The Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund
Haiti
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PEACEBUILDING CHALLENGES

Haiti’s recent history has been marred by recurrent episodes of political turmoil, socio-economic crises and national disasters. Despite these challenges, Haiti’s government structures have developed, civil society is strengthened, and government has become more inclusive. Nonetheless, the country continues to suffer from high levels of poverty, the active presence of gangs and high levels of corruption, as well as persistent structural deficiencies which lead to recurrent episodes of unrest, hamper economic growth, as well as the country’s continued development as a democracy, equipped with institutions capable of responding to the needs of all Haitians.

The Secretary-General granted PBF eligibility to Haiti in July 2019, following a request from the Haitian Government. The priority areas for PBF support in Haiti were identified in consultation with the Government and other national counterparts, considering the reduced UN footprint after the closure of MINUJUSTH. National authorities expressed a need to focus UN interventions in certain critical security and rule of law-related areas such as community violence reduction (in particular armed gang activity), weapons management and disarmament, electoral security and justice. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017-2021 also includes peacebuilding priorities related to support to national authorities in several areas: access to justice; transparent, efficient and reliable institutions; community violence reduction; corrections; police; and elections which are, as well, in alignment with the four priority areas identified for PBF-support.

As the UN transitions from peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Haiti, PBF support presents an opportunity to consolidate peacekeeping gains and address the risks that could lead to relapse into insecurity and widespread violence, and which still threaten Haiti as it seeks to move further along the path towards stability and sustainable development. The overarching goal for PBF support in the coming years will be to support a smooth transition of UN activities to a sustainable development framework that will preserve the gains achieved after fourteen years of UN peacekeeping in the country. It will also contribute to a longer-term vision for UN engagement in Haiti, in which technical support to national institutions (in priority areas such as justice and rule of law, disarmament, community violence reduction, electoral security) will strengthen national ownership in a post-peacekeeping context.
Since February 2018, the UN (UNDP, IOM, UN Women and MINUJUSTH) has implemented a peacebuilding initiative called “Support to conflict resolution and social cohesion promotion through youth organizations in the city of Jérémie” (Grand’Anse Department). This peacebuilding initiative has actively worked in reinforcing youth capacities to foster their active and equal participation in public affairs. The project has also focused on raising awareness with local authorities and local communities to decrease violence (including Gender Based Violence) and promote a culture of peace.

As part of the eligibility request, 3 priority projects were developed and approved: support for DDR, access to justice, and a community-violence reduction project.

1. “Renforcer les capacités nationales pour le contrôle des armes et des munitions” (UNDP-IOM): The project will enhance arms and ammunition control in Haiti (including through support for the legal framework, capacity building of the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (CNDDR), setting up of a weapons registration mechanism and, the strengthening of the cooperation between Haitian institutions (Customs, Immigration, Police) as well as cross-border cooperation with the Dominican Republic to control illegal weapons and ammunition entering in the country.

2. “Renforcer l’accès à la justice des populations les plus vulnérables, en particulier les femmes et les enfants en vue d’une meilleure cohésion sociale” (UNDP-UNICEF-UNWOMEN): The project will support access to justice, legal and judicial aid services for vulnerable groups, including women and youth through the establishment of the national legal assistance system, fixed and mobile legal clinics, and the strengthening of civil society organizations. The project will further support the reduction of inflow of cases and de-cluttering the justice system, coupled with an increased capacity of rights holders to assert their rights.

3. “Réduction de la violence communautaire à Martissant et La Saline” (UNOPS, UNDP and UNFPA): The project will reduce tensions in the neighborhoods of these two communities. The project intends to promote community platforms, to prevent and resolve disputes at the community level. These platforms will serve as “community security management committees” with an emphasis on bringing peace to neighborhoods and reducing violence of all kinds. A second objective is to ensure that these platforms serve as a basis for transformational change among young people and women, particularly by bringing out other models of citizenship in the communities.

Cross-border: A dedicated Dominican Republic-Haiti cross-border project is also under consideration for 2020 programming (migration and gender).

COVID-19 response: The access to justice project (implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and UNWOMEN) has received an additional USD 2M to support a reduction in prison and detention centers’ inmates in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the Penitentiary Administration contingency plan. The component supported by the PBF would help carry out virtual audiences in order to facilitate legal arbitration to release detainees.

GYPI: Haiti was eligible for the first time to submit proposals under the gender and Youth promotion Initiative in 2020: PBF received 14 proposals under the competitive call for proposals (11 from civil society and 3 from the UNCT). The selection process is still underway.

ABOUT THE PEACEBUILDING FUND

The UN Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund is the organization’s financial instrument of first resort to sustain peace in countries or situations at risk or affected by violent conflict. The Fund may invest with UN entities, governments, regional organizations, multilateral banks, national multi-donor trust funds or civil society organizations.

The Fund works across pillars and supports integrated UN responses to fill critical gaps; respond quickly and with flexibility to peacebuilding opportunities; and catalyze processes and resources in a risk-tolerant fashion.