



United Nations
Peacebuilding

Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)

Strategic Plan 2017-2019

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I. Introduction

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

The PBF’s Strategic Plan for the period 2017-19, the third of its kind since three-year planning cycles commenced in 2013, sets a higher level of ambition than previous plans. The aim is to invest at least \$500 million in at least 40 countries over this period. This will serve as a stepping-stone to the objective set in the forthcoming Secretary-General’s Report on Sustaining Peace of \$500 million per year for the PBF.

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

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

The PBF will continue to be guided by its four Priority Areas (implement peace agreements; dialogue and coexistence; peace dividends; basic services) but also emphasize new investments that reflect lessons learned, the Sustaining Peace Resolutions and the [Secretary-General’s focus on prevention](#). A focus on inclusion, access, equality and rights will underpin these four Priority Areas, ensuring close synergies between the Sustaining Peace Resolutions and the 2030 Agenda. This means engaging to sustain peace before, during and after violent conflict. It also means being a strong vehicle to implement recommendations from the joint United Nations-World Bank study on preventing violent conflict, [Pathways for Peace](#). It has shown how prevention is cost effective, saves lives, and safeguards development gains. But the world today requires more concerted and inclusive efforts across political,

¹ Resolutions A/60/180 and S/RES/1645 (2005).

² The terms of reference for the fund were issued in the Report of the Secretary-General A/60/984, annex in 2006. They describe its scope, focus and role. They were amended in 2009 by the Report of the Secretary-General A/63/818 annex.

³ Resolutions A/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016).

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

To this effect, the PBF’s Strategic Plan 2017-19 will have three additional investment windows. They will allow the PBF to focus and track those investments while also helping to strengthen the Fund’s expertise and delivery networks. They are: i) cross-border and regional investments to help tackle transnational drivers of conflict; ii) facilitating transitions between different UN configurations and; iii) youth and women’s empowerment to foster inclusion and gender equality by expanding the [Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative](#) (GYPI) and raising the target of gender-responsive peacebuilding investments from 15 to 30%.

Over this period, the PBF will further consolidate its robust monitoring and evaluation system and enhance lessons learning through a new knowledge management system. These are important both for the Fund’s own investment decisions and the effectiveness of the wider UN system’s peacebuilding efforts. Past project and country portfolio evaluations helped inform this new Strategic Plan, in addition to the important recommendations from the PBF’s Fourth [Advisory Group](#) and from key reviews of recent years. These include the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture from 2015,⁴ and the subsequent concurrent resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council on Sustaining Peace.

II. Achievements of the 2014-2016 Business Plan

The preceding Business Plan saw many achievements and innovations that are now informing the new Strategic Plan, but contributions and allocations fell short of the Fund’s goals especially in view of the increase in crisis-affected situations. In the three years from 2014 to 2016, PBF transferred \$216,176,315⁵ in 27 countries. Over the same period, the Fund raised \$191,428,724, including contributions made through the Fund’s first-ever high-level pledging conference in September 2016⁶ and the interest accumulated. The goal had been \$300 million. Overcoming this discrepancy will be a key challenge for the new Strategic Plan period.

Table 1: Peacebuilding Fund Status 2014-2016

	Cummulative 2013	Annual 2014	Cummulative 2014	Annual 2015	Cummulative 2015	Annual 2016	Cummulative 2016	Total Business Plan
Deposits	\$540,102,571	\$78,317,949	\$ 618,420,520	\$ 53,492,573	\$ 671,913,093	\$ 57,760,691	\$ 729,673,784	\$ 189,571,213
Interest	\$ 20,001,464	\$ 341,783	\$ 20,343,247	\$ 596,823	\$ 20,940,070	\$ 918,905	\$ 21,858,975	\$ 1,857,511
Total Incomming	\$560,104,035	\$78,659,732	\$ 638,763,767	\$ 54,089,396	\$ 692,853,163	\$ 58,679,596	\$ 751,532,759	\$ 191,428,724
Refunds	\$ 13,236,337	\$10,935,377	\$ 24,171,714	\$ 11,202,086	\$ 35,373,800	\$ 6,555,511	\$ 41,929,311	\$ 28,692,974
AA fee (1%)	\$ 5,401,026	\$ 783,179	\$ 6,184,205	\$ 534,926	\$ 6,719,131	\$ 577,607	\$ 7,296,738	\$ 1,895,712
Direct & Other Costs	\$ 16,230,060	\$ 2,351,874	\$ 18,581,934	\$ 1,604,901	\$ 20,186,835	\$ 1,732,988	\$ 21,919,823	\$ 5,689,763
Transfers	\$428,974,099	\$93,845,885	\$ 522,819,984	\$ 63,456,168	\$ 586,276,152	\$ 58,874,262	\$ 645,150,414	\$ 216,176,315
Total Outgoing	\$450,605,185	\$96,980,938	\$ 547,586,123	\$ 65,595,995	\$ 613,182,118	\$ 61,184,857	\$ 674,366,975	\$ 223,761,790
Total Approved PBSO	\$428,974,099	\$93,868,890	\$ 522,842,989	\$ 63,456,168	\$ 586,299,157	\$ 60,974,987	\$ 647,274,143	\$ 218,300,044
Cash Balance (i)	\$122,735,187		\$ 115,349,358		\$ 115,044,845		\$ 119,095,095	
Committment Balance (ii)	\$ -		\$ (23,005)		\$ (23,005)		\$ (2,123,729)	
Total Balance	\$122,735,187		\$ 115,326,353		\$ 115,021,840		\$ 116,971,366	
<i>(i) Total incomming + Refunds - Total Outgoing (ii) Total Transfer-Total Approved</i>					<i>Certified by UNDP/MPTFO: www.mptf.undp.org</i>			

⁴ A/69/968 and S/2015/490 (2015) for the Review.

⁵ The above amount indicates funds that were approved through the IRF and PRF mechanisms during the Strategic Plan period.

⁶ The \$163 million pledged during the September 2016 pledging conference include anticipated contributions to be distributed over four years. Thus, in 2016, the PBF registered only \$58.6 million in income.

