving higher-level results, the root causes of conflict have yet to be addressed. A public opinion survey conducted in 2016 found that two-thirds of Liberians characterized the country as largely peaceful, but equated peace with the temporary absence of violence; 66 percent of participants describing the current peace as “negative.” Liberians identified corruption (86 percent), land disputes (84 percent), and high youth unemployment (80 percent) as the most potent conflict trigger factors. Furthermore, 60 percent expressed skepticism

regarding reconciliation and 68 percent thought that organizers and perpetrators of violence did not genuinely participate in truth telling and reconciliation.⁵⁰ The National Conflict Mapping Exercise conducted in 2016 likewise found that a number of conflict factors persist in Liberia and that Liberians identify three conflict drivers that continue to present an eminent threat to peace and stability of the country: land/property disputes, corruption, and border/boundary disputes, with land disputes reported as the most important conflict driver in all 15 counties. The Mapping Exercise additionally found that grievances resulting from perceived social injustice (44 percent) and marginalization (25 percent) continue to be important conflict drivers.⁵¹

The 2017 Peacebuilding Plan, developed through a consultative process and led by UNMIL in coordination with the GoL, other donors as well as political parties and CSOs, acknowledges that root causes of the conflict persist. As the Plan points out, “notwithstanding the many gains made in maintaining national peace and security in Liberia, issues identified as root causes of the country’s 14-year civil war remain unaddressed (...) recent assessments show that land disputes, corruption, boundary disputes and concession-related tensions continue to be the main triggers of violence. The lives of many women are particularly insecure owing to societal inequality and sexual and gender-based violence, further weakening social cohesion in communities. Challenges are compounded by limited capacities in the security and rule of law sectors, slow progress in national reconciliation, and limited progress in implementing critical government reforms. Relations between the executive branch of the government and society have improved, but remain strained, owing to the absence of meaningful national reconciliation and a low level of public confidence in justice and security institutions, whose presence remains limited outside of Monrovia.”⁵²

Most of those interviewed during the evaluation made similar assessments. They noted that the PBF did contribute to improving the overall environment in Liberia and pointed to progress in achieving several higher-level peacebuilding results in the areas of security and justice, and reconciliation. PBF support for the decentralization process was seen by respondents as helping to address an important challenge facing post-conflict Liberia although most also noted that the process was still incomplete. The county service centers are now the place to take care of essential business, be it getting a driver’s license, a marriage certificate, or a zoning or land use permit. Most interviewees nonetheless noted that given the many actors, international donors, NGOs, CSOs as well as GoL agencies, it was difficult to assess the exact contribution of the PBF to the progress made.

Among those interviewed for the evaluation, 14 of 54 thought that the portfolio did not achieve higher-level results and 18 interviewees thought that it achieved these results only in part. Respondents from RUNOs, UNMIL, and other donors evaluated PBF’s ability to achieve higher level results much more negatively than did respondents from the government. Although there were a significant percentage of negative assessments in the counties, assessments by Monrovia-based respondents were more negative – only 44 percent of those interviewed in Monrovia thought that the portfolio did achieve higher level results whereas 68 percent of those interviewed in the counties thought it did. Similar dynamics emerged on the question of whether PBF helped address root causes of conflict. Government respondents were significantly more likely to have a positive assessment than respondents from RUNOs, UMMIL, UNHQ other donors or beneficiaries, many also underscored that addressing root causes is a long-term rather than a short- or even medium-term process. The challenges cited included: lack of whole government approach to addressing national reconciliation, only partial move toward implementing recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and the politically difficult nature of tackling some of

the root causes of conflict. Many of the challenges identified in the PPs relating to security and justice, and national reconciliation thus remain works in progress.

Achieving Project Outcomes

Consultations with communities facilitated the achievement of project outcomes. In cases where such consultations did not happen prior to the commencement of the project, this slowed down the implementation. Government officials, CSOs as well as former program participants all pointed to this dynamic in the case of the NYSP program. Because of the lack of prior consultations, community elders initially were suspicious of the volunteers since they did not understand the purpose of the program. Once the program was explained to them, however, they become supportive. Respondents described a similar dynamic in the reaction of elders to the ADR and LCCs programs. However, as one UNMIL official noted, while consultations with the grassroots are important, figuring out who is actually grassroots can be challenging, as many CSOs that donors interact with are not representative of the grassroots.

Factors that limited achievement of outcomes included ones outside of the control of PBF, the GoL or other donors. As noted in the discussion of efficiency, these included the EVD and the decline in global commodity prices on major Liberian exports. Additionally, the poor infrastructure in much of the country, including poor road conditions, made access to project sites more difficult during the rainy season thus hampering progress on activities. Furthermore, if project funding arrived at the beginning of the rainy season, many of the planned activities could not be commenced due to weather conditions. This caused delays and shortened the time-frames in project implementation, reducing the ability to achieve outcomes. Many project reports highlighted these challenges and these were confirmed by interviews in the counties.

Despite these challenges, there is also evidence that the PBF did help build capacity of Liberian peacebuilding actors. In particular, the work of the PBO, the Land Commission, and the Governance Commission at the national level and the Peace Huts, NYSP and LLCs at the local level, made important contributions to peacebuilding. However, several government officials as well as other donors interviewed during the evaluation noted that because PBF funded projects through the RUNOs, there was insufficient attention given to working on improving local capacity. Finally, the financial constraints of the GoL budget have meant that not all projects previously funded by the PBF have continued once that support ended (addressed in detail in the sustainability section). Detailed Project Summaries, including project outcomes and challenges, can be found in Annex E.

Security and Justice

Addressing security and justice was one of the key areas of focus of the PBF portfolio. As with other projects within the portfolio, project outcomes present a mixed picture. While progress was made in several areas and in particular in moving forward with the process of decentralization of security and justice provision, through the establishment of three security and justice hubs and supporting decentralization, there were also significant challenges that affected the achievement of objectives. Originally, five justice and security hubs were planned but in the end, three were established: Hub 1 in Bong Country, Hub 2 in Grand Gedah County and Hub 3 in Maryland County. The Hubs planned for Bomi and Grand Bassa Counties were not constructed.

At the same time, addressing the low capacity and resources in the criminal justice sector has been slow. Progress has been hampered by the existence of a dual justice system, statutory and customary. The statutory court system suffers from backlog of cases, costs and accessibility issues as well as perceptions

that it favors the politically and socially well-connected and the wealthy. Consequently, Liberians have continued to rely on the traditional system to resolve disputes.

As part of its portfolio, PBF therefore funded projects designed to improve the harmonization of the dual legal system in the country and to formulate a National Law Reform Policy Act and supported the constitutional review process. To move forward with harmonizing the customary and statutory legal system, dialogues and consultations with stakeholders, including with traditional leaders, women and youth groups, took place across 11 counties, exceeding the original target of planned consultations. Meetings with the legislature were also held and laws previously passed by the Legislature were collected. However, the project encountered challenges in explaining to stakeholders the goals of the exercise, raising concerns among them that their traditions and beliefs were under threat, highlighting the necessity of involving communities and stakeholders in both the process of project planning and implementation.

Addressing security and justice needs of the population is linked with progress on decentralization reform, which in turn, has been slow as it is connected to the constitutional reform process. Reforming the constitution, however, has been politically contentious and has not yet been completed. This underscores the linkages between the process of decentralization, security and justice reform and national reconciliation. These, linkages, as interviews conducted during the evaluation highlight, have not been as robust as they could have been among the project funded by the PBF. As Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Mission in Liberia, noted in August 2016 while briefing the Security Council, “The failure to robustly pursue reconciliation and delays in structural changes, such as land reform and decentralization, raise a ‘red flag’ about prospects for peace and security.”⁵³

The Security and Justice Hubs

Hub 1 located in Gbarnga, Bong County was set up to service Bong, Lofa and Nimba counties. The hub was designed to be a one-stop shop and involved construction of facilities that would house the different police forces and the courts. Interviews and public opinion survey indicate that the establishment of the hub did have a positive impact on improving access to justice and security in the counties, by moving services outside of Monrovia and closer to those needing the services. The three security and justice hubs established (in Gbarnga, Zwedru and Harper) resulted in additional prosecutors and public defenders being hired, the establishment of SGBV units, and the increased presence of security personnel. Although noting the many challenges facing the hubs, respondents from UNMIL, RUNOs, GoL and CSOs, thought that they made an important contribution to the peacebuilding process. However, respondents from across the stakeholder groups noted that insufficient resources made the hubs less effective than they could have been. Most interviewees pointed out that although the hubs moved the justice and security services from Monrovia to the counties, these services were accessible mostly to those living close to the county capitals and remained distant from more rural residents. Respondents also noted that there was initially insufficient attention paid to the traditional justice system, which is used by majority of Liberians. The addition of ADR approaches to the portfolio was therefore seen as a step in the right direction.

Surveys conducted in the counties covered by Hub 1 (Bong, Lofa and Nimba) show that between 2012 and 2014 more people in these areas felt safer (65 percent versus 80 percent) suggesting that decentralizing security and justice to the counties may have improved security. The surveys, however, also note some challenges that remain. They highlight that shifts in perceptions were not uniformly distributed indicating that progress has been uneven and incomplete. Thus, while 35 percent of respondents in Bong county, in 2014, said that the presence of the police contributes to their sense of safety, only 16 percent agreed with this statement in Lofa and 10 percent in Nimba counties. There was also significant difference in the

perception of police between urban and rural areas with 57 percent of urban dwellers relying on police for their security but only 18 percent of rural residents.⁵⁴ A similar picture emerges from other surveys conducted in Liberia in the past couple of years. The most recent Afrobarometer survey (2014/2015) find that only 32 percent say they have trust in the courts. Perhaps more troubling, the survey registered a decline in this trust since 2008/2009 and 2011/2013 survey rounds, when 45 percent of Liberians said they had trust in the court.⁵⁵ Likewise, only 31 percent expressed trust in the police and 59 percent of those who said they were victims of a crime did not report this to the police.⁵⁶

Those interviewed during the evaluation also noted that the remoteness of many communities limited the achievement of project outcomes. For instance, government officials, CSOs and beneficiaries interviewed in the counties agreed that the formal justice system for many communities is difficult to reach and expensive. Likewise, the police are too far away for many communities to reach and there is no police presence in many areas since police have limited capacities to access these remote communities. As a result, for many communities the establishment of justice and security hubs has changed little in their relationship to the formal justice and security sector and they continue to rely on community policing and traditional mechanisms for resolving conflicts. As one group of beneficiaries in a rural community told the evaluation team, “We have heard about the hub but no one has talked to us about it. We know it is there but not what is inside. We have never gone there. The police have not yet come here. We do not see them and they have not told us what they can do for us.” Interviews and project reports confirmed, that outreach campaigns were not as extensive as they could have been.

At the same time, there were significant construction delays and cost overruns in Hub 1 and these contributed to tensions between UNOPS, who was charged with overseeing the construction process, and the GoL. Interviews confirmed that there was disappointment with the operation of this hub, some of which were attributed to poor construction and design of the hub (crumbling ceilings and floors in some buildings, water pumps that could not function without electricity) and its current operation (insufficient GoL funds to ensure supply of electricity, internet and communications equipment, vehicles and fuel). This has hampered the ability of the various police forces (including the National Liberia Police (LNP) and the Bureau of Naturalization and Immigration (BIN) and the SGBV unit housed there to perform as effectively as they would like and in particular to reach rural communities. The findings of the PBF evaluation thus echoes those of the 2015 PBO evaluation which found that there were still “considerable gaps in the Liberian security sector, especially around issues such as infrastructure, logistics, communications and mobility” and that these were likely to especially impact the LNP and BIN as many of the activities previously undertaken by UNMIL would fall to these two security agencies” affecting the effectiveness of the projects.⁵⁷

The challenges associated with the construction of Hub 1 led to rethinking of how best to decentralize security and justice to the counties. As a result, the focus of Hub 2 and Hub 3 shifted away from building of infrastructure to improving service provision, with additional prosecutors and public defenders sent to Hub 3 in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh and Hub 2 in Harper, Maryland. The recognition of the need to enhance service provision also resulted in adding an SGBV unit in Hub 1. At the same time, PBF recognized the importance of incorporating support of ADR and traditional justice mechanisms for resolving conflicts to relieve pressure on the court system and to provide communities with the opportunity to avoid adversarial formal processes and rather rely on systems that facilitate maintaining and/or restoring communal relationships. This shift in emphasis by PBF was cited by most of those interviewed by the evaluation team as evidence of PBF’s ability to respond to feedback, adapt and be flexible. At the same time, those interviewed for the evaluation pointed out that infrastructure and service provision should

not be separate but rather, that improving access to security and justice involves both. As one GoL official outside of Monrovia pointedly noted, you cannot provide adequate legal representation while working out of a car because there is inadequate office space. Therefore, right-sizing infrastructure (for instance by utilizing existing facilities) was viewed as an alternative to large scale infrastructure construction.

National Reconciliation

The process of national reconciliation in Liberia has moved forward but implementation has been slower than anticipated. Initially, a major challenge has been the many different actors and programs that have sought to promote national reconciliation. This has resulted in a lack of unified strategy and duplication of efforts. The development and adoption of the JSC-supported Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation was designed to address these problems and to promote “coherence of institutions, structures, systems, mechanisms and human resources mobilized to foster national healing and reconciliation and build sustainable peace.”⁵⁸ Respondents thought that PBF’s support of projects improved conflict resolution and reconciliation processes at the community level, in particular the Palava Huts, Community Peace Committees (CPCs), LCCs as well as Peace Huts and NYSP (discussed in section 9 of the report), improved conflict resolution and reconciliation processes at the community level. However, those interviewed also noted that there was duplication of effort among these projects and that they would have benefited from greater coordination and synergies.

The “Community-based Truth Telling and Atonement Project,” or Palava Hut project (October 2013 to December 2016) aimed to provide a public forum where victims of past violence and human rights violations could talk about their experiences and where perpetrators of these abuses could acknowledge and seek forgiveness for their actions. These encounters could be instrumental in facilitating healing in communities. One CSO representative in Grand Gedeh County interviewed for this evaluation discussed the powerful experience of a former female warlord coming to the truth-telling session and asking the community for forgiveness.

PBF funding to this program supported the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR) which worked with local communities to set up the Palava process, including providing psychological support to victims of violence and working on a process for selecting the Palava Hut Committees. The project supported two pilot Palava Hut processes: one in Grand Gedeh County in 2016 and one in Lofa County in 2017.⁵⁹ However, there were significant delays in conducting the ethnographic study and logistical challenges, primarily resulting from inadequate means of transportation which made it difficult to reach victims in rural areas. Project staff also reported that delays in disbursement of funds from the UNDP to the CSOs working on public outreach and psychosocial counseling strained relationships with these groups.

“Strengthening Local/Traditional Mechanisms for Peace at County and District Level” which ran from November 2014 until December 2016 aimed at strengthening and institutionalizing local capacity of CPCs to prevent, manage and resolve local conflicts in local communities and to strengthen social cohesion. Through a small grants program, the project also sought to facilitate access to funds for local CPCs and other community organizations to help strengthen conflict prevention and resolution dialogues. The project did succeed in establishing peace structures in 14 counties and local CPCs became more engaged in resolving community disputes. Lofa County CPCs helped reduce the recurrent cycles of violence between Muslim and Christian communities as well the conflict between Golden Veloreum Palm Oil plantation and the neighboring community. At the same time, the project established early warning and response centers in the Gbarnga, Zwedru and Harper hubs. Early warning training was conducted across the country and project evaluation found that at least 30 potential violent conflicts were prevented as a

result. As in other projects, however, there were significant challenges affecting implementation. The proportion of alerts that resulted in early response fell below the target rate of 60 percent, and reached only 45 percent by 2016. There were also delays in recruitment of staff and consequently delays in initiating project activities, lack of vehicles that would allow staff to reach communities, bureaucratic bottlenecks affected the plan approval timelines, and the EVD delayed project implementation.

“Support to the Establishment of a Land Disputes Prevention and Resolution System in Liberia,” ran in two phases: phase one from December 2011 to June 2013, and phase two from October 2013 to June 2015. The projects focused on designing and establishing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms at the local level and in phase two gathering data on land conflicts to inform central policy-making processes. Conflicts over land contributed to the Liberian civil war and continue to be the key sources of disputes in the country. Building up capacity at the local level to prevent and resolve disputes over land was therefore a key means of addressing the root causes of conflict. In addition, data collected about local land conflicts was to facilitate central policymaking aimed at preventing and resolving future conflicts over land. In public opinion surveys, Liberians consistently point to land disputes and conflicts as one of the key factors driving communal tensions. In fact, about 90 percent of civil court cases are related to land issues and over 60 percent of violent conflicts are estimated to relate to land ownership and land access. As one government official interviewed during the evaluation put it, “if there is a war again, it will be over land rights.”

The results of the projects have been mixed. The Land Commission has been strengthened and its administrative capacity has improved; six LCCs were established and more than 500 dispute mediation practitioners have been trained by the Land Commission. However, the roll out of the project in phase one was slower and less successful than expected. This was due to inadequate methodology for identifying existing community mediators. Because the training did not include local leaders, their willingness to cooperate with the LCCs was reduced, underscoring the crucial role that community consultations and buy-in play in the success of peacebuilding projects. The outreach education and awareness activities have improved government officials and people’s understanding of their land rights. By the conclusion of the second phase of the project (in 2015), 98.5 percent of government officials and 68 percent of the population were aware of their land rights, exceeding the target rate of 70 percent and 45 percent respectively. By 2015 1,250 cases were brought in and 177 of them were resolved (41 percent were reported by women). Consequently, people have been more frequently utilizing ADR mechanisms, thus reducing the backlog of cases in the courts. Unfortunately, once PBF funding ended, the GoL was unable to continue financing all the LCCs and currently only one remains operational. Additionally, effectively addressing land conflicts has been hampered by the slow process of implementing the new land law which, as several respondents pointed out, remains incomplete. Interviewees who spoke about the law were divided about whether the legislature would pass the law prior to the October 2017 elections. Several government officials expressed confidence in the law passing, noting that for many representatives this has become an important campaign issue. Others, including respondents from other donors and CSOs, remained deeply skeptical about the ability of the legislature to pass the law in the next few months and some felt senators had little incentive to do so.⁶⁰

Overall, national reconciliation remains an incomplete process. As one interviewee put it, “I don’t think there is aggregate impact (that PBF had) on reconciliation, but there have been some smaller results.” In addition to the reasons discussed above, what accounts for the slow progress on national reconciliation, according to interviews and documents reviewed for the evaluation, has been its politically sensitive nature. Consequently, the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) have not been fully implemented. Although a few cases have been pursued abroad, there have been no prosecutions in Liberia of human rights violations committed during the war and despite the TRC’s recommendation, a number of politicians remain in power. As an ACCORD study noted, “it could be argued that the [TRC] report had the paradoxical effect of eroding public confidence in the justice system, and – by extension – faith in the state itself.”⁶¹ Finally, although there have been numerous efforts to address national reconciliation, including those funded by the PBF, these tend to be fragmented and project-oriented thus lacking an overall holistic and strategic vision. The evaluation revealed that there were shortfalls when it came to the sustainability of the projects (discussed in the sustainability section of this report) and interviews highlighted concerns about the relatively limited reach of the projects with many communities not incorporated into the peacebuilding process. This has led to what one respondent termed the emergence of negative peace where the armed conflict had stopped but reconciliation had not yet taken place. Thus, the evaluation found mixed results on portfolio’s achievement of the three national reconciliation results framework outcomes.

Finding 7: PBF developed and supported innovative approaches to peacebuilding and was willing to take risks to support activities that promoted peacebuilding. In particular, it was willing to support activities that promoted national reconciliation even though projects such as those focused on truth telling were politically charged.

Development and Support for Innovative Peacebuilding Approaches

Reviews of annual project progress reports, JSC Annual Reports and other secondary sources indicate that PBF took risks and supported innovative approaches to peacebuilding. Risk taking/innovation is one of the categories that the annual project progress reports assesses, and these consistently note positive examples with 14 of the 16 projects supported by PBF indicating project innovation.

There was broad agreement among the respondents that PBF took risks and developed innovative approaches to peacebuilding. RUNO and UNMIL respondents had the most positive assessments of these aspects of PBF’s work. Although the differences were small, more respondents at the county level had a less positive assessment of PBF’s risk taking and innovation. Among the innovative approaches that PBF supported were: placing the PBO within Ministry of Internal Affairs, creating LCCs to facilitate peaceful resolution of land disputes, and promoting gender equity and women’s empowerment through Peace Huts and Savings and Loans programs. One of the most frequently cited innovations was the development of the Hubs that brought together various police and judicial services at the county level.

