

Executive Summary for Guinea Evaluation Report (final report July 2017)

Introduction

This report presents the conclusions and recommendations of the appraisal mission on the second priority peace-building plan in Guinea, assigned by the United Nations Peace-building fund (hereinafter "PBF").

Guinea has completed a long political transition started in 2010, marked by the holding, on 28 September 2013, of "free, transparent and inclusive" legislative elections, the forming of the National Assembly on 13 January 2014 and finally the presidential elections of October 2015, which saw the outgoing president, Mr Alpha Condé re-elected. These phases were carried out with the assistance of the UN, the European Union, the United States, France and Germany. Nevertheless, Guinea remains a fragile country whose recovery efforts must be maintained and supported.

Wide-reaching reforms in terms of security have been introduced since 2010 and have managed to keep the macro-economic framework afloat. However, the matter of "coexistence", covering social justice, confidence in the government and access to public services, has not ceased to figure as a key issue in the country's short-term stability and its sustainable development.

Guinea was designated as eligible for PBF support on the declaration of the UN General Secretary of 25 June 2008. Between 2008 and 2010 it received 12.5 million dollars in aid from the PDF, invested in the reform of the security sector, human rights, promotion of dialogue and support in mediation.

The dialogue undertaken with the Guinea government, along with the deterioration in the country's politics and health-care, led to Guinea being placed on the agenda of the Peace-building Commission (CCP) on 23 February 2011 and to an initial Declaration of Mutual Commitments. This Declaration, dated 23 September 2011, set three priority areas for action (DP) on which the second priority plan (PP2), the subject of this appraisal, was based, over the period 2012-2016. The 2011 Declaration of Mutual Commitments indicates that these priorities have sought to pursue the priorities of Poverty Reduction Strategy Document 2011-2012 (PRSD) "and in particular its first priority, improvement of governance and reinforcement of institutional and human capabilities".

This appraisal examines the results achieved by the PP2 between 2012 and 2016. More specifically, it provides an analysis of the performance of the activities carried out within the framework of this second Priority Plan, the institutional arrangements that permitted their achievement, both at Fund management level and at the level of the actions themselves; it then examines, from a broader perspective, what the support of the Peace-Building Fund represents with respect to all the actions being implemented in Guinea. On this basis, it draws lessons and makes broad recommendations intended for the Fund to use in future actions, in Guinea or in other countries of the world.

The activities reviewed correspond to 31 projects, with a total budget of 48 million dollars, distributed among these three priority areas with the addition of the capacity building of the permanent Secretariat in Conakry.

- DP1: Reform of the Security Sector (RSS): 8 projects with a budget of \$15,103,821;
- DP2: National reconciliation: 15 projects with a budget of \$21,078,791;
- DP3: Jobs for young people and women: 6 projects with a budget of \$8,976,637;
- 2 projects in support of the organisms implemented with a total of \$2,624.776.

The methodology covers the following items:

- The reference terms drafted by the UN and listed in appendix;

- A preliminary scoping report, an appraisal grid incorporating the main issues being analysed and the selection criteria for the case studies that provided the initial bases for the analysis and characteristics of the Fund's work in Guinea.
- A data collection campaign undertaken between December 2016 and April 2017, which covered the documentary base, and included visits to New York, in Guinea, as well as field observations.

The appraisal team was able to consult a great many people (see appendix 5) closely or remotely involved in the activities, including partners and beneficiaries in the districts of Conakry, in the prefectures and communes of Kissidougou, Guékédou, Macenta, Lola, and N'Zérékoré, between 13 and 30 January 2017. A memory aid was presented to the steering committee on 30 January. This report expands on the main conclusions.

Relevance

The activities covered by the 31 projects correctly reflect the three priority areas of the PP2 and contribute to peace-building in accordance with the mission and four support categories set out in the PBF's terms of reference¹. Their implementation meets the most pressing needs observed among the different challenges the country was facing at the time of the launch of the second PPP, marking the consultation process from which it stemmed. The actions are in synergy with the United Nations Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP) 2013-2017, but also with the national priorities outlined in the PRSDIII 2013-2015 and in particular the following: i) the restoring of the rule of law and the reform of the Public Administration, ii) the acceleration and diversification of growth; and to a lesser although not negligible extent, the following: iii) development of social sectors and of iv) the reduction of regional inequalities, the promotion of grass-roots development and decentralisation.