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

The annual [Reports of the Secretary-General](#) provide further details of the PBF's key achievements over the period 2014-16 that illustrate how it fulfils its niche. Examples include how the Fund's investments have been *catalytic* both in terms of generating additional funding (e.g. in Sri Lanka and Burundi), and in terms of broadening peacebuilding effects (e.g. on justice for gender-based violence in Guatemala); how it has been *risk-tolerant* by making investments in areas that other donors are not (yet) willing or able to engage in (e.g. in Somalia); how the Fund has been *timely* by providing funds rapidly in response to escalating situations that required, for example, rapid deployment of human rights observers and interim payment of salaries of security actors in Central African Republic; how it has been *inclusive* through participatory analysis and prioritisation processes involving local populations, and partnerships with civil society organisations; and how the Fund has supported *transitions and system-wide coherence* as recognized by a 2016 OIOS evaluation which found that the PBF was a main driver of integration between Missions and UNCTs.⁷

The 2014-16 cycle moreover saw the PBF innovate and expand in areas that will be key features of the new Strategic Plan:

PBF's new niche, investing in cross-border and regional settings: in late 2015, PBF approved its first cross-border project, between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to address cross-ethnic tensions over scarce natural resources in the Fergana Valley. Since then, the PBF has expanded this approach to cross-boundary initiatives in Cote d'Ivoire/Liberia, Somalia/Kenya, and Mali/Niger/Burkina Faso. These investments recognise that while many conflicts are not neatly confined within state boundaries, few funding mechanisms can straddle borders while still placing national ownership at the heart of their work.

Progress in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment: In 2015 the PBF became the first and only UN entity to meet the Secretary-General's target of allocating 15% of peacebuilding funds to gender equality and women's empowerment and surpassed this goal in 2016 reaching 19.2%. The Fund's clear commitment to gender-responsive programming has produced a ripple effect throughout its portfolio, with programming countries increasingly dedicating regular PBF funds to promote women's empowerment and rights. Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, and Sri Lanka have all dedicated more than 30% of PBF allocations to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Youth, peace and security: Recognizing the importance of young women and men in peacebuilding and PBSO's role in championing implementation of Security Council Resolution 2250, the PBF launched its first Youth Promotion Initiative in 2016. It encourages novel approaches to youth engagement. Initial allocations amounted to \$1,795,000 for three projects in Guinea, Kyrgyzstan and Mali.

⁷ UN OIOS (2016), "Evaluation of the Integration Between Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Country Teams in Haiti, Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo," IED 16-015: <https://oios.un.org/>

Strengthened partnerships: For the first time, CSOs could access PBF funds directly through its 2016 Gender and Youth Promotion Initiatives, providing a total of \$6,204,218 directly to seven CSOs in eight countries. PBF furthermore signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the African Union (AU) and allocated \$2.5 million for the deployment of AU human rights observers to Burundi. And good collaboration with the World Bank continued, e.g. through joint missions to Central African Republic in 2015 and 2016 and joined-up approaches in Yemen and Cameroon.

Innovative and flexible programmatic design: In addition to the PBF's Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility (PRF), the past cycle saw more use of the Immediate Response Facility (IRF). This was in response to more demand for PBF engagement in volatile environments and in the new spirit of Sustaining Peace. The PRF is generally better suited to more stable post-conflict contexts and has higher transaction costs that are not always justifiable when time presses.⁸ To avoid siloed projects whose impact is difficult to measure, the PBF required strategic frameworks for IRF projects, e.g. in Guatemala and Central African Republic.

Improved performance through scaled-up M&E: In 2014, the PBF adopted its first design, monitoring and evaluation framework that centralised the evaluation function for its programmatic investments and boosted staff capacity to support new areas of work. By 2016, the Fund posted record high achievements in nearly each of its Priority Areas, earning outstanding marks from Member States during annual reviews. This required a significant scale-up in PBF country engagement, including a six-fold increase in support missions by PBSO staff and partners including the Peace Nexus Foundation, and a five-fold increase in evaluation output and corresponding guidance for robust results-based management. This has had resource implications that go beyond the direct costs, including staffing, funded through the 3% overhead of contributions. To compensate, the Fund developed a project on M&E that has provided the required staff capacity.

III. Shifting dynamics of violent conflict globally

International peacebuilding efforts need to adjust to deteriorating trends in violent conflict and support nationally owned strategies and solutions. Direct deaths in war, numbers of refugees and forcibly displaced populations, and terrorist incidents have all reached historic highs in recent years. A rapidly evolving global context presents risks that transcend national borders and add to the complexity of conflict. State fragility, the regionalisation of conflict, and the blurring of lines between the political, criminal and ideological interests and objectives of increasingly fragmented armed groups create complex challenges for prevention and peacebuilding efforts. This places the onus on policy makers at all levels—from local to global—to make a more concerted effort to bring their tools and instruments to bear in an effective, complementary and inclusive manner.

⁸ For more detail, see PBSO and Peace Nexus Foundation (2016), review of IRF and PRF paper.

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

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

Although much of this violence remains entrenched in low-income countries, some of today's deadliest conflicts are occurring in countries at higher income levels with stronger institutions. Many of these conflicts are imposing high costs on international partners, both in increased costs of response and relief to affected populations, and through spillover effects.

Growing regional and cross-border dimensions of violent conflict: Beyond the numbers, conflict has also become increasingly internationalized, spreading across borders to affect broader regions and as countries intervene in conflict-affected countries. In part, this is a deliberate strategy, but it is also a result of the greater interconnectivity of countries. Localized conflicts have fed into regional conflict systems, facilitated by common ethnic, linguistic, commercial and cultural relationships, as in the Lake Chad Basin and in the fringes of the Sahara. Organized crime and conflict entrepreneurs have exploited the networks that allow for increased trade and information flow to spread violence.¹²

This is facilitated by the increasing use of “remote violence”¹³ both in civil wars and in acts of terrorism in countries far from conflict. Much of such violence occurs in urban areas, often targeting civilian spaces, including those considered sanctuaries under international humanitarian law, such as schools, hospitals, and places of worship.¹⁴ Between 2010 and 2016 alone, the number of civilian deaths in violent conflicts doubled.¹⁵

Changing drivers of violent conflict: This upsurge in violence occurs in a volatile global context where the balance of geopolitical power is in flux, and transnational factors like advances in information and communications technology, population movements, and climate change are creating risks and opportunities to be managed at multiple levels.