Among the examples of risks that PBF was willing to take was its support for national reconciliation activities. In particular, interviewees pointed to the Palava Huts project, which tackled the politically charged issue of truth telling as part of the national reconciliation processes. The project, through the ethnographic forums, provided an unprecedented setting for traditional leaders, elders, women, youth, and persons with disabilities to sit together for the first time to discuss traditional Palava Hut mechanisms and processes and how they could be incorporated into the National Palava Hut system.⁶² Respondents

also noted the NYSP which deliberately placed young university and technical school graduates outside their home communities to promote social cohesion and conflict resolution.

Finding 8: PBF played an important role in filling critical peacebuilding gaps and had catalytic effects when it came to facilitating the acceleration of peacebuilding efforts at the community level. However, it was less effective in bringing in additional donor financing and ensuring sustainability of the projects it had supported. Respondents from across the UN in particular noted that the catalytic impact of the PBF in terms of attracting other donors' funds was not as great as they would have liked to see and this affected the sustainability of the programs.

Catalytic Effects: Funding by Other Donors

The picture is mixed regarding the catalytic effects of PBF funding. Catalytic effects fell into two categories: 1) unblocking and accelerating relevant peace processes; and 2) attracting funding from other donors. The portfolio was more successful in generating catalytic effects in the first category and less successful in the second. Reviews of annual project progress reports, JSC Annual Reports and other secondary sources confirm that PBF took risks and supported innovative approaches to peacebuilding. On the other hand, while PBF did manage to catalyze some subsequent donor support, officials from the RUNOs and UNMIL interviews during the evaluation noted that this catalytic effect was not what it could and should have been and expressed disappointment that other donors did not come in with the same level of enthusiasm that those working at the UN had. As one UNMIL official put it, "I think PBF needs to scream from the rooftops a bit more that they need others to come in behind them" so that funding for projects is maintained and does not dry up when PBF funding stops. Furthermore, as UNMIL noted in a 2015 paper that, "the relatively broad scope of the various projects, together with the comparatively limited funding provided to similar initiatives by other donors in the above-mentioned three prioritized areas, funding from PBF is now generally considered to be a regular funding source rather than small, targeted interventions aimed to be catalytic."⁶³

Funding by Other Donors

- Additional funding of \$34,000 from UNMIL Quick Impact to train and set up peace structures along 25 Liberian border communities to promote peace and security. The project also attracted additional funding from UNICEF to train and set up peacebuilding structures in 90 communities in six counties where social cohesion was being promoted. A number of conflict issues including boundary disputes have been resolved. The GoL has also promised to allocate resources in its 2018/2019 fiscal budget for the PBO.
- Under the first tranche funding the NYSP had key catalytic effects in terms of financial leverage, with the Government of Australia contributing \$800,000 to the program, primarily to support the equipping and operationalizing of the nation's 10 youth centers that would become hubs for youth development. Further funding came from the Government of the Netherlands, which provided funds to upscale the NYSP to two additional counties, provide bridge funding for a program extension until the end of the 2013 school year, and cover induction training. WFP also supported the agricultural sector. In 2013 the program also started new partnerships with the Peace Corps and USAID's Food and Enterprise Development (FED). Overall, UNICEF \$390,000; AusAid \$800,000; WFP \$425,000; Netherlands

(PBEA) contributed \$786,000 to the NYSP Phase 1 and UNICEF/AusAid/PBEA contributed \$800,000 to Phase 2 of the program.

- The Early Warning Working Group coordinated by the PBO received funds from Humanity United through Trust Africa to support the network, which comprised of 34 CSOs, selected government response actors and UNMIL.
- The African Center for Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) based in Durban, South Africa, has been collaborated with PBO in the area of training. It has contributed \$329,977. Eighty-three (46 in 2014 and 37 in 2015) persons from CSOs, government and universities in Liberia have been trained in conflict analysis, peacebuilding and conflict mapping, ahead of a major conflict analysis and mapping exercise across the country in 2016. Irish Aid has also opted to work with the PBO on this exercise. With funding from UNICEF in the amount of PBO reactivated, trained and deployed 75 Junior National Volunteers (JNVs) and 750 community Peace Committee members in 75 communities.
- The PBF funds and initiation of support to the constitutional review process catalyzed \$1.8 million in support from USAID as co-founder to the process. To date with the proposals at the level of the legislature, other partners such as the EU and German have indicated tentative support for post-endorsement phase to enable civic education of the agreed propositions and to possible support the holding of referendum.
- Sweden contributed \$600,000 to construct six courts, including three in Hub 1, and additional to support the JSTF and SGBV joint program.
- USAID's LCRP project provided training and logistical support for some the LCCs.

Catalytic Effects: Unblocking and Accelerating Peace Processes

On the other hand, the annual project progress reports consistently indicate positive examples of catalytic effects that create conditions to unblock and accelerate relevant peacebuilding processes. Annual progress reports indicate that all 16 projects had some catalytic effects. The PBF has also been instrumental in supporting essential reforms such as land reform and constitutional reform. Nonetheless, as noted in finding 6, national reconciliation has been a slow and as of now, an incomplete process.

Respondents from across stakeholder groups thought that PBF support had catalytic effects in terms of facilitating the acceleration of peacebuilding efforts at the community level through its funding of Peace Huts, Palava Huts, Peace Committees, LCCs, and the NYSP. These various projects have provided opportunities for young people and women to become more directly engaged in peacebuilding and conflict resolution work and gave them a greater voice in community decision making processes. In some cases, even when the funding for the projects ended, some of the activities that they supported have continued. For instance, several government officials pointed out that although the NYSP is no longer running, youth centers that had been constructed continue to offer a place for young people to talk about peace, receive skills training and engage in sports. Many other activities, however, have ceased. The challenge of sustaining PBF funded projects was consistently noted by respondents across stakeholder groups.

PBF projects filled critical peacebuilding gaps through support for the Security and Justice Hubs, community-level conflict resolution projects, the LC, and governance reform. A few government respondents also pointed to the key role that support for the NIHRC played in enabling the Commission to expand its work into the counties. Although it took a long time to complete, they agreed that the

ethnographic study conducted prior to the start of the Palava Huts was essential and it allowed for greater inclusion of women in the project. LCCs helped resolve a lot of land disputes that otherwise would have gone to court.

Many projects supported by the PBF were short-term by design, such as awareness-raising campaigns to inform communities about the services provided by the Security and Justice Hubs. However, this short lifespan reduced their effectiveness as they reached only a limited number of communities. As a senior UNMIL interviewee put it, “The funding was like drops in the ocean.” Respondents from RUNOs and implementing partners noted that the scope of the projects was often too ambitious for the limited period allotted for their implementation. Most projects needed extensions to fulfill all of the planned outputs.

Gender and Youth

Finding 9: PBF took steps to ensure gender mainstreaming in its portfolio and to address issues of youth and women’s empowerment, although the focus was more on increasing the number of female participants than on the quality of that participation. A number of the PBF supported programs improved women’s understanding of their legal rights and their participation in community decision-making process. The PBF also supported programs that aimed at empowering youth, which were effective. However, PBF missed an opportunity for broadening the scope of the youth targeted.

Addressing Needs of Women

Trends emerging from interviews show that while there were improvements in addressing the needs of women, youth and other vulnerable populations, there is still much more that can be done to improve the lives of these groups. Respondents from all stakeholder groups interviewed agreed that PBF supported gender-responsive peacebuilding and most thought that PBF support helped address women’s needs in post-conflict Liberia as well as contribute to improving gender equity. Those interviewed in the counties were especially positive in these assessments, while interviewees in Monrovia were more mixed in their appraisal (91% of those interviewed in the counties thought that PBF did address these needs, whereas 60% of those interviewed in Monrovia were of this opinion, with 30% saying that PBF did so only partially). Although the first PP did not include gender as a consideration, the 2nd and 3rd PP corrected this. Consequently, there were many programs that focused on supporting women empowerment, including: The Peace Huts, village savings and loans program, setting up SGBV units, and efforts to raise women’s awareness of their legal rights. There were also efforts to maintain gender balance in other PBF-funded programs. PBF Annual Progress reports and other reports from RUNOs also show that there has been progress on outcomes targeting women. For example, the final report assessing the Gender Equity and Women’s Economic Empowerment in the Liberia program, found “significant long-term impacts on the economic and social wellbeing of women participating in the programme, including increased business stability and profits, women’s greater economic independence and control over income earned, greater respect from their partners and the community, and increased access to services and information.”⁶⁴

The funding for gender programming exceeded the 15 percent mandated threshold. However, most respondents from the government, UNMIL, UNHQ and other donors, voiced concerns that too much attention was focused on the numbers, ensuring that women were included, then on the quality of their participation. As one donor put it, “You meet a target but I am not sure that translates into meaningful empowerment.”

Government officials and CSO respondents pointed out that the Palava Hut project made a specific effort to ensure the inclusion of women, youth and people with disabilities. The ethnographic study that was

conducted before the start of the pilot program proved to be a very useful document that made project planners realize that their strategies for including women were inadequate. As a result, greater emphasis was placed on encouraging women to take on leadership roles and that in turn encouraged other women to come forward and to participate.

Through participation in projects such as Peace Huts and through awareness campaigns, women were better able to understand their rights and to more effectively advocate on their own and their children's behalf. The PBF-funded "Community-based Conflict Management – Women as Peace-Makers and Nation Builders" project (October 2013-December 2016), supported through UN Women the establishment of Peace Huts, with the aim of improving the ability of women to participate more effectively in local and national decision-making processes and advancing women's empowerment. By 2016, 17 Peace Huts were established and 2,270 women were trained in peacebuilding and leadership skills. The final evaluation of the project found lower levels of domestic violence, improved relationships with local security forces, increased female civic participation and increased feeling of self-worth in areas with Peace Huts.⁶⁵ Female beneficiaries interviewed reported keeping their daughters in school longer and postponing the age of marriage although these assessments could not be verified. While overall, the project met many of its objectives, nonetheless it also experienced delays in construction of peace huts and in the release of funds to implementing partners. One of the peace huts the evaluation team visited, although constructed, was never formally opened according to the women participating in the project.

Trends emerging from interviews, reports and secondary sources, show that while there have been improvements in addressing the needs of women, there is still much more that needs to be done to improve their lives. SGBV support units working in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection provided much needed legal and psychosocial support to victims, allowing more women to come forward and report cases of sexual violence. Nonetheless, SGBV violence remains high, including domestic violence and female genital mutilation (FGM).⁶⁶ Furthermore, the 2015 PBO evaluation found that "gender mainstreaming and a human rights-based approach included in the project proposals are weak in general terms and could have benefitted from some collaborations." A detailed review of documents produced or reviewed by the PBO addressing gender issues, showed that "15 out of 33 (45%) do not include any reference to gender issues; and only 6 address gender issues systematically (18%). Finally, the evaluation noted, that "the PBO has managed to introduce some gender-sensitive elements in its M&E work, as is the case of the Public Perception Surveys on J&S, although this is not done systematically."⁶⁷

Addressing the Needs of Youth

PBF supported addressing the needs of youth through a variety of projects, most directly by providing funding to the National Youth Service Program (NYSP) for Peace and Development during both 2nd and 3rd PP. The project aimed at empowering youth and enhancing their ability to achieve sustainable livelihoods and thus contribute to improving social cohesion and peace. During the life of the project, National Volunteers (NV) were placed in 12 counties where they worked as teachers, assisted in health facilities and worked in agriculture and with local government, managed youth centers, and conducted outreach and learning activities. By providing additional talents in schools, they improved the quality of education in the communities. Their presence, project evaluations found, also had a positive impact on social dynamics within the communities in which they lived and worked. For instance, the incidence of domestic violence was reduced and various community conflicts, including those related to land issues, were more effectively addressed. Their work also filled critical gaps in the health care sector which was especially evident during the EVD. In the agricultural sector, volunteers worked with at risk youth, mentoring and

training them for employment and livelihoods. In 2013 there were 315 volunteers (235 men and 80 women); in 2014 there were 485 (351 men and 134 women); and in 2015 there were 300 (198 men and 102 women). Despite these numbers, the NYSP did not meet its target rate of 490 volunteers (335 men and 155 women).

The NYSP was cited by many respondents from the government, RUNOs, CSOs and former participants in the program as addressing the needs of youth and women. Of all the participants, 34 percent were female even though, as several government respondents noted, there were challenges involved in recruitment of female volunteers as many were concerned about their personal safety when placed away from family. A few respondents noted the NYSP program's success at placing young female university graduates in remote, rural communities. Here they served as powerful role models for young girls. Similarly, one of the key impacts of the program was the bridging of the divides between Monrovia and the countryside and between communities in different parts of the country. By placing young people in communities not of their origin, the program contributed to the strengthening of the sense of belonging and national unity where little such national unity may have existed before and where tribal and ethnic allegiances were often more important. Furthermore, by working with CPCs to establish community peace clubs, the program contributed to improving dispute resolution mechanisms at the local level.

However, the program faced some challenges, specifically during the shift from a UN-managed program to one managed by the GoL, through its Ministry of Youth and Sports, which caused delays in program implementation. The program also experienced delays in disbursement of salaries and some of the project beneficiaries interviewed noted that there was inadequate support in case of health or other personal emergencies. Additionally, although in some cases, the activities continued after the projects ended through the services provided by youth centers a number of beneficiaries and government officials interviewed expressed concern that in many other instances there was no funding available for them to remain in their communities and thus some of the improvements the communities experienced during the project were reversed. For instance, scaling up education offerings from junior high school to senior high school level, were not sustained, contributing to community grievances.

Despite NYSP program's successes, challenges in addressing the needs of youth and other vulnerable groups also persist. Young people under 35 constitute most of the Liberian population. Currently, "Less than one-fifth of the labor force is in paid employment, and nearly 80 percent of the labor force is in vulnerable employment with the level at around 94 percent for rural women."⁶⁸ Addressing the needs of youth in a more holistic fashion was noted as a missed opportunity according to many of those interviewed during the evaluation. Many respondents from RUNOs, other donors, CSOs and government indicated that youth and in particular young men are often the key group involved in sometimes violent confrontations. While the situation has improved significantly since the end of the civil war, high unemployment rates among young people and limited opportunities mean that their grievances could be mobilized for conflict, a concern in the run up to the October 2017 elections. Recent public opinion surveys confirm that this concern is widespread. In one survey, 58.2 percent Liberians identified unemployed youth as one of the key potential conflict instigators.⁶⁹

Sustainability

Finding 10: Some PBF programs have been sustained but not at the same quality levels. Due to the economic impact of Ebola and the drop in the global price of Liberia's two main commodities, the GoL does not have the funds to sustain most PBF programs. The risk that the Government's budget would not be able to sustain the programs was captured in the 2nd PP. GoL stakeholders spoke highly of the PFB Liberia's programs and of a desire to continue them. The future of the programs will be determined by the priorities of the new administration, which takes office in January 2018. They are also largely dependent on action by the National Legislature to pass a series of Acts which will legalize the reforms undertaken by the Liberia PBF.

Most respondents were lukewarm regarding the prospect for sustainability of PBF Liberia initiatives. The largest impediment to sustainability has been the lack of fiscal space within Liberia's national budget to carry on the programs. Where staff were hired to support specific programs, GoL has continued to pay salaries but it cannot afford to fund operations. Programs for which the GoL did not commit to fund salaries have ceased to operate. Despite a desire to sustain the PBF initiatives, a recession and competing budget priorities limit the Government's abilities.

PBF-Supported Activities that Continue to Operate

The Gbarnga, Zwedru and Harper Hubs all remain operational. They are staffed by civil servants and are providing services to the public. Interviewees noted that due to funding constraints, their operations have been scaled back and their effectiveness reduced. Electricity, transportation, and fuel are in short supply. The morale of hub service providers has declined due to the lack of resources to do their jobs. Nonetheless, they remain dedicated to their jobs and committed to the hub concept.

By an act of the National Legislature, the LC has transitioned to the Land Authority, a one-stop-shop entity to manage all land-related matters. The Authority will consolidate responsibilities that are currently under the purview of multiple GoL ministries and agencies. This process is currently on-going. To be fully functional, the Land Authority is awaiting the passage of the Land Rights Act by the legislature, which is stalled.

The Law Reform Commission continues to operate. It is working with the UN to rewrite antiquated laws as well as to carry out constitutional reform.

The INHRC is operational. In March 2017, it dedicated a memorial on the site of a mass grave on Du-Port Road in Paynesville. At this occasion, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf remarked that the memorialization was the start of a "process of everyone re-dedicating themselves to peace, national reconciliation and development of the Liberian Nation."⁷⁰ She thanked the PBF for its contribution to the memorial and called upon the INHRC to identify additional sites for future memorials.

There are also CPCs around the country that support Peace Huts and training in economic empowerment. Many of the CPCs became self-sustaining after the end of the PBF funding.

Commitment of the GoL to Sustaining the Results

While there is strong government commitment to the ideals and programs of the PBF, overall confidence across stakeholders is mixed. Interviewees indicated that the government recognizes the importance of

the programs and the impact it had in communities around the country but its ability to sustain them is constrained.

Respondents noted two challenges that stand in the way of continued support for PBF activities: fiscal constraints and the National Legislature's slow process for passing legislation. The GoL simply does not have the funds to meet all its PBF commitments and to address other demands, such as education and health care. It has maintained all staff hired to staff PBF programs but lacks budget flexibility to fund much more. As for the passage of laws, as of August 2017, the Legislature has not passed the Land Rights Bill nor has it addressed the work of the Law Reform Commission. Until the Legislature acts, progress on land reform and law reform activities is on hold.

Extent of Close-Out Sustainability Considered During Design

During the planning phase, there was general agreement that the GoL would be responsible for taking over and sustaining PBF initiatives. Beyond such generalities, interviewees admitted that close-out sustainability was not discussed during design. One UN respondent highlighted an unspoken and largely agreed-upon belief that the government operated with the expectation that donors would continue to fund PBF activities after close-out, and thus it did not plan to take over. This belief that the Government could not sustain the programs is supported by the 2nd PP, which notes the following risk: "The Statement of Mutual Commitment clearly states that the GoL will invest its own resources to sustain operational needs of the hubs, as well as to gradually increase the sustained presence of justice and security institutions nationwide. This is a real challenge, however, given that the overall annual budget in Liberia is in the range of 380,000,000 USD."

This statement suggests that in 2011, prior to implementation of the 2nd PP, planners were aware of the budget constraints the government faced. The risk that the GoL might not be able to sustain PBF activities was considered real and rated high but the program went forward despite this risk. To mitigate this risk, a plan was devised for the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and Ministry of Finance (MoF) to agree on a sustainability plan that would "allow the Government to gradually phase in assumptions of the recurrent costs for the hubs and other operational needs of justice and security institutions." The plan called for financial milestones to be set and reflected in the national budget, starting in 2012. The JSC was tasked with monitoring these financial milestones.

It is unclear to what extent the above actions were taken but the Ebola outbreak and the recession made GoL's delivery on the agreement an impossibility. For instance, the government had to divert the \$3 million it had committed to support for the Reconciliation Roadmap to address Ebola. Further, the 2017 Peacebuilding Plan notes: "low commodity prices for primary exports and the outbreak of the Ebola virus disease have limited economic growth, undermining high expectations for a speedy post-war recovery and the delivery of peace dividends."⁷¹ In short, the state has been forced into austerity and cannot accommodate adding PBS programs to the national budget.

However, respondents did note that GoL was committed to supporting activities. In particular, several government officials interviewed pointed to the plan outlined in the Local Governance Act, which is under consideration in the legislature, to establish a PBO in the Ministry of Local Governance, as a good example of government's political commitment to peacebuilding. Another example noted was the Independent National Human Rights Commission which conducted human rights education and training, handled complaints and oversaw investigations, as well as sent out human rights monitors into the field, showing their commitment to the national reconciliation process. On the other hand, UNHQ, UNMIL, and RUNO respondents in particular noted that some reforms, and especially those related to the national

reconciliation, proceeded slowly in part because they are politically difficult. Secondary sources offer a wide range of views regarding the political commitment of the Liberian government to the reform agenda, including PBF supported activities. Many, however, verify that the Liberian government has faced political challenges in implementing reforms in the priority areas.