In accordance with the principles of these framework documents, the projects target different groups highly sensitive to conflicts, focusing especially on the most vulnerable, including women, by incorporating the principles of UN Resolution 1325 on the inclusion of women at all levels of decision-making. The projects are also drawn up in conformity with the Government's Priority Actions Plan and the Five-year Development Plan for 2011-2015, reflecting the level of priority assigned to this second plan by the government.).

A particular feature of the Fund and the CCP is that the committees and the consultation structure with the government are actually at an exceptionally high political level, demonstrating a great desire to appropriate the projects. This coordination fills a lack the country had in terms of collaboration in stabilisation and peace-building matters. Apart from the national approaches mentioned, the defining of the projects has also been based on the recommendations issued at the end of PP1 and in collaboration with UN agencies.

The appraisal therefore concludes that the sharing out of components between UN agencies is difficult to explain. The state departments and implementing partners have a role that is very difficult to read. The information on the implementation circulates poorly within the PP and is difficult to follow up.

¹ a) [...] respond to immediate threats to the peace process, [...], b) [...] build and/or strengthen national capacities to promote coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflict [...], c) [...] efforts to revitalize the economy and generate immediate peace dividends for the population at large; d) Establishment or re-establishment of essential administrative services and related human and technical capacities

Performance by Priority Area (DP)

DP1: Reform of the Security Sector

Some RSS projects have high visibility and this has played a pivotal role vis-à-vis the departments and Ministries concerned, right up to the Presidency. This inter-ministry support and support from the Prime Minister's office has enabled the projects to obtain the political support and tools required by the various partners for the implementation of the reforms.

Some of the projects have had positive effects in highly sensitive areas, which no financial backer was able to manage, such as the army personnel retirement programme, for example. These pivotal effects demonstrate the added value of this financing mechanism and of the PBF. This retirement project has had a strictly strategic impact.

The priorities chosen under the DP1 and PP2 have adequately met the most pressing needs in terms of confidence in the police and in the legal system. The implementation was done with satisfactory levels of efficiency, effectiveness and prospective sustainability. The challenge for the sector nevertheless remains its size and the outstanding efforts to be made.

DP2: National reconciliation

The setting up of peace infrastructures with structures such as the Communal Peace-Building Synergies (SCAP), the young people's clubs in the neighbourhoods, the national consultations in support of reconciliation, concern deep-seated, well-identified factors in populations' perception of peace. The theme of social reconciliation was astutely taken into account by the PBF, including the issues of women and vulnerable persons, which marked out the debate and tensions that otherwise could have led to new outbreaks of violence. The political and electoral dimension to the reconciliation followed the same pattern, involving the key agents at local, regional and central levels and taking timely action. Here too, the Fund's high commitment capacity ensured the involvement of top central agents, including the President's office.

The link between the supported initiatives and the State and the local authorities is still being studied. The projects have started to build on the gains achieved, to progress towards a more sensitive, strategic approach at the top level. This phenomenon operates both on a national level and on the basis of traditional conflict-solving methods – which are tending to peter out as the country develops but remain powerful and beneficial.

The projects have been effective in developing relationships between traditional groups and civil society agents. They have enabled conflicts to be solved locally, specifically by distancing local agents from national affairs and conflicts between political parties, thus helping ease tensions at this level. However, the way these results are being followed up and above all the absence of quantitative and qualitative follow-up indicators has made it impossible to apprehend the scale of the results achieved.

DP3 Jobs for young people and women

This third area is highly relevant in the context of peace-building, as unoccupied populations represent a permanent threat of instability. The targeting of Funds and the priority granted to youth and women and especially to the sensitive hotbed of former security forces recruits (FDS) was extremely relevant in that it offered an alternative and new future prospects to these groups, as was the decision to act outside Conakry, in regions, and, more specifically, in hotbeds of social tension, especially in Upper Guinea and in the Guinea Forest Region.