Many of today's armed conflicts are waged in geographic regions where state presence is limited, and where popular grievances have been aggravated by perceptions of exclusion from

⁹ United Nations and World Bank. 2017. “Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict—Main Messages and Emerging Policy Directions.” World Bank, Washington, DC.

¹⁰ UCDP 2017. The UCDP dataset used here covers the years 1989 to 2016. From a post-Cold War low in 2005, to 2014, battle-related deaths increased ten-fold. This includes only deaths in conflicts with more than 25 battle-related deaths per year.

¹¹ UCDP 2017. This includes reported fatalities stemming from state-based, non-state, and one-sided violence. It also includes only deaths resulting from violence that has resulted in at least 25 battle-related deaths.

¹² Marc et al. 2015 ; Walter 2017 ; ICRC 2016.

¹³ See ACLED for definitions and discussion at <http://www.crisis.acleddata.com/category/remote-violence/> .

¹⁴ ICRC 2017a. Attacks in schools and hospitals are considered one of the six grave violations under the August 1999 UN Security Council Resolution (S/Res/1261) on Children and Armed Conflict.

¹⁵ UCDP 2017. Many more civilian deaths result from indirect effects of conflict, such as unmet medical needs, food insecurity, inadequate shelter, or contamination of water. UNESCWA 2017; Small Arms Survey 2011.

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

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

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

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

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

Significant, gendered consequences for global peace and development: If current trends persist by 2030, the horizon set by the international community for the Sustainable Development Goals, more than half of the world's poor will live in countries affected by high levels of violence.²¹ Moreover, extreme poverty is now increasingly concentrated in vulnerable

¹⁶ ICG 2016a; World Bank 2015.

¹⁷ ICG 2016a.

¹⁸ UCDP 2017.

¹⁹ Raleigh and Dowd 2013.

²⁰ Walter 2017.

²¹ OECD 2015.

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

Conflicts affect people differently, often depending on gender and age. While men make up the majority of combatants during conflict and are more likely to die from the direct effects of violence, women also face a continuum of violence and insecurity before, during, and after conflict.²³ Sexual and gender-based violence tends to be higher in conflict and post-conflict settings, as does recruitment of girls into trafficking, sexual slavery, and forced marriage.²⁴ For children and youth, the long-term effects of exposure to violence, combined with the adversities of daily life in a high-violence context, are associated with a range of challenges.²⁵

On a macro level, the cost of responding to conflict, and the economic losses that accompany conflict, put incredible strain on state capacity. Afghanistan's per capita income has remained at its 1970s level due to continued war, and Somalia's per capita income dropped by more than 40 percent over the same period.²⁶ Such effects can spread to surrounding countries in the region. On averages, countries bordering a high-intensity conflict experience an annual decline of 1.4 percentage points in GDP, and an increase of 1.7 points in inflation.²⁷ These losses, coupled with the direct costs of responding to security challenges, drain the resources available for basic service delivery.

The need for more inclusive processes and coalitions: Many states that managed to avoid or recover from violence often made meaningful efforts to forge partnerships with groups across society and externally, drawing on comparative advantages that each brings to the table; for example, with those who can reach out to conflict actors when the state cannot. Another is the strong role that perceptions of exclusion play in increasing the risk of violence.

Some research has shown that when *women* take leadership roles in peacebuilding, peace agreements tend to last longer, and there is greater satisfaction with the outcomes.²⁸ Similarly, as recognized in UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, empowering young women and men is essential for prevention and peacebuilding efforts.

Coalitions that are inclusive of a range of *civil society* actors have positive impacts on every point in the conflict arc. While their roles and degree of accountability vary, civil society groups can play a critical role in supporting communities as they engage with the state, including in facilitating peace processes.²⁹ Civil society and other local actors can help broaden a sense of national ownership and make political settlements more sustainable, especially if they are inclusive of women.

National Human Rights Institutions can play an important bridging role between state and society, as recognized in the Sustaining Peace resolutions. As independent state institutions,

²² The [Agenda for Humanity](#) calls on leaders to transform the lives of those most at risk of being left behind.

²³ Crespo-Sancho 2017.

²⁴ Kelly 2017; Crespo-Sancho 2017; UN Secretary-General 2015; UN Women 2015; UNFPA 2017a; UNESCWA 2015.

²⁵ Miller and Rasmussen 2010.

²⁶ Mueller and Tobias 2016; IEP 2015.

²⁷ Rother et al. 2016.

²⁸ UN Women 2015; Paffenholz 2015.

²⁹ Marc et al. 2013; O'Reilly et al. 2015 ; Stone 2015.

they can be an important partner and help address grievances before they become a source of conflict.

Lastly, the *private sector* also has comparative advantages in supporting stability and addressing grievances. Small and medium enterprises have the flexibility to provide services and jobs to the population, and can be collectively powerful in shaping peace incentives in local communities. Large domestic and multinational firms, in turn, can have significant impact, positive and negative. A large company setting visible examples of good conduct e.g. in community engagement or resource exploitation can go a long way to mitigate tensions.³⁰

The case for prevention: Preventing entry and relapse into a cycle of violent conflict holds the potential to save lives and avoid the immense losses in human and economic capital that accompany violent conflict – and safeguard considerable development gains.³¹ It is also cost-effective: according to a background paper commissioned for this report, targeting resources toward just four countries at high risk of conflict each year could prevent \$34 billion in losses.³² In comparison, spending on peacekeeping and humanitarian operations in 2016 was \$8.2 billion and \$22.1 billion, respectively.³³

IV. PBF Strategic Plan 2017-2019: Addressing critical gaps for sustaining peace

Taking into account the contextual changes, lessons learned and comparative advantages outlined above, and in alignment with the concurrent resolutions on Sustaining Peace and the Secretary-General’s reform agenda in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the PBF’s Strategic Plan 2017-19 is structured around the following workstreams:

1. Catalysing the Secretary-General’s reforms by fostering cohesion
2. Leveraging the unique role of the PBF
3. Responding to growing demand for Peacebuilding Support
4. Delivering in Priority Areas
5. Focusing on Priority Windows
6. Strengthening the Programme Facilities

Furthermore, given continued funding constraints, this Strategic Plan presents two scenarios based on levels of income.