Examples of Government financial support to date:

- Allocated \$500,000 in its 2014/2015 budget for Hubs 1, 2, and 3 to support the Justice and Security program.
- Contributed in-kind to support PBF’s constitutional reform activities.
- Committed \$3 million to support the “Reconciliation Roadmap” although this intended funding was eventually diverted to the Ebola response.
- Contributed in kind to supporting the PBO.
- Contributed in kind by providing office space, electricity and water, a meeting hall and security to the Extension and Functioning of the GoL Peacebuilding Office/PBF Secretariat and for Monitoring and Evaluation of the PBF Portfolio and Projects.
- Contributed in kind to the “Support to the Liberia Peacebuilding Office for coordination, monitoring & evaluation, communication and capacity building in conflict management” project.
- Contributed in kind by providing office space, electricity and water, meeting hall, and security to "Strengthening Local / Traditional Mechanisms for Peace at County and District level" project.
- Contributed in kind to the “Enhancing Access to Justice and Supporting National Capacities for Structured Legal Drafting" project.
- Contributed \$450,000 to the Justice and Security Joint Program.
- The Independent National Human Rights Commission is operational.
- The Law Reform Commission continues to operate.
- The Land Authority was created by an act of the National Legislature and is sustained by the national budget.

Finding 11: Future programs can be more impactful by having a longer implementation period and putting greater emphasis on close-out sustainability. Improvements in the administration of the Secretariat might also lead to greater stakeholder engagement.

Suggestions for Better Engaging and Securing the Commitment of Government

Several UNCT respondents felt that the time allocated for the PBF Liberia programs was too short to make an impact. One senior UNMIL official felt a minimum of five years is needed for any program to gain traction. While the charter of the PBF focuses on short term catalytic funding, the reality is a series of PPs that result in long term commitment. In future activities, a longer-term commitment should be considered to allow for improved planning and budgeting and to give activities a realistic shot at sustainability. Program implementers felt challenged to deliver results on the existing project lifespans. Additionally, the requirement to spend approximately 9-12 months updating a Priority Plan results in a loss in time gains, human resources (potentially), and institutional knowledge.

Planning should also start with a consideration of what is sustainable by the government. An analysis of the human and financial capacity of the government at the onset, would allow for the development of plans that can be absorbed into the national budget.

Suggestions of Better Engagement with Other Donors and Partners to Ensure Sustainability

Many UNCT interviewees felt the JSC could have been better utilized. Many felt the PBO-led JSC Secretariat was not as responsive as they'd like it to have been. On the contrary, many GoL program managers praised the PBO and said it was instrumental to ensuring that PBF reporting was completed properly and in a timely manner. It is quite possible that the small PBO staff was stretched too thin and were perceived as supporting Government reporting at the expense of the JSC responsibilities. In part, this is a function of the PBO's terms of reference. The project document that established the PBO in 2009 states the PBO was established to perform two major functions: i) act as the PBF Secretariat with specific roles and responsibilities, accountable to the JSC and the PBSO; and ii) to serve as the Office of the GoL to ensure implementation of Government peacebuilding programs and projects are carried out through conflict sensitive approach. That is one of the reasons why PBO was required to periodically analyze implementation of the PRS with respect to the application of conflict sensitivity. The small size of the Secretariat stretched its capacity constraints and made it difficult for the PBO to deliver. Ensuring a strong, capacitated Secretariat could have improved the functioning of JSC and improved engagement with other donors and partners and ultimately could have led to greater sustainability.

Ways of Better Engaging with CSOs or Local Communities

Civil society members were less likely to have faith in the sustainability of PBF programs. They are also the stakeholders that were most critical about a lack of inclusive consultations. CSOs voiced a desire for greater involvement in the future planning process and to be engaged in efforts to monitor and evaluate programs. Local CSOs have roots in and connections with the communities they operate. They believe they can serve as conduits for engaging with local stakeholders and for obtaining their feedback regarding the impact of programs.

There is also a need for sustained community engagement regarding programs and activities meant to benefit them. Several interviewees indicated that far too often, consultation is a "one-and-done" activity. To be effective, consultations should be routine. Ideally, this is the job of the Public Support and Outreach Officer but by working with CSOs in the community, presumably, a wider group of community beneficiaries can be engaged.

Conclusions

Relevance

PBF Liberia programs were timely and relevant and filled gaps and met unmet needs. The PBF was also responsible for the first tangible actions towards decentralization of governance. Prior to its implementation, governance was concentrated in Monrovia while today, service delivery is being planned at the county level. PBF activities have also been aligned to national and sector plans drafted and/or endorsed by the GoL.

The PBF helped to raise key peacebuilding priorities, even if funding was an issue. The PBF was a precursor to Liberia getting on the agenda of the PBC, pushed for national discussions on peacebuilding priorities, raised the visibility of peacebuilding as a national issue, and dealt with justice, security, and reconciliation as top development priorities.

The PBF also tried to address the root cause of fragility. Finding solutions to land conflicts, decentralizing security services outside Monrovia, and increasing access to justice nationwide were priorities set at the initial stages. Realizing that the plans were incomplete, efforts to promote reconciliation and improve gender equity were added. Nationwide, respondents agreed that the PBF had a positive impact.

Efficiency

PBF provided a fast response in terms of developing the two PPs considering the requirements of the PRF mechanism such as conducting a careful conflict analysis; developing an overarching, strategic peacebuilding framework; and ensuring a strong country-level buy-in. Once the PPs were developed, funding was immediately reserved for each outcome and all 23 MTPFO transfers were made within five days of projects being approved. PBF also demonstrated its commitment to providing a fast response by using a “quick start” mechanism to provide \$4 million to facilitate the start of construction at the Gbarnga Hub.

However, the portfolio was hampered by several important inefficiencies at the project level caused by both significant external factors but also by preventable internal issues. The EVD outbreak in 2014 had an undeniable negative impact on the ability of RUNOs to implement projects, with most forced to completely stop their activities during the height of the outbreak. However, the EVD outbreak is not the only factor explaining why 13 of 16 projects across the portfolio ended up needing extensions (two projects under 2nd PP and 11 projects under PP3).

While several inefficiencies could have been mitigated through improved planning and design—such as streamlining internal procurement and administrative practices or ensuring that key activities were not scheduled to take place during Liberia’s long and intense rainy season—the most significant inefficiencies were caused by issues related to shortcomings in leadership, oversight, and coordination. The evaluation found that these issues were not the fault of any individual actor but a shared shortcoming across key stakeholders in both Liberia and New York. Interviewees consistently highlighted an inability across the portfolio to ensure consistent and coherent messages across the different actors involved, as well as highlighted several missed opportunities for ensuring more effective oversight and accountability. Additional evidence from PBF reviews and past evaluations highlight that these appear to be recurring issues and that PBF needs to reconsider and more clearly articulate the roles, responsibilities, and

functions of the PBC, JSC, PBO and JSC Secretariat, UNCT, UN peacekeeping missions, and the involvement of PBSO itself.

There was a strong consensus that the two PPs were aligned and complementary. Interviewees also widely agreed that the three thematic areas addressed by the PPs—security, justice, and reconciliation—were strategically the most important for supporting Liberia’s transition from 2011 to 2016 and even going forward. PBF also demonstrated a considerable degree of flexibility and adaptability to respond to major changes in its operating environment and lessons learned from the construction of the Gbarnga Hub. While both interviewees and project documents stated that PBF could go even further, 96 percent of interviews conducted acknowledge that PBF had shown a willingness to be flexible and adapt project work plans to respond to contextual changes. This included a few instances of diverting funding to supporting the EVD response, mostly limited to the NYSP, and granting no-cost extensions to the vast majority of projects, recognizing the severe limitation the EVD had on implementation during the original timelines. PBF should also be recognized for providing “exceptional approvals” to extend both PBO and the JSC Secretariat beyond the life of the 3rd PP. Technically, PBF demonstrates a considerable amount of flexibility in re-conceptualizing the hubs, switching from an infrastructure focus to more of a service-delivery focus.

Effectiveness

Although progress was made on achieving higher level results in the priority areas and in addressing root causes of conflict, the root causes of conflict persist. Only 50 percent of respondents thought that the PBF portfolio achieved higher level results in the priority areas of justice and security, national reconciliation, management of natural resources including land, and sustainable livelihoods; whereas 30 percent thought these priorities had been achieved only in part, and 20 percent thought they had not been achieved. Respondents in the counties were more likely to assess progress positively than were respondents in Monrovia. In the counties 68 percent of respondents thought that the PBF portfolio achieved higher-level results. The least positive assessments of progress were made by respondents at the UNHQ, where only 22 percent of respondents thought they had been achieved. Interviewees, however, also noted that many of the changes and reforms being attempted were structural and that progress toward addressing root causes of conflict needed to be seen as a long-term rather than a short- or even medium-term effort.

The PBF program took risks, was innovative and filled important peacebuilding gaps. However, there were a number of challenges that affected the portfolio effectiveness. Interviewees broadly agreed that PBF support for such initiatives as the Security and Justice hubs, community-level conflict resolution projects, the Land Commission and governance reforms, were all examples of PBF filling important peacebuilding gaps and a willingness to take risks and innovate. Additionally, while most interviewees thought that PBF was flexible and willing to adjust to changing contexts, some noted that this flexibility was not evident in all cases. Furthermore, although PBF had catalytic effects in terms of facilitating the acceleration of peacebuilding efforts at the community level, it was less so in terms of attracting additional donor support. Here many interviewees expressed their disappointment that more of such support was not forthcoming. A number of interviewees also noted that there was a tension between the broad scope of some of the projects and the short-time frames in which they were to be implemented and that this had a negative impact on the projects effectiveness.

Most of those interviewed agreed that the government participated in the management and oversight activities and was politically and financially committed to supporting PBF activities. However, respondents also noted a number of challenges in management and oversight, including what many, especially among UN and other donors, viewed as not particularly effective functioning of the JSC and the frequent

personnel changes in government ministries. Furthermore, the budget constraints meant that the government has struggled to maintain its financial commitments.

There were a number of other contextual factors that limited achievement of outcomes that should have been included in the planning process. These included: the remoteness of many target communities; the poor state of the county's infrastructure, including poor road conditions; and the long rainy season that made accessing project sites difficult. Additionally, the EVD diverted government funding from supporting peacebuilding projects to tackling the health crisis. Moreover, the global decline in commodity prices of major Liberian exports put further strain on the government budget, thus further limiting its capacity to maintain its financial commitments.

Gender

PBF took steps to ensure gender mainstreaming in its portfolio and to address issues of youth and women's empowerment. There were a number of programs that specifically targeted women, including the Peace Huts, economic empowerment programs and SGBV units located in the hubs, while others, such as the NYSP and Palava Huts, incorporated efforts to ensure female participation in the project activities. Interviews indicated these efforts improved women's understanding of their legal rights and to their participation in community decision-making process. They also had some positive unanticipated results, such as empowering women to advocate more effectively on their own and on their children's behalf. However, interviewees also raised concerns that too often focus was on increasing the number of female participants rather than ensuring the quality of their participation. Available data indicates that despite progress much work still needs to be done in addressing violence against women, which remains widespread. Interviewees also pointed to the challenges in sustaining the projects once PBF funding ended. Respondents also noted that the needs of young males have not been sufficiently addressed by PBF-funded programs.

The PBF funded programs sought to address the needs of youth. In particular programs such as NYSP focused on incorporating youth into peacebuilding programming. Interviewees agreed that the program, while it operated, was risk-taking, innovative and generally successful. The idea of placing young, university and technical school graduates in communities which were not their own provided not only much needed services to these communities, in areas such as education, healthcare, and agriculture but also showed participants and communities alike that it was possible to forge relationships and collaborations among groups that otherwise may have been in conflict. In some cases, the activities continued after the projects ended through the services provided by youth centers. However, as in other project areas, interviewees noted problems with sustainability of the projects and expressed concerns about the potential harm that was done to communities where volunteers worked during the project's life and who abruptly departed once the project ended. As importantly, interviewees pointed out that given the needs of the Liberian youth, too few resources were earmarked for youth programming and that it would have been beneficial if the program targeted a broader segment of this population. Many interviewees considered this to be a missed opportunity, especially since many studies and surveys of the Liberian public indicate that youth are perceived to be the key potential conflict instigators in the country.

Sustainability

Sustainability was not properly built into plans. Respondents admitted that little consideration was given to the government's ability to absorb the many programs that commenced with PBF funding. GoL admits its responsibility to absorb and sustain PBF programs but it lacks the budgetary capacity to do so. Partially, the PBF activities became a victim of a bad economy. The EVD and a collapse in the price of rubber and

iron ore crippled the economy, which led the GoL to make difficult decisions about budget priorities. In a review of government funding priorities, PBF programs were not treated as critical beyond funding the salaries of those on the wage bill.

Overall, there are mixed results with regards to sustainability. The Land Authority, Law Reform Commission and the operation of the hubs are examples of government commitment to sustainability. There is also widespread commitment to advancing gender equity. Yet, the abrupt end of funding for LCCs, the NYSP and other programs was unfortunate.

Lessons Learned

A clear lesson learned from the PBF Liberia experience relates to the placement, function, and accountability of the PBF Secretariat. PBSO should be commended for its decision to follow an innovative approach of placing the PBF Secretariat within a host government ministry in an effort to promote ownership and sustainability. However, as evidenced by the 2015 PBO evaluation and subsequent relocation of the PBF Secretariat, while the general idea was sound, overlapping accountabilities, heavy staff workloads, and at times competing interests between the UN and GoL ultimately diminished the success of this initiative.

Going forward, PBSO should continue to look for ways to embed or co-locate the PBF Secretariat within an appropriate host country ministry responsible for implementing a government's peacebuilding strategy. However, PBSO needs to more carefully articulate that as the PBF is a UN financial mechanism, the accountability for the use of funds ultimately rests with the UN, meaning that the PBF Secretariat should ultimately be accountable to the UN. While the Secretariat could still be led and staffed by government employees, there should be a clear and direct reporting line to the UN Country Leadership (in most cases also the JSC co-chair).

In the future, PBSO should also avoid situations where the PBF Secretariat plays a dual function of serving both an oversight and implementation function. The tasks of providing adequate preparation, facilitation, coordination, monitoring, and oversight are already strenuous enough without the added complexity, and possible conflict of interests, of designing and implementing individual PBF projects.

Close-out of projects and their sustainability need to be considered at the design stage. Too many of the PBF supported projects ended when the PBF funding ended. The government regardless of its commitment to the projects did not have the financial resources to maintain the funding at levels that would allow the projects to function as intended, if at all. This contributed to frustrations among all the stakeholders and had the unintended consequence, as in the case of NYSP for instance, of inadvertently contributing to community grievances.

Project plans need to be realistic and take into account contextual challenges. For instance, the impact of the long rainy season on project activities needs to be considered in project planning. Rains, especially given the poor state of roads, impair mobility and construction and therefore slow down project implementation.

Consultations should be incorporated into various stages of a project's life. Although consultations did take place, there was a sense among many interviewees especially at the county level who felt that these consultations were insufficient or were more pro forma rather than meaningful. The lack of more consistent consultations with IPs and beneficiaries contributed to misunderstandings of project goals and a perception of marginalization of local voices. Continuous consultations also help in maintaining staff knowledge in contexts where high staff turnover can be expected.

Inclusion of women in programming should focus less on the numbers of participants and pay greater attention to the quality of the participation. Although the projects exceeded the target for inclusion of women, their presence did not always translate into them having a meaningful voice in discussions and decision-making.

Programs targeting women have positive externalities and these should be considered in project planning. Projects that focused on providing women with conflict resolution tools and empowering them to participate in community decision-making processes, also resulted in women becoming more effective advocates for their children.

Unintended Results

An unintended consequence can alter the course of a project. At the start of the land project, the Land Commission was meant to be a policy organization. Quickly, the implementers learned that land conflict mediation was a pressing concern requiring immediate attention. This altered the work of the LC and created a much more impactful program. By mediating land disputes in LCCs, policy work was also strengthened, since Land Commission personnel had greater knowledge of the challenges faced by community members.

Recommendations

1. Decentralizing security and justice and improving outreach

Establishing the three justice and security hubs has improved access to both security and justice to those residing outside of Monrovia. However, access remains difficult for those living in parts of the country not serviced by the hubs and for citizens of counties covered by the hubs but who live in more remote, rural locations. Many Liberians still do not see the justice and security sector as accessible or responsive to their needs. Supporting governance reform that would improve decentralization is therefore essential to long-term peacebuilding. At the same time, any reforms need to be accompanied by improved outreach to communities so that citizens know what services are available and are aware of their rights.

Responsible entity: PBSO and the JSC.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Continuous.

2. Programming targeting youth should be expanded.

The PBF supported the NYSP, which sent university and technical school graduates to counties to work in education, health care and agriculture. The volunteers were also involved in facilitating dispute resolution in communities where they were located and female volunteers served as role models for young, rural girls. By all accounts, the program was successful while there were funds to support it. Currently, PBF is providing short-term funding to mitigate against possible violence that targets women and youth during the upcoming October 2017 elections. Projects focused on youth should be extended following the elections. 19 percent of youth do not have formal education and 39 percent do not complete primary education, with the percentage even higher among the poorest families. Only 4 percent have completed their secondary education.⁷² Expanding programming that targets youth through education, including vocational education, skills training or other activities, should therefore be essential component of future peacebuilding efforts in the country. Reviving support for the NYVS should be considered.

Responsible entity: PBSO should encourage applicants to develop projects specifically targeting youth and to include youth in projects that target other segments of society.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Immediate (0-6 months). The implementation of the new 2017 Peacebuilding Plan, which will inform the future engagement of PBF in Liberia, provides an opportunity to rethink how to address the needs of youth.

3. Consider lengthening programming time-frames

Addressing root causes of conflict are long-term rather than short-term or even medium-term processes. Doing so in a context such as Liberia where the civil war was long and devastating and where multiple peacebuilding efforts, provision of security and justice, national reconciliation, and various legal reforms are deeply intertwined with one another and are logistically as well as politically challenging, is all the more demanding. Yet, because of delays in disbursement of funds and the country's poor infrastructure among other challenges, in effect most PBF funding is usually available for one year. This does not provide the opportunity for many projects to show results and as projects await renewed funding, activities cease and project gains, human resources and (potentially) institutional knowledge are lost. Extending the programming time-frames might facilitate addressing root causes of conflict more effectively.

Responsible entity: PBSO should consider changing the way funding time frame of Priority Plans are organized going forward.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Immediate (0-6 months). The implementation of the new 2017 Peacebuilding Plan which will inform the future engagement of PBF in Liberia provides an opportunity to rethink how to support peacebuilding in post-conflict settings.

4. PBSO, working in close collaboration with JSCs, should explore new ways of determining how PBF funding is awarded among RUNOs in-country.

Echoing recommendations from previous PBF evaluation (e.g. 2014 Burundi evaluation), PBSO should look for ways to ensure that PBF funding is only allocated to those RUNOs with a demonstrated capacity to design, implement, and monitor peacebuilding activities. This includes having a demonstrated capacity to conduct and update conflict analyses, ability to track more qualitative peacebuilding outcomes, and tested internal procurement and reporting procedures that can efficiently procure goods and services within appropriate timeframes. JSCs could play an important role by requiring that the RUNOs do a better job of reporting on intermediary progress; challenges, barriers, and bottlenecks they are facing; and adjustments that have or plan to make in their programming.

Responsible entity: PBSO and JSC.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Immediate (0-6 months) considering the number of current internal PBSO initiatives requiring revised PBF's Business Plan, guidelines, and application documents.

5. PBSO and JSC should identify and expand on opportunities for creating synergies and greater complementarities between projects across the portfolio.

Despite being developed in response to the same PPs, the PBF projects were generally regarded as separate projects run by individual RUNOs. There is almost no joint planning across activities or systematic coordination in support. Going forward, both PBSO and the JSC should take more active steps to ensure greater linkages between PBF projects, particularly those working towards the same outcomes. PBSO could do so by requiring, and scoring, PBF project applicants on their plans for ensuring greater linkages and joint planning. JSC, supported by the PBF Secretariat, should also ensure that they have adequate time to carefully review project applications and discuss opportunities for linkages and joint work across those proposals being considered for approval.

Responsible entity: PBSO to require applicants to explain plans to facilitate synergies, complementarities, and joint work with other PBF projects. JSC to ensure it has adequate time to review proposals and explore opportunities for greater linkages across the portfolio.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Immediate (0-6 months) considering the number of current internal PBSO initiatives requiring revised PBF's Business Plan, guidelines, and application documents.

6. PBSO should undertake a critical examination of how it can improve the form and function of its in-country Joint Steering Committees.