The number of beneficiaries is nevertheless highly limited in comparison to the resources allocated. Their identity and their histories are little known and little detailed. A beneficiary interviewed by the

mission illustrates the need to extend the results achieved and also the follow-up: "Where you picked us up is where you left us".

The isolation of the projects from each other and the absence of an overall approach makes this performance more limited than it could have been, with a high cost per target individual. However, this DP covers projects that are effective and efficient when taken individually, with effects curtailed by the precarious economic situation. The relevance and sustainability of the projects would have been considerably reinforced by an approach that takes into account the dynamics and opportunities the private sector represents in Guinea, a country rich in natural resources.

In the three priority areas, the gender approach is manifest mainly in the form of a quota share. Above all, and even where women were the main beneficiaries, the absence of a cross-cutting, integrated and outreach-oriented approach vis-à-vis men was decisive. The gender market, a general indicator in the project documents, indicates a degree of priority but does not detail how this priority will take shape in the activities directly linked to their role in society or to their rights, not even indirectly.

Impact and added value of the PBF

The overall value of the projects is guaranteed not only by their impact on the target population, but also by the fact they create points of entry for high-risk and innovative projects. It is important to note the value of the PBF's objectives, transversal to the three priority areas, which propose longer and larger-scale actions for peace-building. This marries well with the "catalytic" role the Fund is aiming at. The projects act as a gateway role for potential partners (financial backers, international financial institutions and the private sector) and create a point of dialogue with the country's political authorities.

The impact of the entire PBF is recognisable by its relevance and its coverage of the most sensitive areas in the country. The sectors covered and the partners chosen have been the most relevant and the sectors not covered. The appraisal has not been supported by more specific data enabling the creation of a more precise causal link, due to the lack of a follow-up system between the projects and the changes of context in the country, which would have enabled the impact to be more clearly appreciated.

The sectors not covered, the "gaps" were not given more priority than those that were covered. There is much ground to cover, such as the reform of the legal system, by working to reduce impunity and reinforce the different non-military agencies. Furthermore, the permeability of borders and the lack of a link between the traditional authority and young-peoples' groups remain lasting threats. The main "gap", however, is the absence of any real dialogue with the private sector and encouragement of investment in the country.

The appraisal has not found traces of negative effects and the projects were launched based on good knowledge of the context and of the cultural and historical specificities of the stakeholders. There is no discrimination that would exacerbate the tensions, including in the recruitment of staff. None of the projects studied and none of the aspects of the PBF's management have had a detectable negative impact on the conflicts in Guinea.

The added value of this fund is often poorly identified by stakeholders in the country, but above all concerns its catalytic nature. This is defined as a successful assumption of the risk and of the priority given to resolving bottlenecks in the peace process, on an extremely wide variety of points. The interweaving of government policies and the PBF's funding has been particularly gratifying, creating a coordination forum that deserves to be extended in time, beyond the end of the PDF's activities.

There is nevertheless a significant loss of efficiency originating from the PBF's management methods. The Technical committees and the Management committees, and above all the Coordination and Project Follow-up committees, could play their relay role better. The fund would gain by theorising the sequencing of its support, according to the general observations characteristic of countries emerging from a crisis and those proper to the target country. The catalytic effects are reduced by delays and haste. The operating method does not provide for critical feedback on the analysis of the country's situation during and at the end of the priority plan, to allow suitable adjustments to the vagaries of reforms and reconstruction efforts. A transition phase, which is currently in progress, would enable engagement of dialogue based on a better management mode towards a new priority plan or, where appropriate, towards a Fund exit strategy for the 2019 horizon.

The PBF's management

While the overall impact of the actions is positive, we cannot ignore the wide variation in procedures and, consequently, results, between the projects and the different Priority Areas. The activities show a significant fragmentation of the efforts. Their organisation into separate components, without any central coordination, and an attachment to the creation of products rather than of results means that the impact has been much smaller than expected. Indeed, the distribution of responsibilities between agencies and by components accentuates this phenomenon. As each entity is governed by its own implementation and follow-up and appraisal procedures. There is little collectivisation of the data. The nature of the follow-up, which is product-oriented and only to a limited extent based on quality indicators, does not enable the results and the actual contribution to the changes to the projects and therefore to the Fund to be accurately appraised. In these conditions, it is difficult to capitalise on the gains of this PP and enhance them in a third priority support plan, for example. This last point also poses the question of the escalation of all the results to PBF's central office and by extension to the CCP.