1. Catalysing the Secretary-General’s reforms by fostering cohesion

The PBF will continue to drive and strengthen UN system-wide collaboration and coherence, creating joint management structures and incentivizing integrated programming at country level. Operating in support of political solutions, the PBF empowers the strategic capacity of Special Representatives and Special Envoys of the Secretary-General

³⁰ Hoffman and Lange 2016; Ganson and Achim 2016; Ballentine and Haufler 2009; UN Global Compact 2017.

³¹ See UN/World Bank 2017, p. 4f, for detailed estimate of the returns on prevention.

³² Prevented losses are calculated as the sum of the prevented monetary value of lives lost plus the prevented loss to the economy (GDP) from conflict. This amount accounts for the inherent uncertainty over whether an actual outbreak would occur or not occur in the absence of prevention, and the fact that conflicts could occur anyway in countries not targeted for prevention interventions. Mueller 2017.

³³ Mueller 2017.

and Resident Coordinators to emphasize conflict prevention and peacebuilding in planning processes and catalyse programmatic integration with peacekeeping and political missions.

In non-mission settings, the PBF will support sustaining peace initiatives that aim at providing holistic and inclusive approaches to addressing key conflict drivers. National governments, UN leadership and civil society share equal voice in governance arrangements at country level, and evaluations demonstrate the role of these partnerships for effective delivery and national ownership.

In mission settings, the Fund plans to further increase its complementarity with assessed funding to drive coherence and maximize impact. PBF also commits to play a facilitating role in close collaboration with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in mission draw-down to ensure that crucial sustaining peace capacities are retained and transferred to the UN Country Team.

In line with the Secretary-General's focus on prevention which guides the reform agenda across all pillars, and in which the PBF plays a key role, the Fund furthermore commits to the following lines of action:

Drive cohesion of UN strategies in conflict situations. This will aim at improving joint analysis and planning across pillars, in support of nationally led plans; and providing joint, complementary support to UNCTs and Missions with DPA, DPKO, and UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, working closely with national and local authorities.

Provide integrated support. This will include follow up to decisions by the Executive Committee, Regional Monthly Reviews and Integrated Task Forces; support to the peacebuilding mandate of UN Missions; and support to inter-departmental horizon-scanning.

Strengthen partnerships. This will align with the PBC's new working methods; engage with the World Bank's scale-up in fragile and conflict-affected countries through IDA 18; collaborate with the AU, ECOWAS and other regional organisations; and new partnerships with civil society networks and the private sector.

2. Leveraging the unique role of the PBF:

The Fund will expand and continue to leverage its unique role as a timely and flexible, catalytic and risk tolerant financing instrument supporting inclusive strategies which drive cohesion of UN strategies and facilitate transitions. The PBF will strive to respond as early and quickly as possible using the UN's mechanisms, such as the Executive Committee and the Regional Monthly Review and strategic frameworks (Mission mandates, UNDAFs, Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments) to identify critical entry points and opportunities. It will use the Immediate Responses Facility (IRF) and the Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility (PRF) as mandated in its Terms of Reference to shape its funding strategies to the conditions in the country and the institutional capacities in place to sustain peace and deliver sustainable development under the 2030 Agenda.

Specific commitments for this cycle include:

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

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

Risk-tolerant. The PBF will strengthen its risk-management system through refined risk markers and streamlining mitigation strategies through all procedures. This is to echo what the concurrent resolutions on Sustaining Peace recognized as the inherently political nature of peace processes. It means investing in strong political and conflict analysis that integrates risk management as part of the UN's overall political engagement strategies and due diligence policies such as on human rights. In addition, the Fund will increase performance-based allocations, which were successfully piloted in Somalia, Guinea-Bissau and Myanmar in the previous cycle. Together with flexible, targeted re-programming of unspent allocations, the Fund will be able to maximize its potential for supporting risky initiatives, while minimizing accountability and performance management concerns.

3. Responding to growing demand for peacebuilding support:

The 2017-2019 Strategic Plan aims at approving \$500 million over the three-year period. This is a higher level of ambition than previous years and will serve as a stepping stone to the objective set in the Secretary-General's forthcoming Report on Sustaining Peace of \$500m a year for the PBF.

This is in response to increasing demand that already exceeds allocations, and is expected to increase further. The number of countries requesting catalytic peacebuilding support has grown from 20 in 2014/2015 to over 34 at the end of 2016. We expect this to grow to well over 40 between 2017-2019, if funding is available. The median approval per country in 2017 was only \$4.6m. In line with the Sustaining Peace resolution, the Fund has expanded its role from post-conflict response to engage in preventative and mitigating action in ongoing conflict situations. In 2017, approvals in 'preventative' settings represented 35% of approved projects,

³⁴ For an exhaustive discussion on what catalytic means for the PBF: Peace Nexus Foundation (2010), Catalytic Programming and the Peacebuilding Fund: www.unpbf.org/wp-content/uploads/Catalytic-Review-for-PBF-Final-Sept2-2010.pdf

while ‘in the midst of conflict’ represented about 15%. Thus, half of the demand is new and requires increased resourcing.