JSCs serve as a critical anchor for ensuring that PBF investments are country-led and support key government peacebuilding priorities. However, evidence from this evaluation supports a recurring finding across PBF portfolio reviews and country evaluations that JSCs are inefficient decision-makers, do not

adequately monitor implementation or provide guidance for improvement, and do not fully consider the synergy and strategic impact of the projects they approve.

Going forward, PBSO should at a minimum ensure that TORs and membership lists for JSCs are finalized at the outset of the development of Priority Plans. PBSO should also consider limiting voting members of the JSC to those government institutions, donors, and RUNOs with both demonstrated commitment and capacity to sustain and oversee projects. While others can be invited as observers, PBSO needs to more clearly identify which actors are empowered to take important strategic decisions and thereby also accountable for subsequent results.

A key area of improvement for future JSCs is to ensure greater linkages between PBF projects, particularly those working towards the same outcomes. PBSO could do so by requiring, and scoring, PBF applicants on their plans for ensuring greater linkages and joint planning. JSCs, supported by their PBF Secretariats, should also ensure that they have adequate time to carefully review project application and discuss opportunities for linkages and joint work across those proposals being considered for approval.

Responsible entity: PBSO and JSC.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Immediate (0-6 months) considering the number of current internal PBSO initiatives requiring revised PBF's Business Plan, guidelines, and application documents.

7. PBSO should explore ways to ensure that sustainability issues are more carefully considered during both the Priority Plan development and subsequent project designs.

PBF provided significant technical and financial support to the GoL during an important time in the country's post-conflict transition. Its investment helped fill critical gaps to kick-start initiatives to encourage a nationally-led peacebuilding effort and facilitate the transition from UN peacekeeping support to more regular, development focused programming. However, this also resulted in PBF encouraging the GoL to initiate programs the country could not afford without identifying new sources of funding and developing new ideas for how to absorb the programs into the national budget.

Going forward, PBSO should consider three potential steps for how this could be achieved:

1. Working with the **host government** to ensure that PBF-supported priorities and the national budget are linked. This includes aligning with existing budget priorities as these provide a clear indication of the Government's own interests and therefore more likely to be sustained. To further encourage Government ownership, the management and financing of future programs should gradually be taken over by the Government. The JSC should monitor process of GoL absorption and adjust program features to ensure that they can be realistically sustained within the confines of state resources. Finally, additional PBF investments should also be tied to the successful absorption of existing programs. If the Government is unable to sustain existing programs, additional ones should not be started. The focus should remain on ensuring that existing programs are sustained. By linking programs to the Government's budget priorities and supporting the Government to gradually take control financially and operationally, there is a greater likelihood for sustainability upon closeout.
2. Requiring **RUNOs** to demonstrate a commitment to support PBF investments by investing regular resources and clearly articulating "exit" or "closeout" strategies in project proposals. RUNOs should be required to more clearly demonstrate how their PBF-support activities will be integrated into their regular programming, including working with their HQ and regional

offices to identify potential entry points. Exit and close-out strategies should clearly identify who will be responsible for continuing costs, who takes over the management and oversight of project activities, and how the project will interact with the work of government and other donors.

3. Requiring **JSC** to periodically report on steps taken to prepare for closeout in the PPs and projects.

Responsible entity: PBSO, in collaboration with the host country, RUNOs and the JSC.

Priority: High.

Timeframe: Continuous.

8. PBSO and PBC should clarify the role and responsibilities of the PBC in supporting PBF investments at country level, particularly in terms of how the PBC can help strengthen the catalytic nature of PBF.

PBF Liberia benefitted from active and motivated PBC Chairs dedicated to ensuring the ultimate success of the investment. However, while beneficial for spurring discussion and interest in PBF activities, the active participation of PBC Chairs also created some confusion around who ultimately was responsible for the technical leadership of PBF. Going forward, the PBF would be better served if the technical leadership is clearly left to the JSC at country level. The PBC should in turn focus on fulfilling the role described in A/RES/60/180, and reaffirmed in A/RES/70/262, to bring sustained international attention to sustaining peace, providing political accompaniment and advocacy to countries affected by conflict; promoting an integrated, strategic and coherent approach to peacebuilding; convening relevant actors, and mobilizing additional funding to support the goals of the PBF Priority Plans.

Responsible entity: PBSO and PBC to discuss how to better ensure that PBC fulfills its intended role of providing catalytic support by using its convening power to raise international attention around key peacebuilding issues and mobilize additional funding to support key priorities listed in the Priority Plans.

Priority: Medium.

Timeframe: 6-12 months. While this recommendation has the potential to have significant and immediate impact on PBF projects, it will likely require repeated and high-level negotiation to clearly define the role of the PBC going forward.

Annexes

Annex A: People and Organizations Consulted

Title	Organization
<u>PBO</u>	
Commissioner	INCHR
Executive Director	PBO
M&E Officer	PBO
Political Affairs, Peace, and Security	ECOWAS (Former Sr. PM PBO)
<u>JSC Secretariat</u>	
Peace Building Program Coordinator	UNDP
<u>RUNO</u>	
Country Rep	UNDP
Dep Rep	UNDP
Transition and Security Reform Advisor	UNDP
Project Officer, Justice & Security Program	UNDP
	UNDP
Country Rep (Acting)	UN Women
Portfolio Manager	UN Women
Program Officer, Women Peace & Security	UN Women
Program Officer, Gender & Peacebuilding	UN Women
Country Representative	UNICEF
Program Officer	UNICEF
Country Manager	UNOPS
Former Education Specialist, Peacebuilding	UNICEF
Former Head of Office	UN Habitat
Former Head of Office	UN Habitat
<u>Go</u>	
Minister	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Minister	Ministry of Youth and Sports
Minister	Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Protection

Former Minister Youth and Sports	MYS (former)
Deputy Minister for International Cooperation	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Assistant Minister/Special Assistant to the Minister	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Program Manager	Ministry of Justice
	Ministry of Justice
	Ministry of Justice
Acting Executive Director	Liberia Land Authority
Commissioner	INCHR
Land Commissioner, Grand Gedeh	Ministry of Internal Affairs
Commissioner	Governance Commission
Project Manager	INCHR
Project Officer	Palava Hut (INCHR)
M&E Officer for Peacebuilding Project	Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Protection
Gbarnga Hub Manager (Acting)	Ministry of Justice
Regional Outreach Coordinator	Ministry of Justice
Youth County Organizer, Margibi	MYS
PSO Officer	Ministry of Justice
PSO Officer	Ministry of Justice
Land Commissioner, Nimba	Ministry of Internal Affairs
County Officer	Ministry of Youth and Sports
Program Manager	Governance Commission
Program Assistant	Governance Commission
County Land Commissioner	Ministry of Internal Affairs
County Coordinator	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
Youth County Coordinator	Ministry of Youth and Sports
Commander	Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization
Case Liaison Officer	SGBV Unit, Gbarnga
Victim Support Officer	SGBV Unit, Gbarnga
Inspector and Head of PSU Unit	LNP
Vehicle Maintenance Manager	Gbarnga Hub
Generator Manager	Gbarnga Hub
Auto Mechanic	Gbarnga Hub
Auto Electrician	Gbarnga Hub
Public Service and Outreach Coordinator	Gbarnga Hub
Chairman	Liberia Land Authority

<u>Partners</u>	
Program Manager	NYSP
Project Officer	NYSP
County Liaison Officer	NYSP
Country Director	Search for Common Ground
Program Officer	NYSP
National Program Officer	FIND
County Peace Committee, Chairman	RECIEVE, Bong County
Executive Director	FIND
Executive Director	Gender and Peace Network
Executive Director	AMU-WULU
Executive Director	Rights and Rice
Program Officer	National Youth Volunteer Program
<u>UNMIL</u>	
Former UNMIL and UNDP	UNMIL
DSRSG for ROL	UNMIL
Senior ROL Advisor to DSRSG-ROL	UNMIL
Former Sr Advisor to RC - ROL	UNMIL
Chief of Corrections	UNMIL
Justice/ROL Advisor	UNMIL
Human Rights Advisor	UNMIL
UNPOL Advisor	UNMIL
Former DSRSG, UN RC, and UNDP Res Rep	UNMIL
<u>Other Experts</u>	
Chief of Party	USAID- LGSA, Land Governance Support Activity
Program Manager and Senior Researcher	Sustainable Development Institute
Field Officer	Center for Justice and Peace Studies
Program Manager	Justice and Peace Center
County Dispute Resolution Monitor	Carter Center
Chief of Team	Mitigating Land Disputes in Liberia
Program Officer	Mitigating Land Disputes in Liberia
Program Officer	Mitigating Land Disputes in Liberia
Program Officer	Mitigating Land Disputes in Liberia
<u>Other Donors</u>	
Ambassador & Head of Delegation	European Union

Citizen	Gbarnga Resident
Citizen	Gbarnga Resident
Peace Hut and VSLA	Malema, Bomi
Peace Hut and VSLA	Malema, Bomi
Peace Hut and VSLA	Malema, Bomi
Peace Hut and VSLA	Malema, Bomi
Peace Hut and VSLA	Malema, Bomi
Peace Hut and VSLA	Malema, Bomi
Peace Hut and VSLA	Malema, Bomi
Peace Hut and VSLA	Malema, Bomi
<u>UNHQ</u>	
Senior Political Affairs Officer, West Africa	DPKO
Policy Officer	PBSO
Senior Political Affairs Officer	PBSO
	UNDP
	UNDP
Liberia Program Officer	PBSO
Liaison Officer	DPKO (former PBC)
First Secretary	Permanent Mission of Swedish to the UN
CFO	PBSO
Director and Deputy Head	PBSO
Gender Advisor	PBSO (seconded UNWOMEN)
Policy Specialist	UNWOMEN
Former Head of PBF	PBSO
<u>Remaining:</u>	
Former M&E Officer, PBO	Out-of-Office until July 17
Former Chair, PBF Advisory Group	No response to follow up

Annex B: Project Timelines and Funding Overview

	Title:	Project Approvals	MTPF Transfer	Original Dates	Project Start	Extension	Total	Cost-Share	% of Cost-Share	Util'n Rate
UNDP	"Support to the Liberia Peacebuilding Office (PBO) to coordinate the implementation of the Government overall peacebuilding and reconciliation, provide peacebuilding advice, and strengthen national entities."	Mar 10, 2016	1 day	Jan - Dec 2016	6 months delay, June 2016	9 months, September 2017	\$729,977	ACCORD: \$329,977, Gov: In-kind	45%	63%
	"Peacebuilding Fund Secretariat"	Oct 21, 2015	4 days	Dec 2015 - Dec 2016	6 months delay, June 2016	6 months, June 2017	\$621,670	None	N/A	51%
	"Support for the Extension, and Functioning of the GoL Peacebuilding Office/PBF Secretariat and for Monitoring and Evaluation of the PBF Portfolio and Projects"	Dec 7, 2011	4 days	Oct 2011 - Oct 2014	Oct 2011	N/A	\$1,577,506	Gov: In-kind	N/A	101%

"Support to the Liberia Peacebuilding Office for coordination, monitoring & evaluation, communication and capacity building in conflict management"	Dec 16, 2013	1 day, 2 days (2 transfers)	Jan - Dec 2014	Jan 2014	Costed Extension, June 2015	\$1,720,543	UNDP: \$25,000 Gov: In-Kind	2%	97%
"Enhancing Access to Security and Justice at the Decentralized level - Harper and Zwedru Hub Regions"	Aug 15, 2013	5 days	Sept 2013 - Sept 2014	1 month delay, Nov 2013	26 months, Dec 2016	\$3,062,405	GoL: \$500,000 SGBV JP (UNDP)\$1,100,000	34%	78%
"Support to Constitution Review Process in Liberia"	Oct 21, 2013	2 days	Oct 2013 - Dec 2015	Oct 2013	12 months, Dec 2016	\$2,000,000	Gov: In-Kind USAID: \$1,800,000	47%	83%
"Community-based Truth Telling and Atonement Project"	Oct 4, 2013	3 days	Jan - Dec 2014	24 months, Dec 2016	22 months, Oct 2016	\$1,000,000	UNDP BCPR: \$308,000	N/A	84%
"Strengthening Local / Traditional Mechanisms for Peace at County and District level"	Oct 21, 2013	4 days	Oct 2013 - Oct 2015	1 month delay, Nov 2013	14 months, Dec 2016	\$1,500,000	Gov: In-kind	N/A	92%

	"Enhancing Access to Justice and Supporting National Capacities for Structured Legal Drafting"	Nov 29, 2013	1 day	Dec 2013 - Nov 2015	1 month delay, Jan 1, 2014	1 month, Dec 2015	\$500,000	Gov in-kind	N/A	93%
UNICEF	"National Youth Service Programme for Peace and Development (NYSP)" - Phase 1	Nov 23, 2011	3 days	Dec 2011 - Mar 2013	Dec 2011	N/A	\$1,000,000	GoL: \$140,000 UNICEF: \$390,000 AusAid: \$800,00 WFP: \$425,000 Netherlands (PBEA): \$786,000	71%	100%
	"National Youth Service Programme for Peace and Development (NYSP)" - Phase 2	Oct 21, 2013	4 days	Oct 2013 - Oct 2015	Oct 2013	N/A	\$1,500,000	GoL: In-Kind, UNICEF/AusAID/PBEA: \$800,000	35%	100%
UN HABITAT	"Support to the Establishment of a Land Disputes Prevention and Resolution System in Liberia – Phase I"	Nov 3, 2011	3 days	Nov 2011 - Nov 2012	1 month delay, Dec 2011	7 months, June 2013	\$2,000,000	Gov: In-kind	N/A	97%

	"Support to the Establishment of a Land Disputes Prevention and Resolution System in Liberia – Phase 2"	Oct 21, 2013	3 days	Oct 2013 - Mar 2015	Oct 2013	3 months, June 2015	\$2,000,000	Gov: In-kind	N/A	95%
UN Women	"Community-based Conflict Management- Women as Peace-makers and Nation Builders"	Oct 21, 2013	3 days	Oct 2013 - Mar 2015	Oct 2013	20 months, Dec 2016	\$1,000,000	None	N/A	100%
	"Women's Economic Empowerment: Building Peace, Promoting Prosperity"	Oct 21, 2013	2 days	Oct 2013 - March 2015	Oct 2013	21 months, Dec 2016	\$2,200,000	\$200,000 UN Women	10%	98%
UNOPS/UNDP	"Justice and Security Joint Programme"	Feb 2012(?), No ProDoc available	7 transfers, all within 5 days	Feb 2012 - Dec 2014	Feb 2012	24 months, Dec 2016	\$7,766,494	GoL: \$450,000	6%	97%

Annex C: Project Summaries

1. “Support to the Liberia Peacebuilding Office (PBO) to coordinate the implementation of the Government overall peacebuilding and reconciliation, provide peacebuilding advice, and strengthen national entities.”

Dates: June 2016-September 2017

Budget: \$399,977

Partners: UNDP

Locations: Monrovia

Purpose: To provide effective coordination, M&E, capacity building in conflict management, and communication of all the GoL peacebuilding and national reconciliation programs in Liberia. The PBO will also provide peacebuilding advice and support to the GoL in the implementation of the Liberia Peacebuilding Program etc.

Intended Beneficiaries: PBO.

Results Achieved:

- Implementation of the Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation, the Liberia Peacebuilding Program, and the Statement of Mutual Commitments and related programs coordinated.
- National capacity to manage and amicably resolve conflicts built and enhanced.
- Key infrastructure at local and traditional levels for peace expanded and strengthened.
- Key stakeholders adequately receive and understand progress updates on government peacebuilding including SMC and the Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation.

Challenges Faced: The restructuring of the PBO took longer than expected before commencing implementation. Meanwhile, the coordination between UNDP and PBO was facing challenges and was not effective, and as a result obtaining basic things such as fuel for vehicles and essential services was delayed. This project delay was the main challenge faced.

Lessons Learned: The PBO was split and resulted in slow implementation and achievement of results. The restructuring of the PBSO and national peace infrastructure took almost a year to gain momentum. The lesson learned is that a phased approach may be a better option.

The 18-19 October technical review meeting of Liberia’s peacebuilding priorities held in Monrovia brought together participants from CSOs, government, local and international nongovernmental organizations, youth and women groups as well as people with physical disabilities to have a say in Liberia's transition to sustaining peace by confirming and enhancing the revised SMC. The participants reiterated their support for the revised peacebuilding priorities on 20 October at the Government-UN High Level Forum in Monrovia through the National Civil Society Council of Liberia and the Youth Representative, who made separate statements expressing peacebuilding challenges.

2. “Enhancing Access to Justice and Supporting National Capacities for Structured Legal Drafting.”

Dates: January 1, 2014-February 2016

Budget: \$500,000

Partners: UNDP

Locations: Montserrado County

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to formulate a National Law Reform Policy (NLRP) Act and have it endorsed by the people and GoL, to formulate an options paper for the harmonization of the dual legal system in Liberia formulated, and to have a group of 20 legal drafters create and publish codified laws and opinions (additional volumes of Liberian Code of Law Revised and Liberia Law Report).

Intended Beneficiaries: Youth, women, and other marginalized groups.

Results Achieved:

- Organized and conducted a round-table dialogue amongst principal stakeholders of the law-making process. The dialogue was intended to arrive at a consensus on the most practical approach to accelerate the law reform process. Participants came from all three branches of the government as well as local and international partners.
- Held consultations in 11 counties (Margibi, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Bomi, Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Bong, Nimba, Lofa and Montserrado) on the essence and purpose of the NLRP.
- Held two separate validation meetings with principal and key stakeholders (including international partners) on the NLRP.
- Held two separate sessions with the Legislature on the endorsement of the NLRP.
- Submitted final version of the NLRP to the Legislature for endorsement.
- Conducted 12 consultative meetings and three town hall sessions with traditional leaders, women and youth groups, CSOs, etc., on the harmonization process.
- Developed questionnaires and conducted perception surveys on the harmonization process in five counties (Bomi, Grand Bassa, Lofa, Bong and Maryland).
- Visited Ghana and Cameroon to review the structures they have in place relative to the dual legal system (regional best practices).
- Developed various options that could help in harmonizing the two legal systems in Liberia.
- Developed course syllabus and training manual for the legislative drafting program.
- Vetted and selected 36 participants from an entry of 78 to undergo training in legislative drafting.
- Identified and selected trainers for the exercise.
- Conducted a month long intensive training program after which all 36 participants successfully met the requirements and were certified as legislative drafters.
- The trainees were organized into a model legislative drafting group.
- Collected and scanned all laws enacted by the 52nd and 53rd Legislature, and edited and indexed as Volume 43 of the Liberian Code of Law Revised.
- First full draft published and undergoing a final revision for typos and other errors after which copies will be printed for public consumption.
- Additionally, all opinions handed down by the Supreme Court from 2006 to 2014 were sourced and processed and published copies are being reviewed for final printing.

Challenges Faced:

The Ebola crisis had a large impact on this project and on Liberia as a whole. Many activities related to this project had to be suspended and the annual work plans (for first and second year) were approved late which meant that project activities were delayed. Funds were delayed which meant that new projects were developed for providing fuel to vehicles, undertaking field visits and other.

Other challenges faced were of a logistical sense, such as poor road conditions (particularly in the southeast), making it difficult and in some cases impossible to travel to certain parts of the country.

It was also a challenge to make people fully aware and understand that the intent of the exercise was to harmonize the dual legal (customary and statutory) systems in order to ensure equity, and not a process to undo people's traditions and beliefs that they have practiced and held over centuries. People might not accept the concepts being discussed due to ethnicity and other factors which presents a problem for the project. The project team spent time raising awareness on the issue and ensuring that all beneficiaries understood that opportunities enjoyed by one group should be offered to others.

Lessons Learned:

Efforts should be made to involve the Liberian people in the process of project planning and implementation. It is important to get the beneficiaries involved in the process, not only having outside organizations and people dictating it. Ownership by the Liberian people is important in driving the process further.

The participation of the people could be increased by decentralizing the current system of governance. Courts in rural areas are too far away from those they are meant to serve, and people tend to ascribe to other means of achieving redress to their problems when they feel aggrieved. Traditional leaders should be given quasi-judicial powers and that power should rest with the Judiciary and not the Executive as is currently the case. Particularly the People in the rural parts (but not limited to) of Liberia in particular seem to be disconnected to the central government and feel left out of the decision-making process.

3. "Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) Secretariat."

Dates: December 2015-ongoing

Budget: \$621,670

Partners: United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

Locations: Monrovia

Purpose: The purpose of the project is to support the PBF secretariat located within UN. The main focuses of the PBF secretariat in Liberia will be to ensure overall coordination, undertake monitoring and reporting of the PP at the outcome level, support evaluative exercises, and provide capacity building in peacebuilding programming and communication of all PP outcomes and results.