The PBF entered into a fruitful relationship with a great number of agents and at extremely varied levels of the administration and of civil society. By establishing links between the global and regional policy with the Commission for the peace-building in New York and isolated community initiatives, the PBF, the PBSO and the UN agencies have enabled overall consistency to be maintained.

The Steering committee, under the aegis of the Prime Minister and the Resident Coordinator, the technical committee and the auxiliary committees of the priority areas, are useful, strategic mechanisms. In this regard, they would have the means to obtain better feedback, and to enter into specific discussions concerning the implementation of the projects, in the impact analysis, and to guarantee their appropriation by the government's partners in order to ensure they are lasting within national policies.

Despite this strong potential, there is a wide variation in the quality of the projects. This is due to various factors:

1. The Fund has not been able to set up a real mechanism for the centralised control and follow-up of the projects, combining too many decision-making fora. Furthermore, the conflict analyses are well used in the projects, but the programming conclusions are no longer sufficiently shared by the UN agencies and implementing partners. This leads to divergent interpretations of the projects' objectives and a loss of efficiency.
2. Certain projects have been affected by the Ebola crisis and the implementation of actions according to the scheduled timelines. Ebola and the many crises the country is going through, have created significant constraints for the projects. At the same time, the high number of UNS execution agencies and implementing partners involved in the projects' different components creates a high transactional cost still to be appraised in relation to the speed and volume of the actions. The great number of extensions at no additional cost (affecting at least 90% of the projects) also have an impact on efficiency.

3. It is difficult to justify the very high number of UNS executive agencies (nine UN agencies) involved in implementing the projects in relation to the wide diversity of execution channels this generates. There is a lack of clarity in the attribution of the project components, which affects the accountability and clarity of the execution, even if it does increase the collaboration opportunities. Furthermore, when actions are undertaken, a number of fragmentations are encountered, based on the lack of authority of the main operator, known as the "lead" agency. The model itself is the forerunner of the UN's reforms for agencies to work together. At project level, specifically at DP3 level, we have observed that the coordination and follow-up committees, as provided in the project documents, are not being diligently set up. The selection criteria for the implementing partners were not clearly defined prior to the start of the projects. They are responsible for most of the execution, however. Another pitfall is that the highly efficient methods used by these partners are lessened by the too-broad definition of the problem targeted, leading once again to a waste of effort and resources. Despite the added value of each UN agency, there is a real risk of fragmentation of the efforts of all the agents involved and therefore of the gains.

Recommendations

There is no reason to keep the wording of the Priority Areas that has been used up to now. It should be changed to focus on the three areas for progress in the country: safety and security, the processes of reconciliation and justice, and the private sector. The first is firmly at the national, political level, the second is more at the level where customary law and the local authorities meet and the third involves attracting private capital and putting it to work for peace in Guinea.

For the Steering Committee

1. **Security Reform:** Capitalise on what has been achieved in the completed projects and continue to support the reforms by continuing to provide guidance on the priorities and by supporting the coordination and management of resources. The goal will be to enable the institutions to continue to take ownership of the reforms.
 - Prioritise the continuation of the Strategic Council project in order to maintain a connection between international cooperation and the reform undertaken by the government.
 - Actively promote the RSS Technical Committee to ensure continued coordination not only of the activities of the PBF but equally of the bilateral cooperation agencies (where coordination is viewed as an efficient and balanced interaction and not as a control process).
 - Launch cross-border projects so as to attain a dimension that has a strong impact on the dynamics of conflict.
2. **National reconciliation:** Continue to develop the dialogue and reparation process undertaken by the various reconciliation bodies both at local and national level.
 - Ensure the availability of ongoing funding by the PBF for the National Reconciliation Committee or to support the formalisation process.
 - Better define the respective roles of the reconciliation bodies and the peace infrastructure at local level, and continue to support the work of the local committees and local synergies. Ensure that these structures become known to the bilateral cooperation agencies.
 - Link the issues of formal and traditional justice more formally. This may be done by developing jurisprudence or a standard distinction between the separate areas of responsibility, for example between situations of urgent crises (formal law) and reparation (traditional law). Ensure the harmonisation of regional variations.