4. Priority Areas:

Following the concurrent resolutions, the PBF is now requested to ensure it contributes to sustaining peace which expands the role of the PBF from an exclusively post conflict instrument to support preventive action and focus on root causes as well as peacebuilding in the midst of violent conflict.³⁵ This will require political engagement and coherent approaches across the peace and security, development and human rights pillars, within and outside the UN System. Such a holistic approach needs to be based on coherent conflict analysis and include displaced populations and refugees in efforts to sustain peace. At the same time, sustaining peace seeks to place greater emphasis on detecting and strengthening what is already working, to accompany and strengthen champions for peace, and not only reduce, manage or eliminate violent conflict.³⁶

The PBF will retain its Priority Areas as per its Terms of Reference, but also collaborate with UN partners on new guidance to reflect evolving practice and the implications of the Sustaining Peace agenda. In addressing these Priority Areas in the new PBF Strategic Plan period, the PBF will liaise closely with colleagues across the UN system supporting the 2030 Agenda, and focusing on inclusion, access, equality and rights, as the key elements common to the Sustaining Peace Resolutions and the 2030 Agenda. The Priority Areas and corresponding focus areas are:

- i. **Implement Peace Agreements:** Responding to imminent threats to peace, support for the implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue. Focus areas may include security sector reform, rule of law, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration; and political dialogue around specific time-bound peace/political agreements.
- ii. **Dialogue and Coexistence:** Building and/or strengthening national capacities to promote coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflict. May include national reconciliation; democratic governance; and conflict prevention and management.
- iii. **Peace Dividends:** Supporting efforts to revitalise the economy and generate immediate peace dividends for the population at large. May include employment generation and equitable access to social services;
- iv. **Re-establishing Basic Services:** Establishing or re-establishing essential administrative services and related human and technical capacities. May include strengthening of essential national state capacity; extension of state authority; and local administration and governance of peacebuilding resources.

5. Priority Windows:

During this cycle the PBF will also place emphasis on new investment areas expressed in three Priority Windows. These are based on experience from the previous cycle, insights from *Pathways for Peace*, and designed to help promote the Secretary-General’s vision on

³⁵ PBSO (2016), What does sustaining peace mean?: https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Guidance-on-Sustaining-Peace.170117.final_.pdf

³⁶ See IPI (2017), Sustaining Peace, what does it mean in practice? www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/1704_Sustaining-Peace-final.pdf

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

i. Cross-border and Regional Window

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

The PBF is uniquely placed to support such initiatives focusing on providing catalytic funding and fostering joint analysis, exchange of experience and collaboration across borders. Based on a review of PBF and partners' experiences, the Fund will therefore expand its support for cross-border and regional approaches, keeping approved amounts within established ceilings at national level.

ii. Facilitating Transitions Window

The PBF will increase its efforts to help ease transitions between different UN configurations. This builds on the role the Fund has had in the past to help address critical gaps in transition moments and support the rapid reinforcement of governments and other actors involved in building sustainable peace, such as in the early days after a peace agreement has been signed. But the increased emphasis for this cycle takes into account efforts of the Executive Committee to anticipate and prioritize different types of transition contexts, and facilitate earlier preparation to support sustaining peace efforts across all pillars.

The aim is to recognize that transitions are not linear (before/after) processes with clearly identifiable phases, and that increased efforts are necessary to ensure the UN continues to be a viable partner to countries as it recalibrates its presence. The Report of the Advisory Group of Experts (AGE) on the 2015 review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture³⁷ pointed out many challenges with the transitions between different UN configurations. And while lessons have been learned, some good practices are not always and systematically implemented, e.g. on joint analysis and planning, and risk management. The Fund will seek to work with its partners such as the UNDP-DPA-DPKO joint project on transitions to make progress in these areas, in addition to addressing critical financing gaps.

iii. Youth and Women's Empowerment Window

The PBF will expand its support to foster inclusion of youth and women, with a target of 30% of total investments in gender-responsive peacebuilding (up from 15% in the previous cycle). This is both to help achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's commitment to "leave no one behind", and to recognise the emphasis placed on the positive role of youth and women in peacebuilding in key UN resolutions. PBF will therefore seek to

³⁷ A/69/968-S/2015/490

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

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

6. Strengthening Existing Programme Facilities:

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

	All countries	Eligible recipient country³⁸
Facility	IRF	PRF
Timeframe	18 months per project maximum	Up to 36 months per project
Project/ Outcome	Single project(s) with outcomes	Multiple projects contributing to the same strategic priorities
Strategic framework	Government peacebuilding strategy preferable. Basic conflict analysis	Government peacebuilding strategy, conflict analysis & UNCT prioritisation required
Steering committee	Project level steering committee as per AFPs rules and regulations	Joint Steering Committee preferred co-chaired by Government and UN and inclusive of broad set of stakeholders
Approximate range approval amounts	Determined by PBSO, subject to a maximum of \$3 million in active projects at any given time.	No specific maximum ceiling, envelope determined by PBSO for each country and context.

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

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

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

In addition, the PBF will consult countries with programmes at the end of their cycles to prepare a clear exit strategy, especially for those that have received multiple PBF investments. To complement this approach, the present Plan will encourage measures to seek or secure national financial commitments, in coordination with the PBC and other partners, notably the World Bank, to ensure sustainability of PBF-supported investments.

As before, all funding proposals must be developed jointly with government counterparts and submitted by the highest-ranking UN official in the country (SRSG or UNRC). They need to be counter-signed by the respective Government and shared with the country's Permanent Representative to the UN in New York. This will help ensure responsiveness to country needs and demands, Furthermore, the Fund will continue using existing mechanisms wherever possible, including multi-donor funds, and does not require the creation of new coordination and decision-making structures.

Funding decisions by the ASG for Peacebuilding Support, will take greater consideration of the capacities of both the UNCT and the country in question. Both the level of investment and the choice of facility will be determined by the following criteria: 1) eligibility of the country; 2) relevance to the PBF priority areas and alignment with the country's peacebuilding and SDG strategy; 3) PBSO analysis of how catalytic and innovative a proposal is; 4) conflict and risk analysis; 5) Peacebuilding Commission engagement; 6) political opportunities and timing and; 7) delivery capacities of the UN system and CSOs in the country.