Intended Beneficiaries: JSC.

Results Achieved:

- Improved coordination, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and communication on the achievement of the PP outcomes and supporting projects.

Challenges Faced: The recruitment process for the Peacebuilding Coordinator was delayed due to the recommended candidate declining the position at last minute. Further, the M&E and Program Assistant

recruitments were cancelled which delayed the implementation of a several activities in the project, particularly those related to project monitoring and capacity building.

Lessons Learned: It is crucial for the GoL to take ownership and show commitment in order for the process to be sustainable. So far, the projects financed by PBF have shown weak prospects for being sustainable. Support to the National Youth Service Program and the Land Coordination Centers ended after the PBF interventions. The lesson to be learned is that ownership by the Government needs to be improved.

There is a lack of independent evaluations of PBF projects and programs. It seems that only one independent evaluation of the PBO has been made. More consistent evaluations would help identify inefficiencies more quickly.

Important organizational changes should be planned more carefully in order to avoid serious inefficiency. The restructuring of the PBO has delayed projects and was done at the same time as the JSC secretariat's transfer of functions to the PBF secretariat, which has negatively affected PBF projects in general and specifically the efficiency of the JSC.

4. "National Youth Service Program (NYSP) for Peace and Development."

Dates: December 2011-March 2013

Budget: \$1,000,000

Partners: Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Education, USAID/Food and Enterprise Development Program (FED), Peace Corps

Locations: Bong, Bomi, Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Grand Bassa, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, Montserrado, Sinoe and Grand Gedeh.

Purpose: Enhanced social cohesion through the empowerment of youth, and enhanced sustainable livelihoods of youth in conflict-prone areas. The program sought to enhance access to quality education, youth development and livelihood opportunities through the provision of services by National Volunteers (NVs) in 12 counties.

Intended Beneficiaries: Youth.

Results Achieved:

- On an individual level, the volunteers felt empowered to be the change in their assigned communities by achieving peacebuilding and development results. They were teaching in classrooms, worked for the local government, assisted health workers, and conducted outreach and learning activities. All of these responsibilities instilled in the young volunteers a sense of empowerment for positive change.
- At the socio-political level, communities' attitudes of the government changed with better access to social services and other needs of the community and the youth population. Students were learning math and science, and schools were accelerating their teaching level based solely on the presence and capacity of the NVs.
- Under the JNV program, incidence of domestic violence reduced and community conflicts related to land issues were addressed.
- The NYSP also addressed the 'Monrovia/urban' versus 'County/rural' divide by sending university volunteers to serve in remote rural areas. Since the volunteers were assigned to communities to

which they do not belong they learned about and appreciated the local culture, thus creating a sense of belonging and national unity in diversity. Community members and leaders appreciated the services and leadership they delivered, so overall this process lessened discrimination and negative (tribal-based) perceptions.

Challenges Faced: There have been key challenges and bottlenecks with regard to UNICEF and the GoL. At the end of 2011 UNICEF changed its financial management system globally from Promms to Vision. While the PBF funds were transferred on December 14, 2011, the funds did not appear in the Vision system until January 5, 2012. Furthermore, the new system created operational challenges requiring regular troubleshooting from the Master Programmers, which results in system-wide delays that affect the County Office's business processes. Despite these challenges, critical activities such as the NYSP assessment and procurement of supplies were implemented.

In January 2012, the President started her second term and named a new Minister of Youth and Sports (MoYS) and Deputy Minister for Youth Development. The Minister was not confirmed until February 10, 2012 and the Deputy Minister in May 2012. It is crucial to note that the GoL cannot be committed to programming decisions and implementation by those not officially appointed and confirmed. Given the critical importance of national ownership and leadership, this caused considerable delays that were not resolved until the new administration was finalized and confirmed and a stakeholders meeting was held with all government partners and stakeholders and critically Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MoPEA), and Ministry of Gender and Development (MoGD). This was particularly challenging given that the MoYS was directly responsible for recruitment and funding of personnel that were responsible for managing the day to day operations of the NYSP.

Capacity levels and diverse needs at the local level were major challenges, as the NYVS switched from a UN-managed program to a government-managed program that was implemented at a decentralized level. This required a restructuring of how the MoYS operated at the county level. While information is limited, indications were that the new NYSP County Officers would serve as the MoYS County Coordinators in those counties of implementation. Further restructuring of the Ministry under the new administration and establishing new offices at the County level caused further implementation delays.

Bureaucratic and administrative processes at the MoYS caused delays in the implementation of some activities. Project officers were not paid on time and their deployment was delayed. Deployment of NVs by road was delayed based on financial processes and the requirement of multiple signatories to checks. POs were in the field but operational expenses were delayed, however all were given \$500 resettlement support. The deployment of motorcycles was delayed based on the requirement to license, register, plate, and insure the motorcycles as well as tag them through General Services Agency.

In the health sector, there were challenges recruiting the target numbers, with under 50 percent applying (12 out of 30 spaces) by the program's mid-point, which required attention with key stakeholders to resolve. However, it should be noted that this was a tremendous (400 percent) increase from the previous years, where the highest numbers recruited for this sector were three.

Lessons Learned: The most significant lesson learned from this program cycle was the importance of a timely procurement process. It delayed the program in supporting educational and healthcare sectors with the supply of resources and with equipping the Youth Centers with the necessary items to support the planned activities. This was a need to be addressed in the next program cycle in order to prevent any future delays.

The recruitment process for the JNVs was hurried and 50 percent were not deployed into the County of their origin, making their integration into the communities much more difficult which was detrimental to the overall success of the program. In order to address this, these JNVs had to be let go and a new group of JNVs were employed, taking care to assign them to communities in their County of origin to strengthen the social cohesion element of the program. This proved to be a much more successful approach.

It was important to strengthen collaboration amongst all relevant stakeholders to create opportunities for retention and/or employment of qualified program graduates. Then the program had to tailor the upcoming induction training of the new batch of NVs to address shortcomings identified during the past trainings and the fieldwork. Furthermore, the M&E capacity of the MoYS needed to be strengthened in order to systematically monitor and document the results and identify and address bottlenecks.

5. “Community-based Conflict Management- Women as Peace-makers and Nation Builders.”

Dates: October 2013-December 2016

Budget: \$1,000,000

Partners: UN Women, Ministry of Gender and Development (MoGD); Development Education Network (DEN), Rights and Rice Foundation (RRF)

Locations: Sinoe, Grand Gedeh, Gbarpol, Grand Basa and Cape Mount, with interventions in 17 rural communities with existing peace huts

Purpose: The project aims to build on and improve traditional community conflict resolution mechanisms. The most well-known of these mechanisms is the “Palava Huts” (see project below), however they tended to be patriarchal and heavily dominated by men. To build on the Palava Hut tradition but also promote greater female participation, UN Women helped establish local “Peace Huts” where women volunteers help fellow community members resolve local conflict or support access to legal and other services. The project aims to augment the government's efforts towards building women's capacity in leadership, increasing women's voices in local and national decision-making processes, and increasing women's access to justice. The Peace Huts also serve as venues where members can discuss other sensitive topics, such as how to change traditional attitudes towards violence against women, and share ideas on topics like new livelihood resources or reproductive health information. While the project's focus was on women, the program also sought to promote the involvement of men as champions for advancing gender equality and female empowerment.

The program is part of UN Women's larger country program which is implicitly based on two assumptions— (1) that increased women's participation in peacebuilding leads to reduced levels of gender-based violence; and (2) women's participation in peacebuilding, conflict management, and conflict prevention is crucial for establishing better security for the whole community, as well as great protection for women themselves.

Intended Beneficiaries: Women, men, girls, and boys in 22 targeted communities in five counties.

Results Achieved:

- 22 Peace Huts established (17 existing huts refurbished and five newly constructed).
- 62 women leaders were trained in peacebuilding and leadership skills.
- A 2014 final evaluation of UN Women's “From Community to Global Security Institutions” program, under which Peace Huts were supported, found lower levels of reported domestic

violence, improved relationships with local security forces, increased female civic action, and increased feelings of self-worth in areas with Peace Huts.⁷³

- Approximately 3,500 women and girls trained in peacebuilding and conflict mitigation skills.
- Five male networks were established and are operational with men serving as gender equality champions publicly working to end violence against women and girls in targeted communities.
- 250 men and boys were profiled and trained as gender equality advocates.

Challenges Faced: The project experienced some initial delays in both the construction of Peace Huts as well as procedural delays in the release of funds to implementing partners. The 2014 evaluation also highlighted instances where planning was overestimated the capacities of local partners which lead to slow startup that then caused compressed project timelines which then lead to some training activities being shortened. Several construction activities were negatively impacted by the rainy season and its effects on road networks, making some communities unreachable. The outbreak of Ebola and subsequent governmental emergency measures significantly limited the activities that could be implemented. Additionally, subsequent activities became costlier as the outbreak forced new hygiene and prevention measures that required more resources to work with communities.

Lessons Learned: The 2014 final evaluation noted that going forward, future work on women, peace, and security in Liberia should strive to connect to the chiefdom structure, from community to national levels, as activities currently tend to take place outside of this structure.

The project found that a major barrier to women's participation in domestic and local decision-making processes was the relatively low level of education and high poverty levels. The project had to adjust several of its training curriculums and pedagogies to better ensure that illiterate women and girls could fully understand the information conveyed on their rights and obligations.

The project demonstrated the value of working with women's civil society grassroots structures to not only facilitate implementation but also ensure a continued presence especially in rural and hard to reach areas even during the Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak and during rainy season.

6. "Community-based Truth Telling and Atonement Project."

Dates: October 2013-December 2016

Budget: \$1,308,000 - \$1,000,000 PBF; \$308,000 UNDP's Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR).

Partners: Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR), national CSOs, National Traditional Council, Interreligious Council

Locations: Monrovia; Toffoi's Town, Tchien District, Grand Gedeh County; and Vezela, Voinjama District, Lofa County

Purpose: To promote community-based healing and reconciliation using the traditional Liberian justice and reconciliation mechanism known as the "Palava Hut" process. The process aims to provide a public forum for victims to voice grievances of past human rights violations and for the alleged perpetrators to acknowledge and apologize for their violations. It emphasizes the concept of restorative justice over the more putative justice associated with customary law, focusing on restoring the dignity and relationships of those involved.

The Palava Hut process is limited to alleged violations that occurred during the period of January 1979-August 2003 and is limited to non-capital offenses and human rights violations such as looting/theft of property, destruction of properties, torture, arson, forced labor, desecration of traditional shrines, displacement and physical assault. It does not cover cases involving murder, sexual violence, and other more serious human rights violations.

The PBF supported project worked to support the Palava Hut process through four discrete activities. First, the Independent National Commission on Human Rights-Program Management Unit (INCHR-PMU) team of trainers conducted a one week training of “Statement Takers” who identified both perpetrators and victims in towns and villages and recorded their stories on special Statement Forms. Second, these statements were then screened and validated to determine that they met the standards of quality and admissibility for hearing. Third, the certified statements were then listed for hearing and the victims were transported from their respective locations and lodged at safe houses. Fourth, a team of psychosocial counselors helped victims to psychologically and emotionally prepare for the hearings.

The project also implemented a process for determining and selecting members for the Palava Hut committees. This included conducting town hall meetings where members of the District Palava Hut Committees were nominated, validated, and endorsed using the criteria developed from a special ethnography study commissioned at the outset of the project.

The project ended up supporting two full Palava Hut meetings: one in Toffoi’s Town, Tchien District, Grand Gedeh County on December 15-24, 2016, and the second in Vezela, Voinjama District, Lofa County on January 16-27, 2017. The districts were selected from the Kwa and Mande linguistic regions based on the history of the atrocities committed in the areas during the war. The cases involved looting, extortion, destruction of properties, arson, killing of cattle assault, abduction, forced labor and land seizure.

As the Palava Hut committees are traditionally overwhelmingly dominated by men, the project places special emphasis on encouraging the participation of women.

Intended Beneficiaries: Victims, perpetrators, and communities affected by violations and crimes committed during the Liberian Civil War, specifically between the period of January 1979-August 2003.

Results Achieved:

- 269 victim statements (“cases”) were recorded (108 in Voinjama District and 161 in Tchien District).
- 177 cases amicably resolved (86 in Voinjama District and 91 in Tchien District).
- 176 males and one female perpetrators acknowledged wrongs, admitted guilt and asked for pardon.
- 38 males and 139 female victims accepted apologies and forgave offenders.
- 271 alleged violations were documented:
 - 37 percent related to allegations of torture; 28 percent to extortion; 13 percent to forced labor; 10 percent to property damage; and the remaining to “humiliation” and land disputes. In terms of age, 59 percent of allegations were brought by men and women between the ages 36-46 and 28 percent between the ages of 47-57.

Challenges Faced: Interviews with project and UNDP staff indicated that the ethnographic study needed to design the Palava Hut support was significantly delayed. Interviewees explained that was in large part due to delays in recruitment caused by the requirement of an international team leader.

Project documentation also showed that limited logistics, including inadequate means of transportation, made it difficult to reach out to victims and perpetrators in rural areas. It also made it difficult to transport them to the hearing venues in Toffoi's Town and Vezeala, and INCHR-PMU staff report having to personally pay for gas.

Project staff also raised several issues with delayed disbursement of funds from UNDP, especially to CSOs hired to provide public outreach and psychosocial services. Staff reported that these delayed payments ended up negatively impacting the working relationship with these partners.

Lessons Learned: A key lesson learned from this pilot initiative was to better appreciate the significant amount of preparation and sensitization work needed to successfully conduct the Palava Hut process in a transparent, inclusive, and conflict-sensitive manner. This included carefully considering the groups targeted under the initiative, as well as careful training and sensitization of staff involved to ensure that they respected the psychosocial wellbeing of those involved in the Palava Hut process.

7. "Strengthening Local / Traditional Mechanisms for Peace at County and District level."

Dates: November 2014-December 2016

Budget: \$1,500,000

Partners: Ministry of Internal Affairs/PBO (Lead), UNMIL, CSOs

Locations: Liberia (15 counties)

Purpose: The purpose of the project is to strengthen and institutionalize on-the-ground capacity of CPCs to prevent, manage and resolve local conflicts within their districts and communities and foster social cohesion. Further, a small grant mechanism will be set up through which CSOs and other community based organizations will access funds to support efforts by CPCs and intervene in emerging conflicts and facilitate dialogue that aims at consolidating peace and preventing violent conflicts.

Intended Beneficiaries: Youth.

Results Achieved:

- Peace structures in 14 counties harmonized, recognized by Superintendents, and received supplies and logistics.
- Gender sensitive training modules produced and conducted for 150 CPC members.
- CPCs more involved in community level conflict resolution, including land and other disputes.
- Some CPCs organized targeted peace event programs on the International Day of Peace, through events and radio talk shows.
- Recurrent cycle of violence between Muslims and Christians in the area of Lofa County was reduced and the Sinoe CPC has contributed in resolving long-standing concession dispute between Butaw Community and the Golden Veloreum Liberia concession company.
- Early warning and early response centers have been set up in Gbarnga, Zwedru & Harper Hubs. Early Warning data communicated via SMS through an internet based platform thereby triggering response actions that help to prevent violence.

Examples of community level response actions include violence prevention in Fuamah District, Bong County, involving the workers' union and China Union and dispute resolution between Immigration Officers and citizens of Kpazagizia in Lofa County.

- Early Warning trainings across the country were conducted for 180 Early Warning reporters and 1,449 incident reports were received during project lifespan which averted at least 30 potential incidents of violence.
- 24 small grants awarded to CSOs across the country and grantees' capacity built in project management, financial and narrative reporting. Communities are now engaged more in dialogues to find solutions to shared conflict issues, youth and women received alternative skills for livelihood, literacy and numeracy improved among rural women, village savings and loan creates a network of women who share and resolve domestic issues and promote social cohesion in respective communities.

Challenges Faced: The recruitment of staff took longer than expected and therefore delayed the activities of this project. The PBO transition to a full government entity and new mode of operations contributed to the delays due to a lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities. As the spread of the Ebola virus intensified throughout Liberia it further delayed the activities and implementation of the project. For a long time, the project did not have any vehicles and therefore staff had to use rental and personal vehicles to carry out project activities. When a vehicle finally arrived it soon had to be turned over to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to be used in the Ebola virus response. Another challenge faced was the communication with UNDP, though that has since been improved.

Bureaucratic bottlenecks also increased the delays, such as the 2015 annual work plan not being approved by relevant authorities until March 2015.

Lessons Learned: Financial sustainability and technical support to local peace structures are required to achieve success and sustainability should always be a key component of the strategy for the local peacebuilding structures. Local ownership and local involvement and leadership could promote the sustainability. Participation of all sectors of the communities is fundamental.

Communication gaps or prolonged interruption in direct engagement with community based structures affects overall project outcomes. This was demonstrated clearly when there were delays in the provision of project inputs to the project team. Repeatedly, team members had to re-engage and re-mobilize community dwellers due to the constant break in engagement.

8. “National Youth Service Program for Peace and Development (NYSP).”

Dates: November 2013-November 2015

Budget: \$1,500,000

Partners: Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Agriculture, NGOs

Locations: Bong, Bomi, Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Grand Bassa, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, Montserrado, Sinoe and Grand Gedeh

Purpose: Enhanced social cohesion through the empowerment of youth and enhanced sustainable livelihoods of youth in conflict-prone areas. The program sought to enhance access to quality education, youth development and livelihood opportunities through the provision of services by NVs in 12 counties.

Intended Beneficiaries: Youth

Results Achieved:

- 634 NVs were deployed between 2013 and 2015 and served in over 95 communities as teacher assistants, health care assistants, youth center managers, or agriculture workers. Volunteers.
- NVs also worked in their communities settling disputes between students and teachers as well as students and parents, and in financial and land disputes.
- In other counties (Lofa, Nimba, Maryland) NVs worked with CPC and established Peace Clubs in various communities and schools.
- 52 schools, 8 hospitals, 6 health clinics, 17 agriculture projects, and 10 youth centers benefitted from the deployment of the NVs.
- To date, the program has been successful in addressing the public service provision gaps at the local level, and has contributed to increased youth empowerment and peacebuilding.
- New partnerships established with Peace Corps and Food Enterprise and Development have further strengthened education and agriculture sector components.

Challenges Faced: The deployment of the sixth batch of volunteers was behind schedule due to the temporary suspension of the program during the peak of the EVD outbreak. While 160 NVs trained in the sixth batch, only 83 were deployed due to changes in the TORs of NVs necessitated by the EVD outbreak. Schools were closed indefinitely and non-essential government staff were placed on mandatory leave. This meant that NVs could not be deployed to their assigned sectors, and the terms of reference for NVs were reviewed to focus on EVD response. This also meant a revision of the selection criteria for deployment of NVs. It was agreed that sixth batch of NVs would be deployed in 12 counties, paired with some NVs from the fourth and fifth batches. In the end 10 NVs were selected from the fourth batch, 110 were selected from fifth batch, and 83 were selected from the sixth batch. They worked in the Ebola response interventions ranging from Infection Prevention & Control that includes contact tracing and family tracing for separated children, Psychosocial Support, and Social Mobilization in the 12 counties.

Lessons Learned: Exit plan/strategy not factored from outset of project implementation undermines adequate preparation for project exit. Implement better and joint preparation and development of Direct Cash Transfer with line Ministries can increase government capacity in project planning, budgeting, and monitoring of implementation. Finally, conduct more regular monitoring visits to ensure accountability of the NVs in the institutions in which they are deployed.

9. “Support for the Extension and Functioning of the Liberia Peacebuilding Office/PBF Secretariat and for Monitoring and Evaluation of the PBF Portfolio and Projects.”

Dates: February 2012-October 2014

Budget: \$1,577,506

Partners: PBO

Locations: Monrovia

Purpose: Support to PBF Secretariat in Liberia to provides effective coordination, monitoring, reporting, evaluation and communication on the achievement of the Priority Plan results and the projects that support it.