- Projects involving mining regions must be viewed as youth and conflict prevention projects involving the development of new opportunities as such projects are ineffective in terms of conflict resolution. They must be centred on the issue of resources. They have a real economic potential.
3. **PA3 Employment of youth and women:** Youth employment must not be focussed only on involving groups of potentially violent youth but offer the possibility of long-term activities with a real future perspective. A new project should be related to a growth sector of the economy. This long-term perspective, less restrictive than the simple "saving" of a category of the population should, on the one hand, contribute to the perpetuation of social links, detached from the idea of the "tagging" people as belonging to a particular group, and, on the other hand, launching new life perspectives. This could be done by identifying priority populations, by attracting international investment agencies, players from the private sector and even social enterprises, which have an important role in the creation of long-term employment.
- Launch a project to support social enterprises in a growth sector of the economy to enable them to become involved in broader activities. Target companies potentially recruiting at least ten people or rework existing activities to give them a social and stabilising impact. This support is to be provided through grants in combination with a capital contribution by a development funding body (bank for development or promotion of the private sector).
 - Combine collective social activities (such as discussion clubs and sporting events) with commercially attractive sectors, such as diggers and artisanal miners or the agricultural sector in tense geographical regions or municipalities. Link these activities to enterprises that agree to promote messages of understanding, communication and dialogue.
 - Identify priority population groups on the basis of a renewed analysis of the regions of greatest tension and demoralisation in the country. Attract international investment agencies, players from the private sector and even social enterprises, which have an important role in the creation of long-term employment.

For the PBSO

4. **Use the grants to channel private capital:** the PBF at the international level must understand and demonstrate the importance that gifts can play in reducing investment risks in fragile countries, such as Guinea. There is also a growing range of actors, such as development finance institutions.
- Contact associations of development finance agencies, such as the European Development Finance Institutions, to combine and promote financing involving donations, loans and venture capital ('blended finance') on the basis of joint vigilance analyses for countries, such as Guinea.
 - Make an 80% or 100% financing offer for social, health and environmental impact studies for businesses wishing to invest in countries, such as Guinea. Via these studies, help them develop impact mitigation measures and positive measures building on synergies with PBF funding, in the context of the 'Shared Value'.
 - Organise trade events (company trade fairs) or specific research on particularly promising sectors that require collaboration between actors of different types. This could, for example, focus on the ethical recruitment of migrant workers (which often depends on proper training) or the organisation of development impact bonds.

Operational recommendations:

The following recommendations are directly modelled on those in the Business Plan 2014-2016, which should be renewed.² If this is not done, the PBSO will be in a weakened position and find itself with procedures that involve a lot of work for a parallel follow-up that is not always fully possible given its current staffing (two people per region at the headquarters).

For the Steering Committee

5. **Specific conflict analyses** to assist identifying the priority areas (more than just the sectors and the assistance goals) at the initial stages of each of the projects to determine the target groups, the desirable changes and the improvement and regression processes, as well as how the risks can be monitored in a consistent and structured way.
 - Carry out a new analysis of the tensions and future risks for the country, including a working definition of the priority areas and populations.
 - When aligning these areas and populations, identify some relatively small interventions (in relation to the size of the projects defined so far) that can act as pilot projects, in line with the three main areas outlined above (security, reconciliation and the private sector).
 - Define later projects of a larger size to ensure the continuation and development of projects that have really borne fruit.
 - Identify monitoring and evaluation systems that take account both of the contribution of the projects and of external factors that can motivate change.
 - Put these monitoring and evaluation systems on the agendas of Project Committees, Technical Subcommittees and Peacebuilding Steering Committee.
6. It is important to justify the **choice of agencies that should lead project implementation in terms of capacity and not mandate**, and to limit the number of elements managed by separate agencies, except where expertise or a presence on the ground warrants it.
 - Ensure that the project formulation includes elements that serve a unified verifiable objective, for which the Lead Agency is responsible, and that each project is not just the sum of several separate projects. These projects must have a realistic timetable, over, say, a three-year period, except in exceptional cases.
 - Select the Lead Agencies for the projects in question based on their ability to deliver on time and their resources. Ensure that these agencies establish and chair Steering Committees for each project. The implementing and operational agencies must be part of the committee when a project includes several elements.