In deciding on investment volume and type of facility, PBSO will pay particular attention to the UNCT's implementation track record and the risk management matrix, and expand the use of IRFs. This is both in line with experience of the last Business Plan, and with recommendations from the 2013 PBF Review. The PBF will also discontinue the per-country ceiling during Business Plan periods, apart from those directed by the eligibility process. The revised PBF Guidelines will provide further detail.

V. Financing the PBF

Recognizing the need for UN peacebuilding efforts to have adequate, predictable and sustained financing, the Sustaining Peace resolutions requested the Secretary-General to present options for increasing, restructuring and better prioritizing funding dedicated to UN peacebuilding activities. As options from both assessed and voluntary contributions are discussed with Member States and other partners and subsequently rolled out, the Peacebuilding Fund will need to ensure its continuing viability. Any new funding arrangements will not be in place before the end of the present Strategic Plan which means the Fund will need to rely on continued voluntary contributions from Member States.

Achieving \$500 million of investments in 3 years will require a combination of measures related to fund management, engagement of established and new member states and sources of funding with a new outreach strategy. The new performance-based transfers and improved cash management will avoid setting aside cash to countries when implementation is

slow. Clearly identifying and tracking funding decisions through pledges, approvals and transfers will also clearly outline residual needs spelled out in existing projects which remain unfunded and to which cash can be allocated when available.

Maintaining the engagement of existing Member States while also engaging new Member States for voluntary contributions will remain at the heart of the strategy. Doing so, will require on the one hand involving representatives of key member states, particularly in capitals to witness the work of the PBF first hand either directly through visits or with specifically designed events in New York and in different regions where beneficiary governments and stakeholders can showcase how the PBF supported their efforts. Then, the PBF will design specific instruments to communicate with member states as outline in the outreach section of the present plan while identifying donor based channels to show case the work of the PBF in their language. A critical objective of these efforts will involve appealing for multi-year contributions to increase predictability and reduce transaction costs. For this purpose, the PBF will work closely with the Group of Friends of the PBF and the Chair of the PBC while using opportunities such as the High-Level event on Sustaining Peace or the Annual Stakeholder Meeting during the PBC annual session to showcase the work of the Fund.

Finally, as part of PBSO's efforts to flesh out options for alternative and innovative sources of funding for the UN system, the PBF will invest in testing and piloting new forms of fundraising. Notably, the Fund aims to mobilize \$5 million from innovative sources over this Strategic Plan cycle, and test partnerships allowing for individual private donations to the Fund. It will also contribute to work on the development of other innovative funding sources such as corporate partnerships, bonds, taxes and voluntary levies.

The PBF will dedicate more staff time to resource mobilization and donor relations. This will include a dedicated Innovative Financing Specialist and more time of existing PBF staff including the Chief of the Financing Branch. It will be complemented by recruiting a fundraising consultants, and by secondments from Agencies, Fund and Programmes.

VI. Partnerships for Sustaining Peace

The PBF will continue to reinforce existing partnerships and forge new strategic alliances with a variety of stakeholders, for a more integrated, coherent, cost-effective and impactful approach to sustaining peace. This is in direct response to the Sustaining Peace Resolutions' call for a broad range of actors to engage in peacebuilding, ranging from the UN system, various levels of government, international financial institutions, through bilateral and international donors, regional and sub-regional organisations, to civil society organisations and networks, women's and youth organisations, and the private sector. With regard to the latter, PBF intends to open a new funding window for private sector engagement by the end of this Strategic Plan cycle to incentivize new partnerships and foster private sector investments in peacebuilding.

The close collaboration between the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the PBF will continue to expand. Indeed, if the PBF provides catalytic funding, the PBC is a forum to discuss peacebuilding strategies, which the PBF can fund, while marshalling the wider set of resources and partnerships for countries to realize their medium to long term peacebuilding strategies. In this sense the PBF will benefit from a closer working relationship between the Security Council and the PBC and from the new working methods of the PBC. These include engaging on a range of cross-cutting and thematic issues while welcoming a wider set of

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

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

- Establish partnerships with the top ten AFP recipients to increase the support structure for UNCTs and Missions for programme development, monitoring and outreach.
- Provide project development or start-up surge support with partners such as Peace Nexus Foundation or funding UN entities missions or temporary deployments.
- Increase capacity of RCO for conflict analysis and programmatic coordination on peacebuilding by promoting the deployment of Peace and Development as well as Human Rights Advisers with the UNDP/DPA Joint Programme on Prevention and OHCHR respectively.

To strengthened **inclusiveness**, the Fund will:

- Contribute to the improvement of UN-wide conflict analysis tools while continuing to apply them systematically as the basis of its engagement.
- Implement MoUs with the African Union (AU) and sub-regional groups including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) for country specific joint support.
- Expand partnership with UN Women and UNFPA to provide technical support, policy review and other to advance gender equality and improve quality of gender-responsive and youth-inclusive peacebuilding programming.
- Launch an annual initiative for Gender and Youth Promotion open to CSOs following a review of performance and impact of the first round open to CSOs.
- Expand the promotion of partnerships between national and international CSOs and between CSOs and the UN.
- Catalyze new partnerships for peace through private sector engagement that helps address socio-economic dimensions of peacebuilding.
- Engage with existing mechanisms for inclusion and private sector engagement, such as the Global Alliance for Reporting on peaceful, just and inclusive societies.
- Continue deepen collaboration with AFPs and UN Secretariat entities to improve the quality and cross-pillar integration of peacebuilding programming
- Update PBF Guidelines to allow for PBF portfolios combining Recipient UN Organisations (RUNOs) and Non-UN Organisations (NUNOs) as direct recipients.

To drive **cohesiveness**, the Fund will:

- Produce, together with DPKO and DPA, guidance for Missions and AFPs on complementarity between PBF and Programmatic Assessed budgets of Missions.
- Take part and support Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessments together with the World Bank and the European Union
- Launch a new protocol of exchange of information with the World Bank's State and Peacebuilding Fund (SPF) to ensure complementarity of programming
- Fund two programmes jointly with the SPF.