Intended Beneficiaries: PMU at PBO

Results Achieved:

- Two M&E staff (international and local) recruited at PBO to support functional M&E systems of the LPP.
- Two Public Perception Surveys on Justice and Security conducted: two in Gbarnga Regional Hub counties of Nimba, Lofa and Bong in 2012 and one in 2013 in Hubs 2 and 3 Regional Counties of Maryland, Sinoe, Grand Kru, River Gee and Grand Gedeh.
- Conducted one desk review in 2012 on access to Justice and Security based on empirical data gathered from various reports.
- Conducted four trainings in monitoring, reporting and evaluation in March, June, October and December of 2013 for national implementing partners.
- M&E Framework of the LPP reviewed and revised set of SMARTer indicators identified and agreed.
- Reviewed project reports in 2013 and 2014 to ensure quality before submission to PBSO and subsequent uploading to the MDTF Gateway.
- Developed Results/M&E Framework for the PBF Priority Plan 2014-2016.
- PBO organized a total of 15 Joint Steering Committee (JSC) meetings as follows: five in 2011 (January 26, May 8, July 13, August 10, and November 1), five in 2012 (March 19, May 17, July 13, September 12, and November 23), three in 2013 (January 25, August 6, and October 4), and two in 2014 (March 14 and May 21).
- PBO prepared and submitted JSC annual reports for 2012 and 2013 to PBSO.
- A total of 37 Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meetings were convened, four of which were on National Reconciliation while 33 were on Justice and Security. Several technical meetings were held by the National Reconciliation Task Force which subsumed the role of the TAG on national reconciliation. 15 meetings were held in 2011, 12 meetings were held in 2012, and 10 meetings were held in 2013.
- Three SMC reviews were organized in 2011, 2012 and 2013, with reports prepared and submitted by PBO.

Challenges Faced: Project implementation was significantly affected in 2014 due to the scourge of the Ebola outbreak, which took more than 50 percent of annual implementation. Planned activities were not fully implemented given the risk of transmission of the virus. In order to assist in combating the virus, PBO supported the government and the International Community's remediation plan by deploying volunteers who were engaged in health promotion, contact tracing and peacebuilding, especially for Ebola survivors stigmatized by communities.

Lessons Learned: Regular interaction with key actors in the reconciliation process proved to be worthwhile in achieving results. If George Weah, Liberia's Peace Ambassador had not been persistently contacted by the PBO to make a presentation at the April Reconciliation Forum, his initiatives to help broker further reconciliation between and among the peoples of Nimba and Grand Gedeh counties may not have been initiated with such vigor. In addition, key policy actors took practical steps to accelerate the implementation of the Reconciliation Roadmap, such as the Minister of Finance who committed \$3 million dollars on behalf of the government.

As a way of enhancing procurement capacity based on a 2012/2013 audit recommendation, PBO recruited a procurement officer in 2014, empowering it to become responsive to partners' requests. PBO undertook a number of procurement activities with minimum risk during the period under review.

Technical discussions and review meetings with partners in July 2014 presented a platform for inter-agency coordination and increased understanding of each of the partner's role and responsibilities as well as the PBO. Some of the partners did not know what each of the projects was doing despite combined efforts to achieve sustainable peace and reconciliation. The reiteration of PBO's mandate at these discussions further electrified partners' understanding on the function of the Secretariat.

10. "Support to the Liberia Peacebuilding Office for coordination, monitoring & evaluation, communication, and capacity building in conflict management."

Dates: December 2013-December 2015

Budget: \$1,695,543

Partners: Liberia PBO (at Ministry of Internal Affairs)

Locations: Monrovia, but nationwide coverage

Purpose: The main project focus is to ensure that an adequately capacitated and effectively operating PBO provides overall coordination, support in monitoring, reporting and evaluation, capacity building in conflict mediation, and communication of all PBF projects which will help address a number of root causes of conflict in Liberia, thereby enhancing national reconciliation, justice and security at all levels.

Intended Beneficiaries: PMU at PBO

Results Achieved:

- Significant contributions to enhanced monitoring and evaluation of the expected outcomes and outputs related to (1) Justice and Security, and (2) National Reconciliation as set out in the Strategic Performance Management Framework of the Liberia Priority Plan 2011-2013.

Challenges Faced: The Ebola crisis delayed activities of the project. The spread of Ebola affected the whole country and the State of Emergency was declared to stop the further spread of the virus. All PBF-supported projects were considerably affected with activities either on hold or delayed. The PBO trainings on M&E and conflict management could not be held, and the field visits could not be conducted.

Lessons Learned: Coordination and regular interaction with all key actors in the national reconciliation process has proven to be worthwhile in achieving results, even though progress has been slow in certain instances. The July 2014 mid-year review of the various national reconciliation projects brought 46 persons together in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, and regular project based coordination meetings created increased understanding by each project team that the various projects were being implemented as part of the National Reconciliation Roadmap rather than as stand-alone initiatives. It helped in ensuring increased coordination in terms of maximizing synergies and linkages between and among projects, all working towards the attainment of an overall peacebuilding outcome.

The experiences and lessons shared by PBO staff during the PBSO/ACCORD Workshop on 'Enhancing Peacebuilding Practice' held in Durban in August 2014 generated considerable discussion and were highly appreciated. While often there were many challenges that affected peacebuilding work in Liberia, this knowledge sharing also showed that in certain aspects PBO and its partners have pioneered some innovative approaches that can be shared with other countries. In addition to follow-up exchanges

through the PBF Community of Practice there has also been practical peer support to, for example, Guinea-Bissau in terms of a M&E detailed assignment providing technical advice in the design and implementation of a perception survey for a PBF-funded project on peace dividends.

Innovative and creative ways to support peacebuilding efforts were employed through increasing partnerships for South-South cooperation, such as the partnership with ACCORD. This partnership has developed skills and knowledge in conflict mapping and analysis of 37 persons from government and CSOs, and led to a national conflict mapping exercise in 2016. Tracking and reporting on implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) recommendations has helped to awaken debates on the need for increased support to national reconciliation by the government. Also, engagement with the House Standing Committee on Peace, Religion, and Reconciliation has increased national consciousness for budgetary support to the overall implementation of the Strategic Roadmap on National Peacebuilding, Healing and Reconciliation.

11. “Support to the Establishment of a Land Disputes Prevention and Resolution System in Liberia – Phase I.”

Dates: December 2011-June 2013

Budget: \$2,000,000

Partners: Land Commission of Liberia, Land Dispute Resolution Task Force (including Ministry of Land, Mines and Energy, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Liberia Institute of Geostatistics, National Archives, Ministry of Justice, UNMIL, and Norwegian Refugee Council), USAID

Locations: Monrovia and 5 counties - Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Maryland, Montserrado, Margibi

Purpose: The design, establishment, implementation, and institutionalization of an alternative land disputes resolution system for Liberia, by implementing activities that will strengthen existing land disputes resolution capacity, increase the public understanding of land rights, and overall contribute to peaceful resolution of land disputes in Liberia.

Intended Beneficiaries: Liberia Land Commission.

Results Achieved:

- Five LCCs have been able to counsel disputants to avoid resorting to violence over land disputes.
- They have also all independently assessed that their work has achieved a great deal in terms of restoring relationships and reinforcing peaceful coexistence in non-homogenous pilot communities.
- The work has proven, at least at this initial stage, to be efficient, reliable and cost-effective, with parties maintaining (or re-establishing) a relationship once a dispute is settled.
- There is open communication which facilitates fair and timely resolutions, and outcomes are mutually agreed upon relatively quickly. Disputants in Liberia report that they far prefer mediated outcomes to judicial or arbitrated solutions, as the latter tend to end up with “winners” and “losers” and do not restore relationships.
- It has proven possible to alter traditional land dispute resolution structures to include women and youth, while preserving or even reinvigorating their traditional authority. Mediation committees have been created which always include a traditional leader (either male or female) as well as women and youth representatives. Yet at the same time, by including traditional leaders,

traditional structures (to which the majority of Liberians prefer to turn) have been strengthened after losing efficacy, respect, and even self-esteem during the period of conflict.

- 508 dispute mediation practitioners were trained by the LC and its partners and established community mediation committees that help resolve land cases using traditional mediation methodologies. Bolstering these structures while enhancing their inclusiveness has been a major success of the project.
- Outreach, education and awareness activities implemented by the LCCs have progressively reached more people. As a result, more people, and in particular women and youth, are bringing their land cases to the LCCs. The LCCs in the five counties have reduced the threat and frequency of occurrence of violent land conflicts.
- There have been significant improvements in the knowledge of land rights and ADR options among Land Commission officials (from 35 percent in September 2012 to 98.5 percent in June 2015) and the general population (from 9 percent in September 2012 to 68 percent in June 2015) in the 10 districts where the LCCs were operating. The officials included County Superintendents, District Commissioners, Clan Chiefs, and the Judiciary. Increased the number of land dispute cases that were resolved by the LCCs. 53 percent of Liberians in the project areas expressed their willingness to utilize the land ADR system.
- Catalytic effects of the project have included attracting other donors, who have provided important funds and knowledge, and the Land Commission being asked to expand its dispute resolution work into other areas such as concessions and community conflict over land and natural resources.
- The Bong LCC and the Gbarnga Hub agreed to collaborate in using the Hub's complaint mechanism and to conduct joint outreach activities through community engagement. The Land Dispute Resolution Taskforce (LDRT) held meetings at the national and at the county levels. Draft Land ADR Policy was completed and transitional strategies agreed to with Ministry of Justice and the Justice Sector.

Challenges Faced:

The project objective of developing of overall policies and laws to deal with land disputes is still pending, because the policy must be based on the findings of the pilot offices using the new system. There is currently no clear relationship between the alternative dispute resolution system and the judicial system. There is no formal referral system in either direction, and no recognition of alternative dispute resolution options under current laws. There is still a great need for both a land dispute resolution policy, and in conjunction with it, an overall alternative dispute resolution policy. Both of these need to be prepared in partnership with Liberia's judicial and legal actors, in order that the systems can work synergistically, rather than in silos as is currently the case.

The project also did not succeed in its initial methodology for identifying community mediator trainees. The first few batch of trainees tended to be people handpicked by local leaders, not necessarily people with the standing in the community or the talent/skill/motivation to mediate disputes. The first few trainings did not result in many cases coming to the LCC in question.

The initial trainings also did not include local authorities, which negatively affected their perception of and willingness to cooperate with LCCs. Thus, the LCCs at their inception had to deal with negative or

hostile reactions from local authorities, who did not understand or felt threatened by what the LCCs were doing.

Operating costs of LCCs have been much higher than predicted. Travel time and transport costs have been considerably larger than budgeted, resulting in fewer cases taken and solved than would be possible with more motorbikes, more per diem money and more money for petrol. This shortfall also makes it impossible to expand beyond the two districts per county covered in the pilot. In addition, limited travel and operations budgets have also made it difficult for the five LCCs, which are dispersed over a wide geographic area, to come together to share experiences and learn from each other, which would have been particularly useful in the early months as they each struggled with similar challenges.

Administrative delays have also been a problem for the project. Delays in getting funding from UN-Habitat Nairobi to the LCC staff in the field (due to UN-Habitat internal delays, and also logistics of getting salaries to staff in remote areas) caused one set of LCC staff to quit en masse. UN-Habitat and the LC have endeavored to ensure that such delays do not recur, but forward planning and ensuring a financial cushion in case of delays should be a priority in future.

Lessons Learned: Lack of initial indicators against which to measure the success of the project. Gender disaggregation of data has not implemented from the beginning. There has also been a lack of a clear baseline against which to measure outreach/awareness penetration. The fact that LCC offices are receiving a lot of visitors must indicate that the services are needed and useful, but it is unfortunate that there was no baseline before the existence of the LCCs.

Including the authorities in trainings and outreach events, as well as private discussions, helped to solve this problem and win supporters for the LCCs' methods. Including the local authorities in the local Land Dispute Resolution Taskforces set up by each LCC also helped promote ownership of the land dispute work.

Another best practice has been to ensure the presence of eminent persons in the community to witness the signing of agreements at the end of successful mediations. Closure ceremonies with such witnesses seem to have a beneficial effect on impact on compliance/sustainability. LCCs will in future work to identify such persons, and train and mentor them to ensure their support and participation.

12. "Support to Constitution Review Process in Liberia."

Dates: January 2015-December 2016

Budget: \$2,000,000

Partners: Constitutional review Committee (IP); Other partners; Governance Commission, Law Reform Commission, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs.

Locations: Monrovia and national

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to support an inclusive and participatory constitutional reform process in Liberia. Constitutional reform provides a unique opportunity for advancing reconciliation, political dialogue, peace consolidation and towards achieving consensus on underlying issues and the nature of the state best suited for Liberia.

Intended Beneficiaries: House of Representatives Constitutional Review Committee.

Results Achieved:

- The civic engagements grant, legislators and their constituents with facilitation of civic groups have the opportunity to consult on prioritization of proposals and their impact on human and civil rights of the citizens, which provides the citizens to better understand Liberia’s international obligations within the global human rights framework.
- The House Representative has itself conducted three public consultations to review and analyze the 25 proposals submitted to the President. No final endorsement has been made, however, consultations already held on the proposals have provided an opportunity for a deepened dialogue and engagement with citizens.
- The project strategy of engagement of civil society/media organizations ensures a wider dispersion of the dialogue to enable the attainment of better understanding of the intervening factors and perceptions and hence the possibility of crafting a joint agreement on the prioritized way forward.
- The project continues to facilitate an inclusive and participatory constitutional review process while advancing reconciliation, political dialogue and peace consolidation. The process has been underpinned by consensus building amongst various stakeholders on creating an enabling environment for different phases.

Challenges Faced:

The divergent views of various stakeholders on issues such as peacebuilding and reconciliation together with the complexity and sensitive of these subjects meant that the coordination of the project was challenging. The Ebola virus made it impossible to convene meetings, trainings etc.

Lessons Learned: Constitutional reform is a very political process, involving not only the mandated national institutions but also involving public engagement and perception. The project needed to have had a more robust and direct strategy of engagement of CSOs from the onset complementary to the ongoing consultation and dialogue by mandated national institutions.

13. “Women’s Economic Empowerment: Building Peace, Promoting Prosperity.”

Dates: October 2013-December 2016

Budget: \$2,000,000

Partners: Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection, National Adult Education Association Liberia, Educare, Foundation for Community Initiatives

Locations: Key concession areas and communities relying on extractive industry in Sinoe, Grand Gedeh, Gbarpolu, Grand Bassa and Cape Mount/Bomi. Border communities in Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Lofa, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, and Maryland

Purpose

The project aimed to increase the economic security of women to generate and manage their own incomes in five key concessions areas and seven border counties across Liberia. The project targeted 4,000 rural and young women and provided through the provision of basic literacy and numeracy, business skills, and financial management trainings. The project also sought to help increase local confidence in the security sector by partnering with the Mano River Union, GoL security services, and the Association for Women in Cross Border Trade, as well as provide increase community awareness of the PBF-support Security and Justice hubs.

Intended Beneficiaries

Women and girls in concessions areas and border communities.

Results Achieved:

- Over 4,000 women from 43 communities are utilizing VSLAs for access to credit.
- Over 3,500 women in 22 communities have the capacity to participate in decision making as it relates to their rights in the management of natural resources and land.
- Project monitoring records showed that over 90 percent of the women trained had begun setting aside small amount of money monthly as savings.
- Project monitoring data also reports that women beneficiaries are able to read and write and also assist their children to do their homework as a result of their participation in adult literacy classes.
- Women participants reported increased levels of self-confidence and are better able to articulate issues of their rights related to Natural Resource Management.
- The project was able to mobilize additional financial resources from Norway and Sweden by leveraging activities and relationships from the Joint UN Program on Rural Women Economic Empowerment which also targets rural women and women in cross border trade.

Challenges Faced: The project reported many of the same challenges as the Women’s Peace Hut project, namely: (1) delays in the start-up of activities caused by overly optimistic timelines; (2) significant delays in startup due to the outbreak of Ebola; and (3) heavy rains during the rainy seasons causing many rural communities to be inaccessible.

Interestingly, project reports also highlight negative effects on communication between UN Women and PBF caused by the relocation of the PBF Secretariat. This was mostly due to delays in recruitment for staff for the new Secretariat.

Lessons Learned: The project highlighted the need for greater flexibility in implementation plans. This was particularly pronounced during the EVD outbreak but also during more regular project delays caused by Liberia’s rainy season or the need for additional community trainings.

Project reports also highlight the importance of managing community expectations in order to ensure a “Do No Harm” approach. This is especially important if stipends are given and projects must ensure that the exact amount that beneficiaries will receive are clearly communicated.

The project also demonstrates that value that projects focused on economic empowerment can bring to donor support peacebuilding efforts. By empowering women and ensuring increased economic security for communities prone to violence projects can help reduce key drivers of conflict.

Lastly, the existence of grassroots local structures, community based organizations created crucial entry points to help in the identification, mobilization, and recruitment of project beneficiaries.

14. “Support to the establishment of a land disputes prevention and resolution system in Liberia - Phase 2.”

Dates: October 1, 2013-March 31, 2015; end date revised to June 20, 2015

Budget: \$2,000,000

Partners: Land Commission

Locations: Monrovia, Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Maryland, Montserrado, Margibi

Purpose: Grievances over land are seen as both a cause and consequence of Liberia's civil war; this project will take both a bottom-up and top-down approach to land conflict resolution, first by supporting the resolution of real-time conflicts at local level and the collection of data and evidence from that work; this in turn will be used for policymaking at the central level to prevent and resolve future conflicts.

Intended Beneficiaries: Land Commission.

Results Achieved:

- Land Commission/New Agency's land administration capacity has been improved and here has been an improved understanding of urban disputes, and their effects on women, as well as the displaced, for Land Commission/New Agency.
- Reported data shows an increase in the number of persons that are aware of their land rights, land ADR and who preferred to use ADR option through the LCCs. 98.5 percent of key informants (officials), including County Superintendents, District Commissioners, Clan chiefs, and the Judiciary, and 68 percent of the general population in the ten Districts where the LCCs operate are aware of their land rights, Land ADR options and the Land Commission. The LCCs are also above target for officials that are aware of the LCC operations and the ADR option.
- Outreach education awareness activities implemented by the LCCs have progressively reached more people. As a result, more people are bringing their land cases to the LCCs and in particular women and youth. The outreach, education and awareness activities included radio talk shows and phone in programs on local radio stations, presentations of LCC messages, distribution and viewing of land resolution program documents. Other awareness activities included sensitization of the communities on ADR through drama performance and through town criers.
- The LCCs have recorded an increase in the number and percentage of cases that have been recorded. 1,250 land dispute cases have been recorded and 177 resolved. Disaggregated data indicated that 518 cases were reported by women and 732 by men.
- Overlaps were eliminated and synergies established and the Justice and Security Hubs Regional Justice and Security Hubs were part of the LDRT in Bong and Lofa LCCs. The Bong LCC and the Gbarnga Hub agreed to collaborate in using the Hub's complaint mechanism, and to conduct joint outreach activities through community engagement. Seven joint activities were held between the Bong LCC and Gbarnga Hub. This was above the target. LDRT meetings were held at the national and at the county level. A Draft Land ADR Policy was completed and two transitional strategies have been agreed to with the Ministry of Justice and Justice Sector.
- LCCs in the various counties established land mediation centers in different locations of the Districts and Communities to peacefully resolve land disputes. Mediation practitioners from different mediation centers can preside over land disputes in different centers. Where a disputant expressed dissatisfaction with any mediation practitioner, that practitioner was changed to enhance transparency. This has reduced the risk of conflicts in many communities thus promoting peaceful co-existence.

Challenges Faced:

Delays in signing the Cooperation Agreement between UN-Habitat and the Land Commission caused delayed disbursement of funds for field activities. Low achievements during 2014 were due to the Ebola epidemic. This scenario was not foreseen and could therefore not have been captured in the risk management matrix. UN-Habitat had to allocate additional funds to the Land Commission to boost the LCC operations midway through the project.

The LCCs are above target for recorded cases but below target for resolved cases. This is due to backlogs in surveys and recalcitrant behavior by some disputants during the mediation process and the lack of an enforcement mechanism.

Lessons Learned: Initially, some of the country land commissioners, surveyors and chiefs felt that the functions of the LCCs were going to overlap with their roles, which was not the case. After seeing the impact of the ADR, they are willing to work with them and are even transferring cases to LCCs.

Lack of compensation for voluntary mediation practitioners negatively affected their commitment to mediation activities.

The ADR method is well accepted by the people because it enhances traditions and relationships, does not favor any participant due to position or relation, and it is provided at no cost to the disputants.

15. “Enhancing Access to Security and Justice at the Decentralized level - Harper and Zwedru Hub Regions.”

Dates: November 2013-2016

Budget: \$3,062,405

Partners: The Liberian Judiciary, Ministry of Justice and its law enforcement agencies including the Liberia National Police, Bureau for Immigration and Naturalization, Solicitor General’s Office, Bureau for Corrections and Rehabilitation, Probation Program, Juvenile Diversion Program, Sexual Gender Based Violence (SGBV) Crimes Unit, Independent National Commission on Human Rights.