² “A performance basis for financing – As has started during the last business cycle, the Fund will use performance as much as possible as a basis for financing. Initial tranches will remain on the smaller size, rarely exceeding \$15 million and often smaller. The initial amount will be based on the articulation of priorities in the Priority Plan, the size of the concerned population and scale of peacebuilding needs, the capacity of the UN and its partners to manage additional funding, and a clear analysis of financial flows and gaps for peacebuilding. Follow-on allocations can be done as early as the following year – well before the first tranche is completed – if partners can demonstrate that funds are being used efficiently and effectively.

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To achieve these improvements, PBSO will:

- Roll out a three-phased country evaluation strategy covering the full programme cycle,
- Introduce community-based monitoring to complement strengthened reporting by UN partners,
- Through close M&E accompaniment during design, help clarify the relationship between project and Priority Plan outcomes and indicators to ensure greater collective impact,
- Strengthen reporting on peacebuilding outcomes, and
- Innovate new approaches to monitoring and evaluation to address persistent field-wide challenges.“

- The Evaluation Reference Group has noted that coordination and operational synergy become extremely complicated when there are more than three agencies involved. The number of implementing agencies (of the United Nations system) involved in a project must be limited. The volumes of projects that can be broken down into sub-projects should be grouped together with respect to operational agencies (other than UN).
- Give the Secretariat of the Steering Committee (which must be clearly subordinate to the PBSO) the power to convene meetings of the Project Steering Committees and to put items concerning sound financial management, monitoring and evaluation, and coordination with other actors on the agenda.
- Ensure that, when projects are being developed, their objectives relate to the national conflict prevention strategies in order to better measure their impact and improve coordination with development partners. The objectives must clearly identify the elements and roles within the projects. Assign a clear and important role to the Coordination and Monitoring Committee in the reduction of the transaction costs within each project.

For the PBSO

7. The **monitoring and evaluation** of the PBF needs to be fundamentally reviewed, taking as the starting point an overall examination of the changes picking up all the projects in relation to populations, groups of actors or given regions.
 - Indicators should be based on developments or mappings that allow the cumulative effects of different projects to be grouped together.
 - Much greater use should be made of numerical models (spatial representation maps, mappings of actors or of acceleration factors) to create models/patterns that can be visualised and, on the basis of field observations, allow the changes in critical conditions to be rapidly understood and of how the projects contribute to them.
 - Use information systems that link sensors (e.g. financial monitoring software for credit to small and medium-sized enterprises) and field monitoring teams with the PBF Secretariat in Conakry and the PBSO. Using artificial intelligence software, this could take the form of a scoreboard.
 - The monitoring of gender issues must be cross-cutting, across the different agencies and between the priority areas to strengthen its inclusion in projects. Agencies could share recruitment costs and jointly define the Terms of Reference for the roles of experts to harmonise the indicators.
8. **Financial control should be coupled with the monitoring of performance in line with the Business Plan** in order to define a concise, clear and consistent strategy, and to link funding to actual results. This will allow greater emphasis to be placed on the results achieved within the Secretariat and the Technical Committees and to seek adjustments, where necessary.
 - The Secretariat of the Steering Committee in Conakry should be placed administratively under the PBF and the Steering Committee's management to ensure that it is able to carry out a control of the agencies in an independent way.
 - Results-based planning can enable the budgetary tranche payments mechanism to effect competitive calls for proposals. Quality control must be done in conjunction with the disbursement in budgetary tranches by the PBF.
 - The PBSO must be able to ask the MDTF or the Resident Coordinator for details of any additional amounts, not originally foreseen, resulting from an increase in operating and personnel costs as a result of project extensions.