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

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

VII. Monitoring, evaluation and learning:

Enhanced PBF capacity helped provide greater upfront support in the design and implementation stages of programming, which yielded better outcomes for both programme management and evaluation. In addition, PBF's decision to invest in a comprehensive but centralised evaluation function for its programmatic investments resulted from the need to fill a clear gap in capacity at country level, where evaluations of PBF's investments focused primarily on individual projects and those assessing programmatic results struggled with insufficient budgets, overall level of quality, and lack of focus on peacebuilding-relevancy.

While centralising some of the evaluations, PBF recognized the need for distributed accountability for monitoring and evaluation. For this Strategic Plan, RUNOs and NUNOs remain the primary agents for monitoring projects and programmes and for procuring and managing evaluations of projects. The Strategic Plan will aim to institutionalise practices that proved robust while paring down others and reducing efforts of PBF over time. This implies greater attention to ensuring capacity at national and community levels, reducing transaction costs, as well as a need for innovation in how the Fund currently captures and organises the greater levels of data and analyses the returns on its investments.

Building on several efforts to launch community-based monitoring (CBM) in Mali, Niger, Cote d'Ivoire and PNG during the previous Business Plan, the PBF will consolidate best practices in order to improve CBM and enhance participation of affected populations in these monitoring mechanisms. Wherever possible, PBF commits to working through National Statistical Offices to support capacity building at national level for inclusive, participatory monitoring. In addition, PBF renews its commitment to ensuring robust baseline and end line data collection in both target and non-target communities in order to better understand the impact of its investments. The PBF will also learn from existing work on monitoring in the 2030 Agenda, including especially SDG 16 on peaceful, just and inclusive societies.³⁹

During the past Business Plan, the three-step evaluation framework for PRF investments provided structured opportunities for reflection and adjustment of programmes in fluid, conflict-affected environments. PBF privileged PRF investments in order to account for settings of higher investment, which produced greater fiduciary risk for PBF but also potentially greater impact. Experience in implementing the evaluation framework

³⁹ See for example <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/monitoring-to-implement-peaceful--just-and-inclusive-societies.html>

demonstrated challenges of the three steps within the programmatic cycle and the need for distributing accountability for project evaluations to RUNOs and NUNOs. Learning from the past Business Plan, PBF will adjust the evaluation framework as follows:

- All projects (IRF and PRF investments) will require RUNOs and NUNOs to procure and manage final external evaluations, and to allocate sufficient budgets for high quality evaluations.
- For PRF investments, PBSO will lead at the portfolio level (i) evaluability assessments⁴⁰ within the first 9 months of implementation and (ii) final evaluation at the end of a country’s 5 year eligibility or earlier if deemed necessary by PBSO. For countries on the agenda of the PBC, PBF will conduct portfolio evaluations every five years. The Table below compares the evaluation framework for the two Plans:

Changes in the Evaluation framework		
Type	Business Plan 2014-2016	Strategic Plan 2017-2019
Evaluability assessments	First 9 months of PRF	First 9 months investing in a new strategic plan
Lessons learned reviews	Midterm for PRF	Where decided by PBSO, toward the end of a strategic plan period
Project evaluations	IRF projects meeting criteria	All projects (IRF and PRF)
Portfolio evaluations	End of PRF	End of eligibility (5 years)

Blue: managed by RUNOs and NUNOs
Green: managed by PBSO/PBF

For this cycle, PBF also commits to roll out a more diverse set of evaluative exercises, beyond final evaluations. In particular, PBF will work with key partners, such as NGOs, bilateral donors, UN offices and others, to develop innovative approaches to evaluate highly contingent investments, where outcomes are not readily known in advance. For PRF countries, PBF may also conduct Lessons Learned Exercises of multiple projects that contribute to a strategic plan or framework.

PBF also commits to reducing the transaction costs of procuring evaluations through a multi-pronged approach. This will include establishing systems contracts with a list of vetted vendors and tapping into international partners such as Peace Nexus Foundation to conduct evaluations on our behalf.

Incorporating lessons learned from the past Business Plan, PBF will provide guidance through templates, workshops, etc. to RUNOs, NUNOs, vendors and other partners on evaluative exercises. By further institutionalizing the practice of evaluation, more evidence will better position PBF to synthesize evaluation results and recommendations across themes,

⁴⁰ An evaluability assessment (EA) is an exercise early in the implementation cycle to review outcomes, timeline, resources and monitoring that provides an opportunity to course correct if needed. The aim of an EA is to both increase the likelihood a project’s success and ensure that data and other inputs will be sufficient to conduct a robust final evaluation.

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

Underpinning these improvements, and in keeping with findings of the Fund's Advisory Group and the subsequent Resolutions on Sustaining Peace, PBF will roll out a multi-tiered training programme aimed at sustainable capacity building among our in-country partners. PBF commits to biannual training workshops to be developed around the outcomes of the UN capacity assessment undertaken by the Overseas Development Institute in 2017 and managed by the MPTFO. An indicator of the training effort's success will be reduced demand for in-country support missions by the PBF team, as well as a reduction in the time it takes to design an acceptable proposal.

The Fund will develop a new online system for reporting, in partnership with the MPTFO. This is to facilitate the use of increasing amounts of information that PBF's monitoring and evaluation system has begun to accumulate, including unprecedented amounts of quantitative and qualitative data, analysis and other relevant information essential to proper Fund oversight, accountability and learning. The online system will also facilitate more rapid and effective calculation of performance indicators at the project level, helping to establish the basis for the release of performance-based tranches as well as the Fund's global performance

In addition, the Fund will develop a knowledge management system to better capture and share lessons of what has worked or not. This system will be demand driven, easily accessible, and focused on areas of growth and high volume in the present Strategic Plan. Although dedicated human resources will be necessary for the development and launch of such a system, knowledge management will require collaborative working among all stakeholders, including PBF staff, RUNOs and NUNOs.