Locations: “Harper Hub” to cover Maryland, Grand Kru and River Gee and the “Zwedru Hub” to cover Sinoe and Grand Gedeh.

Purpose: Enhanced access to justice and security at regional and county level in preparation for UNMIL transition

Intended Beneficiaries: Citizens of Maryland, Grand Kru, River Gee, Sinoe and Grand Gedeh

Results Achieved:

- The project completed and implemented all six services as approved by the Board:
 - Enhanced public defense and prosecution
 - Public awareness on hub services
 - Roll out of complaints mechanism
 - Roll out of SGBV Crimes Unit
 - Provision of human rights monitors in all five counties
 - Civic and legal education of traditional leaders.

- The roll out of the traditional leaders' project implemented through Search for Common Ground, a national CSO, first conducted a training of trainers' workshop for eight community based civil society organizations. Of those trained, five received grants to provide civic and human rights education to citizens within the region and legal education to traditional leaders to improve their understanding of their rights and responsibilities.
- Through pre-deployment training and the establishment of the SGBV Crimes Unit in Hubs 2 and 3, capacities of criminal justice actors and medical workers involved in the referral pathway of SGBV crimes were increased.
- Awareness on sexual violence was raised among citizens in the regions through a national CSO, Development Education Network.
- A massive awareness campaign was conducted by the Public Service Officers (PSOs) and coordinators in five counties covering Hubs 2 and 3, reaching out to approximately 8,968 residents (5,926 males and 3,042 females) in 253 communities.
- Support to SGBV victims and survivors increased during the year. The SGBV Crimes Units in the regions received 49 cases through their hotlines, processed 20 cases through the courts, and successfully convicted 15 offenders. During the same period in 2015, only nine cases were processed through the courts, resulting in only seven convictions. It is therefore easy to assume that the high number of cases prosecuted and successfully convicted can be attributed to the JSJP, as the program provided the necessary training and empowered and deployed criminal justice actors to the regions.

Challenges Faced: The Justice and Security Policy Management Board's phased implementation approach, which focused on the enhancement of existing services in the region through the roll out of six priority services, instead of a simultaneous implementation of infrastructure construction and service delivery. Criminal justice actors deployed to provide enhanced services were challenged with dilapidated or no infrastructure space to professionally provide the service for which they have been deployed. During the justification for the location of Hubs 2 and 3, it was noted that these five counties were vulnerable to security threats and therefore needed the deployment of security officers to the regions. However, due to the lack of infrastructure, LNP and BIN officers have not been deployed in the numbers as expected; although due to UNMIL drawdown from the area, the government has managed to deploy some officers to support the local detachment. Speaking to citizens of the regions in a recent M&E visit, it was noted that the absence of infrastructure is also being interpreted as marginalization of Southeasterners by the GoL, which is not positive in the consolidation of peace.

The removal of UNDP as fund managers from the Justice and Security Policy Management Board during the program restructuring created a gap in the implementation as UNDP was not aware of the implementation of key decisions in line with their operational policy. This in many cases has delayed implementation.

The restructuring of the Justice and Security Joint Program which reduced the meeting time from monthly to quarterly had a bearing on the program implementation. Discussion and decisions about the implementation of the program were delayed due to the quarterly meetings schedules.

Lessons Learned:

Consultation in most cases lead to successful implementation. During the recruitment of the Case Liaison and Victim Support Officer the remuneration determined for officers was thought by the institution to be

acceptable. Having identified qualified candidates, none of the candidates accepted the remuneration. To resolve this issue PMU had to consult through the Sector Finance Committee where the project budget had to be recast without any additional costs and was acceptable to all.

It is necessary to strengthen both the "supply side" and the "demand side" of the rule of law equation. Service cannot be enhanced without infrastructure.

The monitoring and evaluation of any project is a key element. However, the JSJP suffered, as this element was not included within the program management unit, but noted as a responsibility of the PBO.

It is important to take into consideration how other areas of government affects service delivery. For example, even with the improved service delivery in five counties, citizens access to these services are hampered by bad road network, as the southeast of Liberia was cut off for six months during the "rainy season". With the onset of climate change, this isolation period may increase.

Leadership by national authorities is critical for building confidence and for long-term sustainability

16. "Justice and Security Joint Program (UNOPS, UNDP)."

Dates: February 2012-December 2016

Budget: \$7,766,494

Partners: The Liberian Judiciary; Ministry of Justice and its law enforcement agencies including the Liberia National Police, Bureau for Immigration and Naturalization, Solicitor General's Office, Bureau for Corrections and Rehabilitation; the Probation Services; SGBV Crimes Unit; Independent National Commission on Human Rights

Locations: Bong, Lofa and Nimba Counties

Purpose: Enhanced access to justice and security at regional and county level in preparation for UNMIL transition.

Intended Beneficiaries: The Liberian Judiciary; Ministry of Justice and its law enforcement agencies including the Liberia national Police, Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, Solicitor General Office, Bureau of Correction and Rehabilitation, Probation Program, Juvenile Diversion Program, SGBV Crimes Unit, Independent National Commission on Human Rights.

Results Achieved:

- With support from the GoL and international partners, security institutions were operationally prepared to take over full security responsibilities on June 30, 2016.
- Capacities of security officers and institutions were enhanced to ensure an easy and peaceful transition of UNMIL; trained and logistically empowered officers were deployed to strategic locations in the leeward counties to replace UNMIL officers and provide improved service to the people of these communities.
- Legal frameworks needed to improve the professionalism of security institutions were developed and passed into Law.
- In improving access to justice, three magisterial courts were constructed in three populated strategic locations in Bong, Lofa and Nimba counties.

- 60 college graduates are currently undergoing thirteen-month legal training to become associate magistrates in an effort to enhance the quality of service at the first courts of instance.
- Logistical capacity of the Criminal Justice System was strengthened through the rollout of the Magistrate Sitting Program (MSP) in Bong county.
- Communications between national security institutions was improved through the completion of installation of communications equipment on the remaining towers in the Hub 1 region. As a result, security institutions can effectively communicate between nine counties, enhancing linkages between institutions, whilst covering 28 sites due to completion of this installation and the US Government has since provided financial support for the maintenance and expansion of the network throughout Liberia.
- The region has witnessed an improvement in quality service delivery over this period. LNP/PSU officers were trained in community policing to improve relationship between them and the communities they serve. With this new training, LNP/PSU officers conducted 23 confidence patrols, reaching out to 233 communities and effectively quieted 19 criminal incidents, as opposed to 16 during 2015. BIN/BPU officers strengthened border security by conducting surveillance patrols in 190 border communities through 23 community visits.
- Public awareness about hub services increased in the region as Public Outreach Officers visited 203 communities amounting to 20,374 residents of which 13,257 were male and 7,117 is female.
- There were increased trial and support to victims of SGBV related cases. The Unit handled 105 cases through the SGBV hotlines, 23 cases were processed through the courts, of which 11 went to trial with 8 convictions.

Challenges Faced: The project experienced significant construction delays. The completion of the Circuit Court, the residing and rotating judges' residences and the PSU dormitory was completed in December 2013. The provision of adequate water supply was tardy and the perimeter fence are still incomplete. These delays have been attributed to cost overrun by a prior management of UNOPS, which was discovered through a detailed financial assessment of the project by the successor management team in the first quarter of 2013. Steps to resolve this shortfall and complete the Hub were initiated, however, adequate funding was not made available for a period of time. This had a negative impact on the delivery rate of these buildings, thereby affecting the delivery of judicial and justice services from the Hub.

Similarly, the construction of a cell-block at the new Monrovia Central Prison, situated in Cheesemanburg, also experienced significant delays. However, UNOPS' new management team (2013) revised the initial design and master plan and in accordance with UNOPS' design unit prepared and delivered a report informing the relevant stakeholders about the failures and risks that the initial design presented. UNOPS agreed to re-design a single cellblock at no cost emphasizing the need of developing a complete and detailed master plan if extra funding were available. UNOPS proceeded to re-design the single cellblock and completed the tender process but the project was never completed.

Lessons Learned: It is important to take into consideration how other areas of government affects service delivery. For example, even with the Hub constructed in Bong to service three counties, the absence of useable road network affects service delivery, especially during the rainy season when access to two hub counties are not passable.

The monitoring and evaluation of any project is a key element. However, the JSJP suffered, as this element was not included within the program management unit, but noted as a responsibility of the PBO.

Annex D: Data Collection Instruments

RUNOs	
Project:	Date:
Location:	___ Male ___ Female
<p>Confidentiality and Informed Consent Statements: Thank you for taking the time to meet with us. We are conducting an independent evaluation of the UN Peacebuilding Fund’s portfolio in Liberia. We have been hired by the UN Peacebuilding Support Office in New York for this assignment but are not employees of the UN. All information shared will be kept anonymous. We will aggregate and present our findings from interviews in a way that cannot be tied back to any individual or organization. Therefore, please feel free to speak openly and candidly with us.</p> <p>Your participation is voluntary. Please feel free to ask to skip any question that you do not feel comfortable answering or ending the interview at any point. In terms of use, we will produce a draft evaluation report following our fieldwork which will be shared with PBF stakeholders for their comments. We’ll then revise and finalize the draft based on comments received. PBSO/PBO will then be responsible for the circulation of the report. We expect that the Executive Summary of the evaluation will be publically available and possibly also the report in its entirety depending on its sensitivity.</p> <p>Thank you again for your willingness to participate in this interview. Do you have any questions before we get started?</p>	

Relevance

1. Part of our task is to understand what PBF tried to achieve in Liberia and how this might have changed over time (2011-2016). From what you know about PBF, what were its overarching goals?
 1. Did these change over time?
2. What about for your project [insert project name]? What was the Theory of Change behind it?
 1. How was the TOC developed? (Probe community, government, donor consultations, etc.)
3. To what extent did you consider traditional/informal conflict resolution and reconciliation models?

Efficiency:

4. What was the level of government engagement with your activity? (Probe funding, participation, future support, alignment with plans, etc.)
 1. To what extent did your project align with government priorities and plans?
 2. Were there any factors or issues that hindered/facilitate your work with government?
5. Did you work with civil society?
 1. To what extent were they involved?
 2. What do you think their involvement will be in the future?
6. Are you familiar with the Liberia Peacebuilding Priority Plans?
 1. Did these plans influence your program?
 2. Did you see any advantages/disadvantages in using them? (Probe on complementarity, donor coordination, etc.)
7. What was your overall experience with the PBF?
 1. What was your experience during proposal/project design?

2. Funding?
3. Reporting?
4. Communication and Support?

Effectiveness:

8. What would you cite as the major achievements of your project?
 1. What about challenges and shortcoming?
 2. Was there anything particularly innovative about your project? (Probe on risk-taking, new ways of operating, new partners)
 3. Were there any other development partners working on this topic?
9. What were the major lessons you took away from the experience?
 1. Any advice to PBF for supporting future post-conflict transitions?
10. Did you see any unanticipated results from your project? (Probe on conflict sensitivity, aid dependency, etc.)

Gender/Vulnerable Groups:

11. Did you make any efforts to support any particular groups (women, youth, ethnic minorities, former combatants, etc.)?
 1. Did they have any specific needs?
 2. Did they experience the activity in any unique ways?

Sustainability:

12. Are any of your activities ongoing?
 1. What do you think are the prospects for sustainability?
 2. Any major concerns?
 3. What is the extent of Government or Development Partner interest?
 4. To what extent was sustainability considered during design?
13. If you could do it all over again, would you do anything differently?
 1. Steps to better engage GoL?
 2. Steps to better align with other donors/partners?
 3. Steps to better strength CSO capacity?
 4. Steps to better raise community awareness/engagement?

Wrap Up:

14. Our task is to provide as complete and accurate an assessment of PBF support as possible. Is there anything we didn't ask about that is important for us to know?

Beneficiaries

Project:

Date:

Location:

____ Male ____ Female

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Thank you again for your willingness to participate in this interview. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Relevance

1. To begin, please tell me a little about your participation in [project name]?
 1. Who came up with the idea?
 1. Was anyone from your community involved in the design?
 2. Did the project try to address any specific issue/need in your community?

Efficiency:

2. How was the project paid for?
 1. Did your community provide any support (probe for funding, labor, or other in-kind)?

Effectiveness:

3. Has anything changed in your community as a result of the [project name]? (Probe for evidence of attitude or behavior change).
4. If you could start all over again, would you do anything different?
 1. Address same issue/need?
 2. Work with different partners?

Gender:

5. Who got the chance to participate in the project?
 1. Was any group left out? (Probe by sex, age, ethnicity, disability, former combatant, etc.)
6. Have you seen any changes in how groups interact as a result of the project?

Sustainability:

7. Are any activities from the project still going?
 1. Do you think this activities/results will continue?
 2. Are there any steps that your community could take to ensure they continue?
 3. What has been the level of government interest/participation in the project?
 1. Is there anything that could help increase their interest?

Wrap Up:

8. Our task is to provide as complete and accurate an assessment of PBF support as possible. Is there anything we didn't ask about that is important for us to know?

GoL Officials

Project:

Date:

Location:

____ Male ____ Female

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Thank you again for your willingness to participate in this interview. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Relevance

9. To begin, please tell me a little about your familiarity with PBF/PBO. Overall, what is it trying to achieve?
 1. How does it try to achieve this?
 2. Why did it choose to try to address this?
10. From what you've seen/heard, how was the PBF developed?
 1. What was the extent of consultation with government?
 2. Do the PBF activities align with or complement government peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts?

Efficiency:

11. Please tell me a bit about the GoL's involvement in PBF. Has it helped finance any activities?
 1. What, where, how much? (Probe on *intended vs actual*)
 2. Were there any issues in raising these funds? (Probe on aligned with government procure systems, entrenched interests in Senate, etc.)
12. From what you've seen/heard of the PBF, do you think that it was implemented efficiently?
 1. Would you have done anything different?

Effectiveness:

13. Looking back over the last six years, can you point to any changes that PBF helped support?
 1. If so, how did it succeed? What was important?
 2. If not, why not?
14. Was there anything unique about PBF compared to other peacebuilding and reconciliation donor programs?
 1. Did it take certain risks?
 2. Did it work in new areas or with different groups?
 3. Did it use new and innovative methods?
15. What lessons do you think that PBF Liberia can take away on how the UN can best support transitions to peace?

Gender:

16. To what extent do you think PBF helped address issues particular to women and youth?
 1. Were any of the actions particularly useful?
 2. Are there any ways this could have been improved?

Sustainability:

17. 2017 is a year of significant transition in Liberia. What do you think will happen to PBF activities?
 1. Is the government interested in funding any activities going forward?

Wrap-Up:

18. Our task is to provide as complete and accurate an assessment of PBF support as possible. Is there anything we didn't ask about that is important for us to know?

Other Peacebuilding Donors

Project:

Date:

Location:

___ Male ___ Female

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Thank you again for your willingness to participate in this interview. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Relevance

19. To begin, please tell me a little about your familiarity with PBF/PBO. Overall, what is it trying to achieve?
 1. How does it try to achieve this?
 2. Why did it choose to try to address this?
20. From what you've seen/heard, how was the PBF developed?
 1. What was the extent of consultation with government?
 2. What was the extent of consultation with local communities?
 3. What was the extent of consultation with other donor or international partners supporting the transition process?

Efficiency:

21. Are you generally familiar with the "Peacebuilding Priority Plans"? If so, do you think these were helpful?
 1. Did these help identify and prioritize key issues?
 2. Did they help coordinate donor efforts?
22. Overall, in terms of efficiency, what is your impressions on how the PBF functioned?
 1. Did it face any major delays or issues?

Effectiveness:

23. Now, overall, in terms of effectiveness, did you see any key changes supported by PBF?
 1. Did it help address underlying roots of conflict?
 2. Did it achieve any important outcomes in security, justice, or reconciliation?
 3. Was it unique and/or catalytic?
 4. Did it take risks?
24. What lessons do you think that PBF Liberia can take away on how the UN can best support transitions to peace?

Gender:

25. To what extent do you think PBF helped address issues particular to women and youth?
 1. Were any of the actions particularly useful?
 2. Are there any ways this could have been improved?

Sustainability:

26. 2017 is a year of significant transition in Liberia. What do you think will become of PBF activities/results?
1. Are there any that are more likely to endure?
 2. What are the major threats to sustainability?
 3. How strong is the commitment of the Government to continuing these activities?

Wrap-Up:

27. What steps could PBF take to improve its support in Liberia in the future?
1. Steps to better engage GoL?
 2. Steps to better align with other donors/partners?
 3. Steps to better strength CSO capacity?
 4. Steps to better raise community awareness/engagement?

PBSO and UN NYC Staff

Project:

Date:

Location:

___ Male ___ Female

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Thank you again for your willingness to participate in this interview. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Relevance:

28. What steps did PBSO take to align the Liberia PBF to its country context?

Efficiency:

29. How timely was the process of approve the Priority Plans? What were the main factors facilitating or delaying it?

30. Were any efficiencies gained or lost by implementing through the 2nd and 3rd PPs?

Effectiveness:

31. How effective was the support provided to RUNOs, the UNCT, and the JSC, and other stakeholders throughout of the process (approval, design, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation)?

Gender:

32. What steps did PBSO take to ensure PBF Liberia considered and address issues specific to gender and youth? Any suggestions for improvement in the future?

Sustainability:

33. What do you think is the likelihood of activities and results continuing after PBF support? What could be done to strengthen sustainability?

Overall Assessment:

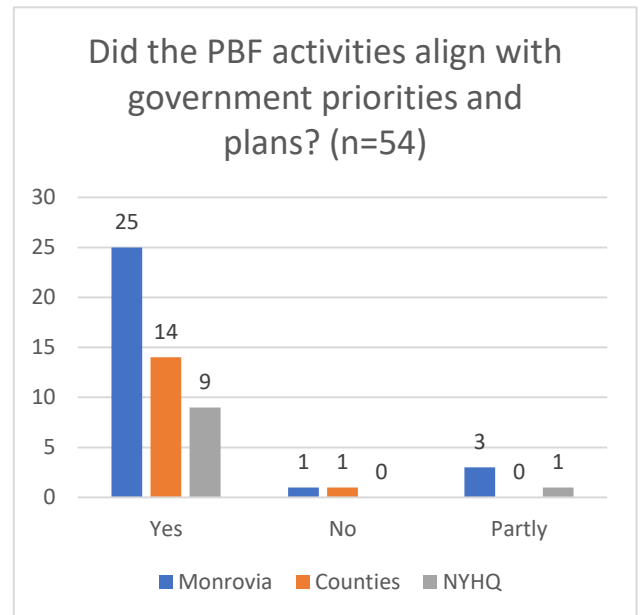
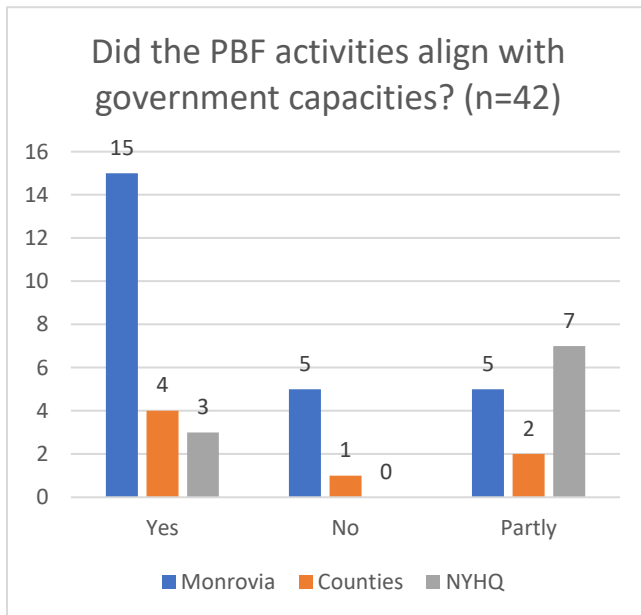
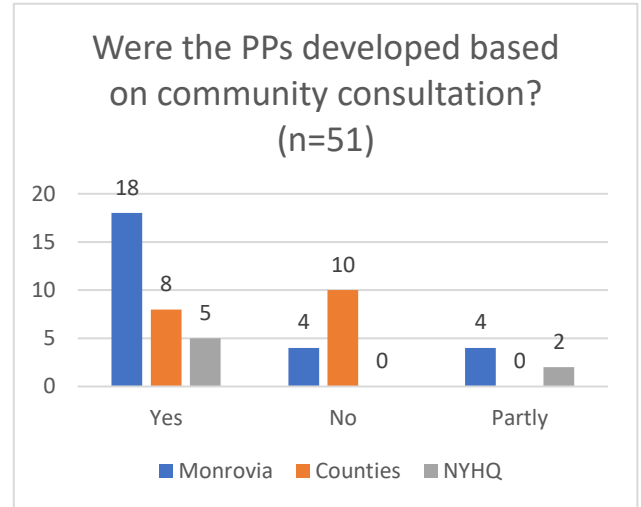
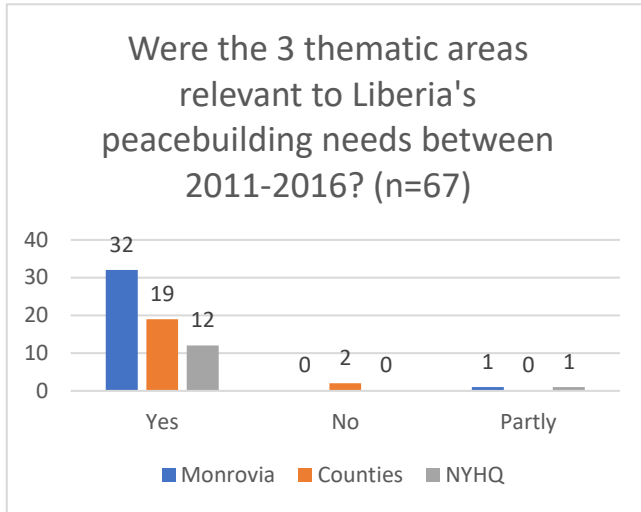
34. How transparent, effective, and efficient was the decision-making regarding the PBF/PBSO support?