VIII. Outreach:

A key recommendation from the Advisory Group as well as Member States is for the PBF to communicate better and more widely what it does, its impact as well as how funding decisions are taken. Increased outreach should also serve the purpose of supporting resource mobilisation, partnerships and facilitating knowledge management. Increasing outreach will require additional dedicated resources which are only feasible in the medium to longer term in the optimistic funding scenario.

Even with additional resources dedicated to outreach, the present Plan must remain nimble and focused on PBF's priority areas of support. It needs to take advantage of issues and countries which are under the global spotlight and are receiving attention throughout the UN while recognizing the tremendous competition for internal UN as well as external stakeholder's attention. Another key observation was that until now, RUNOs have only rarely recognized the PBF as a partner in their outreach efforts, so added incentives as well as direction must be provided to RUNOs and NUNOs as to what is expected in terms of visibility and branding.

During this Strategic Plan period the Fund will therefore focus its outreach on two objectives associated with specific audiences and outreach channels, the first being to mobilize greater resources for the PBF. This will be done by demonstrating alignment, leverage and complementarity with Member States policies, priority countries and goals and high level of impact based on PBF's comparative advantages. The audience for these efforts

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

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

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

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

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

IX. Management, Accountability and Transparency:

Thanks to the Fund's Terms of Reference and its ongoing partnership with the MPTFO and its investment model, the PBF can remain a non-operational entity and focus on strategic management and project approvals, support to the RUNOs and NUNOs as well as monitoring and evaluation, learning and outreach. The PBF team in New York will remain small, flexible and responsive in all scenarios. This said, a critical role of the PBF is to ensure transparency and accountability to partners who entrusted resources to the Fund.

To effectively oversee and administer the PBF portfolio of 40 recipient countries and investments of \$500 million in three years, PBSO will follow a management model that relies on a combination of factors that include: i) prioritization of country support to large and medium portfolio countries; ii) critical needs driven country support missions; greater reliance on strategic partners for follow-up project/programme design and training support; iii) empowering select RUNOs with adequate capacity to lead/guide PBF country programmes; iv) implementing strategic partnerships with UN Departments and AFPs.

The PBF management was modelled under its terms of reference as a lean, non-operational and self-financing entity within the UN Secretariat funded through income generated from 3% of donor contributions. This said, this model has now reached its limit and will need to be reviewed before the next strategic plan in light of growth projections. The staffing plan remains extremely precarious. To ensure minimum levels of staffing, the nine staff, eight professional (1D1; 2P5, 3P4, 1P2, 1P3) and two general staff positions (1G7, 1G6), covered through the overhead or the accumulated interests, have been reinforced with secondments from agencies, funds and programs (1P5 and 1P4), one Junior Programme Officer (1P2) and a purpose-built monitoring and evaluation project funded by the PBF (3P4). Given the unpredictability of income, the fund will continue to tap into its accumulated interest whenever the overhead income is insufficient to maintain its basic staffing.

Indeed, the revenue from the 3% overhead is clearly insufficient to cover the fund management, field support, outreach and monitoring functions required and expected from PBSO by donors and recipients alike. It is also important to note that all staff managing the PBF are either on secondment or on volunteer funding modalities which only allow a year to year renewal. This said, the proposed restructuring of the Peace and Security Pillar will also entail a detailed review of the organisational chart, the levels and the terms of reference of each staff during 2018 and 2019 as part of PBSO integration into the new Department of Peacebuilding and Political Affairs considering any additional missions and task related for example to strategic resource mobilisation.

Countries, RUNOs and NUNOs receiving PBF support will be held accountable for the effective use of PBF resources first and foremost in pursuant to their respective established rules and regulations. Furthermore, and in addition to the well-established public reporting requirements through the MPTFO, supported by the above-mentioned reporting system and the new monitoring and evaluation framework, the PBF will expand its use of performance based tranches for all projects expect those with short execution time frame or those with relatively small budgets. The new standard will be to advance only 70% of the funds in the first tranche and to release the remaining 30% when certain agreed intermediary results are achieved and the first tranche mostly spent (over 80%). This said, this formula will remain flexible and will need to be adapted to the specific recipients and situations on the basis of the risk management framework. It is important to note that second tranches will always be contingent on availability of funding in the PBF.

Furthermore, the present Strategic Plan will continue to expand the role of and support received by the independent Advisory Group. A new AG will assume office during 2018. To ensure continuity, the present plan will encourage and build on the lessons and good practices of previous groups including upfront identification of priority issues for the group to pursue; appropriate alignment of PBF to the Secretary-General's vision on prevention. Priorities for the Advisory Group's work will be identified based on the Secretary-General's priorities.

Further improving transparency will be a continuing priority during the Strategic Plan. To do so the Fund will now present its data publicly using the International Aid Transparency Initiative⁴¹ standards as a result of its partnership with MPTFO. Furthermore, and in addition to the new reporting system and strengthened monitoring and evaluation MPTFO will release a new version of its gateway to improve user friendliness and

⁴¹ <http://www.aidtransparency.net/>

accessibility. To improve both corporate and country/project level financial monitoring, the plan will oversee also the introduction of a PBF Dashboard to provide periodic reviews and reporting to senior management, on the effectiveness of, and compliance with, key project approval, oversight and closure controls; as well as support risk management at the Fund level. The dashboard will also complement information and data on the virtual MPTFO Gateway.

Finally, the PAC process will continue to be strengthened following an in-house review of PAC guidelines/procedures with a view to further improve and align them to new PBF requirements and strategy. All projects, including those of PRF will be approved by the ASG for Peacebuilding. PBSO will continue to approve all project within the 21-day turn-around time. The role and engagement of the Peacebuilding Support Group in project review will also be reviewed in dialogue with its members to increase transparency and efficiency.

As a result of the present Strategic Plan, a thorough review of all PBF procedures and guidelines will be issued in 2018 to adjust and simplify them in light of the experiences in the last cycle.