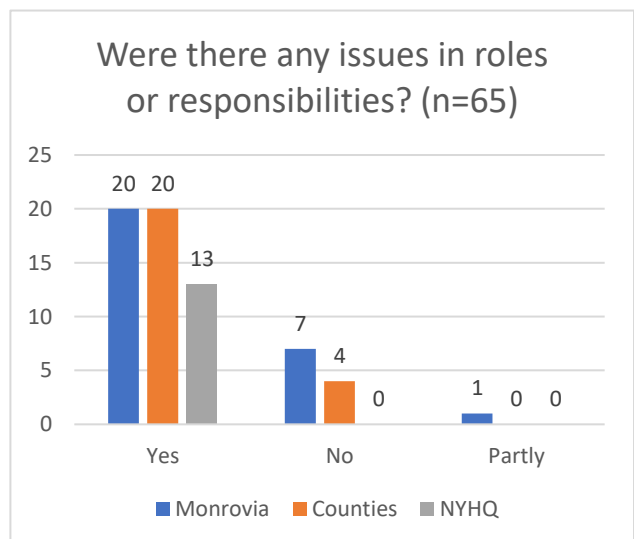
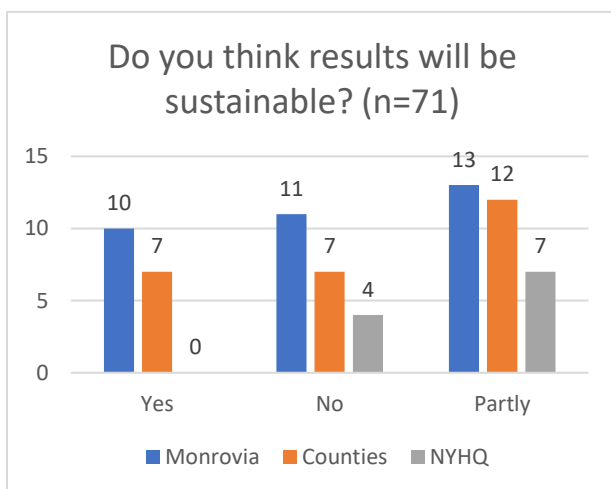
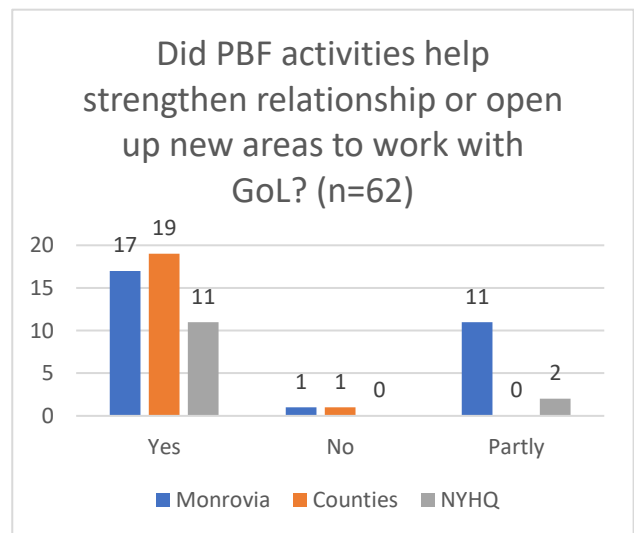
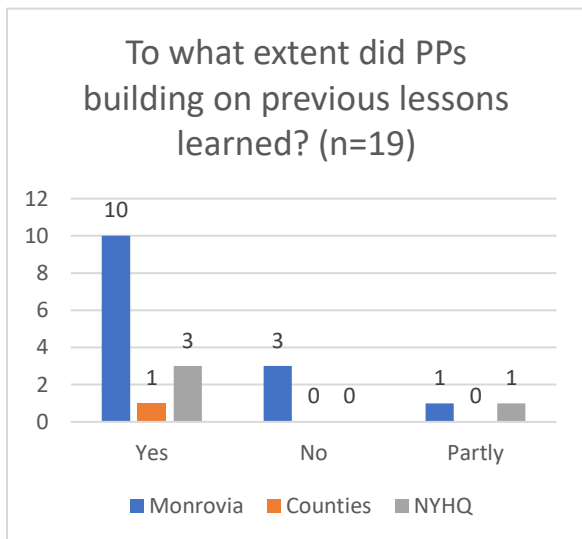
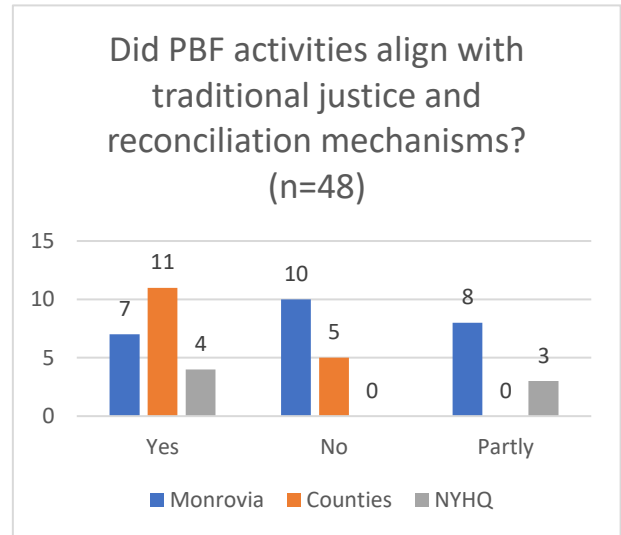
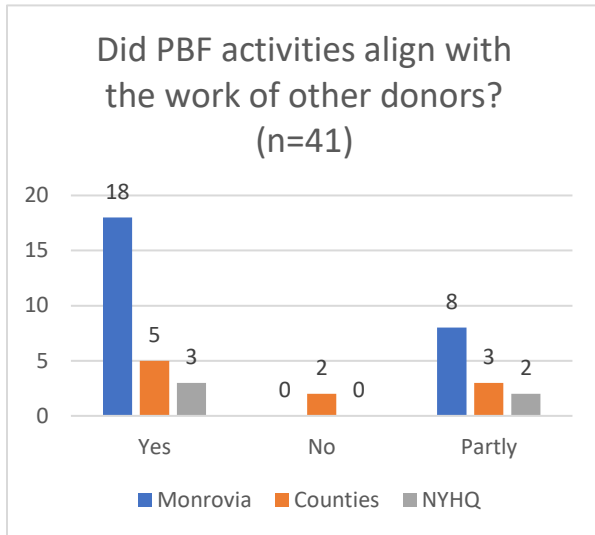
35. How does PBF Liberia compare to other PBF countries?

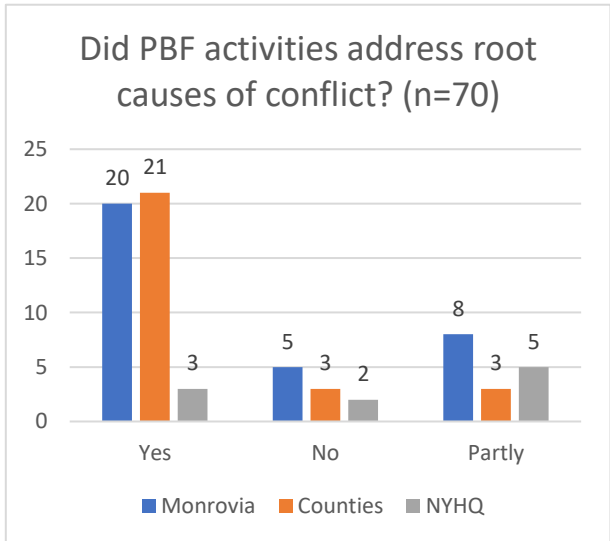
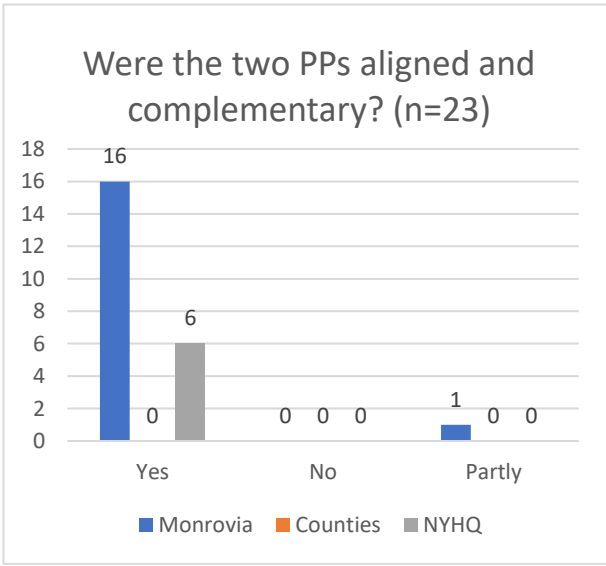
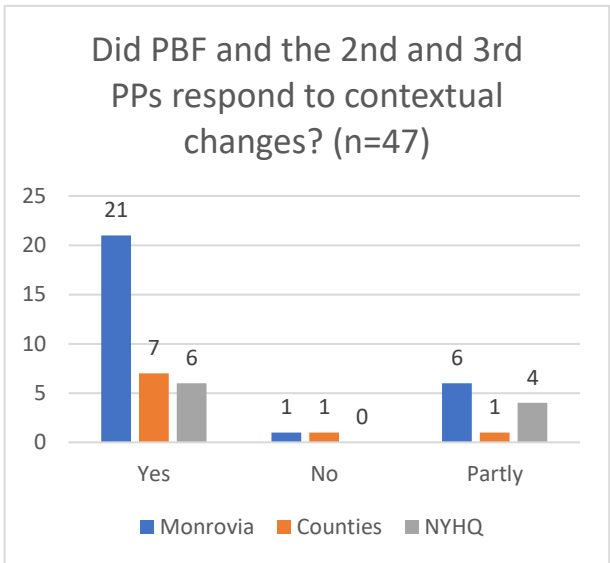
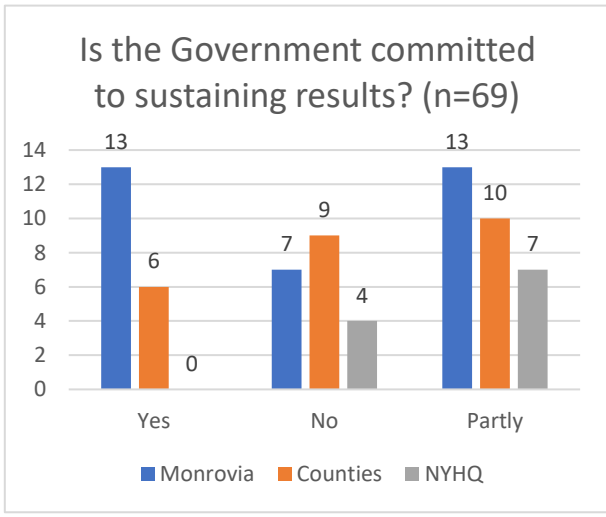
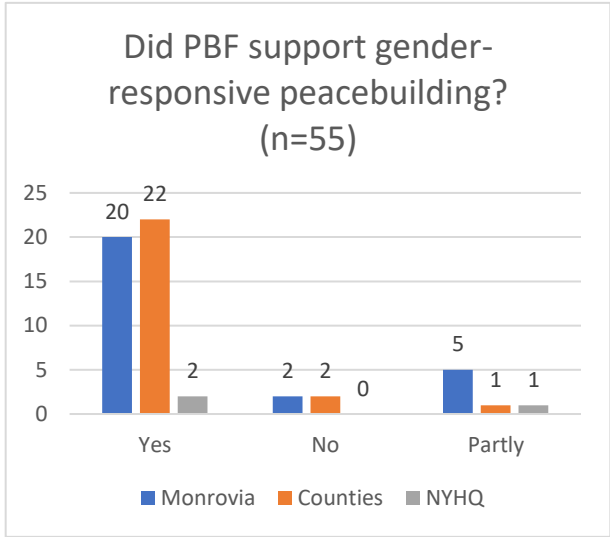
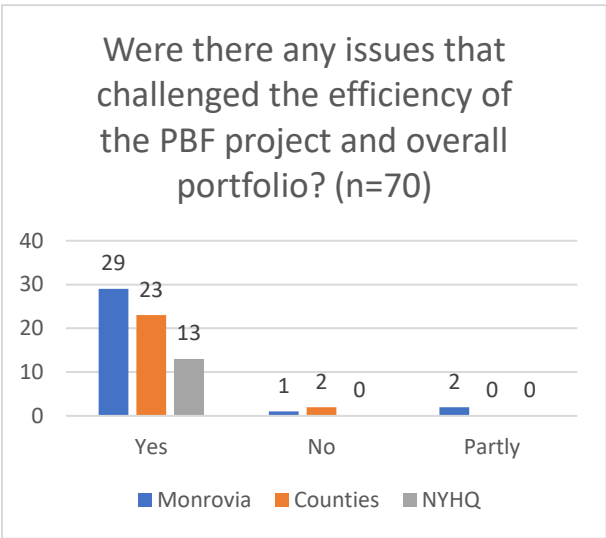
Wrap-up:

36. Our job is to provide as comprehensible an assessment of PBF Liberia as possible. Are there any important questions we didn't ask but should or anything you feel is important for us to understand for our assessment?

Annex F: Summary of interview responses







Annex E: Endnotes

- General Assembly. *A/70/262: Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture*, May 12, 2016.
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- UNMIL. "Unmil Non-Paper on Peacebuilding Recommendations for Liberia." Monrovia, Liberia. , November 2015.

¹ General Assembly Resolution A/60/180 and Security Council resolution 1645 (2005).

² Richard Snellen, Oscar Bloh, and Julius Togba, "Peacebuilding Fund Liberia: Mid-Term Review," ed. Liberia Peacebuilding Office (March 2010), 11.

³ PBSO, "UN Peacebuilding Fund: Business Plan 2014-2016, 5.

⁴ "Guidelines for Applying to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)," October 2009. http://www.unpbf.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/application_guidelines.pdf

⁵ General Assembly, *A/70/262: Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture*, May 12, 2016.

⁶ <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/PB000>

⁷ <http://www.unpbf.org> and <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/PB000>

⁸ These are Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

⁹ PBSO, "UN Peacebuilding Fund: Business Plan 2014-2016, 3.

¹⁰ Government of Liberia, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Division of External Resources and Debt Management, "Mid-year Assistance Report, (July-December 2014) FY 2014/2015" February 2015.

¹¹ Evaluation of Liberia Peacebuilding Office, 2015.

¹² Annual Report of the Joint Steering Committee in Liberia, December 20, 2016, 4.

¹³ Draft Liberia Peacebuilding Programme, Revised 3rd Draft, 2 May 2011, 3.

¹⁴ Final Draft Liberia Peacebuilding Programme, 02 May 2011, 3. <http://www.unpbf.org/wp-content/uploads/Final-Approved-LPP-May-5-20111.pdf>

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- ¹⁵ Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, Governance Commission, Independent National Commission on Human Rights, Liberia Peace Initiative and Civil Society Organizations, supported by United Nations Liberia. 2013. *Towards a reconciled, peaceful and prosperous Liberia, strategic roadmap for national healing, peacebuilding and reconciliation*, 15.
- ¹⁶ Liberia's Agenda for Transformation, 2012-2017.
- ¹⁷ Revised Peacebuilding Priority Plan, 2013-2016.
- ¹⁸ Snellen, 7.
- ¹⁹ "Sustaining peace and securing development: Liberia peacebuilding plan," S/2017/282, 4.
- ²⁰ http://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_notice.cfm?notice_id=38757
- ²¹ Library of Congress. "The African-American Mosaic." <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam002.html>.
- ²² Amos Sawyer, *Beyond Plunder: Toward Democratic Governance in Liberia* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005); Jon D. Unruh, 'Land Rights in Postwar Liberia: The Volatile Part of the Peace Process,' *Land Use Policy*, 26, (April 2009), 425-433.
- ²³ The enormity of the human costs of the conflict can be seen in the Ipsos/ICRC, *Liberia: Opinion Survey and in-Depth Research 2009* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, December 2009).
- ²⁴ Steve Radelet, 'Reviving Economic Growth in Liberia,' Working Paper no. 13 (Center for Global Development, November 2007), 6.
- ²⁵ Although the evaluation team noted that only \$29,978,595 was listed as programmed on the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Gateway portal.
- ²⁶ Key informant interviews were semi-structured and held with individuals identified as particularly knowledgeable about a PBF intervention or the PBF Liberia portfolio, the Liberia country context, or PBSO, UNMIL, and/or PBF in general. Small group interviews were conducted with a group of 2-6 individuals. They did not constitute focus groups as these utilized a semi-structured interview guide, not a defined FGD facilitation guide, and did not involve transcription. Round table discussions were more open-ended discussions with a group of identified experts to explore and better understand key issues identified in earlier fieldwork.
- ²⁷ Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, Governance Commission, Independent National Commission on Human Rights, Liberia Peace Initiative and Civil Society Organizations, supported by United Nations Liberia. 2013. *Towards a Reconciled, Peaceful and Prosperous Liberia, Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation*, 15.
- ²⁸ Nessa Kenny, Marina Fawn McLellan, Sabrina Shanze Quamber, Alexandra van Nievelt and Bryant Zuniga, "Failure and Turnaround in United Nations Peacebuilding Fund Projects," Columbia, SIPA June 8, 2016, 35.
- ²⁹ JSC Annual Report 2015.
- ³⁰ As listed in Peacebuilding Support Office, "Un Peacebuilding Fund Business Plan: 2014-2016," (2014).
- ³¹ P.A. Rib House, "A Workshop on Lessons Learned from the Regional Justice and Security Hub in Gbarnga," in *Peacebuilding Joint Steering Committee* (Monrovia, Liberia. June 2012).
- ³² United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office, "United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (Pbf): Guidelines on Application and Use of Funds," (April 2014).
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ Carlos Carravilla, "Evaluation of the Liberia Peacebuilding Office," (2015).
- ³⁵ Ibid., 16.
- ³⁶ Peacebuilding Office, "Terms of Reference of the Liberia Peacebuilding Joint Steering Committee (for Approval) ."
- ³⁷ Office, United Nations Peacebuilding Support. "United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (Pbf): Guidelines on Application and Use of Funds." April 2014
- ³⁸ Mariska van Beijnum, "Challenges and Opportunities to Peacebuilding: Analysis of Strategic Issues Identified by Country-Specific Pbf Evaluations," *Clingendael Institute1* (June 2013).
- ³⁹ Office.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ The Law & Development Partnership, "Liberia Justice and Security Final Report," (LondonMay 2014).
- ⁴² Carravilla.

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- ⁴³ Although to their credit, PBF guidelines do state that projects should explore the “potential to achieve programmatic results going beyond the scope of individual UN agency achievement and taking advantage of their specific expertise and capacity.”
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