



# The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund

## Mauritania



PEACEBUILDING  
FUND

AUGUST 2021

### PBF Investments in

**TOTAL**  
APPROVED  **\$9.34 M**

**CURRENT**  
PORTFOLIO  **\$6.34 M**

### Focusing on

-  Prevention of violent extremism
-  Inter and intra-community tensions
-  Conflict related to transhumance and natural resources

### Partners



## PEACEBUILDING CHALLENGES

Mauritania faces multi-dimensional risks and fragilities including cross-border insecurity, the spread of violent extremism and conflicts related to access to natural resources in a context of climate change. If not addressed in a timely fashion, these factors may jeopardize socio-political and institutional instability increasing the risk of spill-over effects of conflicts in the sub-region into Mauritania.

The Secretary-General granted eligibility to Mauritania in 2020 following a request from the Government of Mauritania asking support for conflict prevention and peaceful coexistence, delivery of peace dividends in remote areas and strengthening State capacity and authority through the delivery of basic services.

## PEACEBUILDING FUND IN ACTION

The growing Fund portfolio currently represents \$6.34 million and enables 9 United Nations agencies to support the Government's efforts of addressing sensitive root causes of instability through innovative peacebuilding initiatives and integrated programmatic responses bringing together peacebuilding, development and humanitarian actors in remote areas of the country and cross-border areas. The interventions are in line with and complementary to the UN Strategy for the Sahel as well as the G5 Sahel Priority Investment Programme.

PBF supported in 2018 a first project in Mauritania as part of the operationalization of UN Support Plan for the Sahel and in the context of increasing external pressures on the Moughataa, including population increase, situation as well shocks as a result of climate change. The project addressed some of the immediate and intermediate conflict factors including: (1) weak planning and coordination with regards natural resource management, (2) poor diversification of population's income, and (3) lack of participation and disempowerment of women and youth. The project strengthened the capacities and resources already present in the Moughataa, both at community and institutional, for prevention and social cohesion.

In 2020, 4 new projects were approved the first phase of support on stabilization of border areas and prevention of violent extremism and social cohesion and natural resources management as priority peacebuilding areas identified by the Government.

- I. **“Consolidation de la paix à travers l’engagement des femmes et de la jeunesse et le renforcement des capacités des communautés dans la région frontalière du Hodh El Chargui”** implemented by IOM and UNHCR for a budget of \$1.5m over 18 months. The project addresses two pressing peacebuilding issues in the Hodh Ech Chargui: (1) the need to strengthen local and inclusive decision-making, conflict resolution mechanisms and trust between local authorities and border communities; (2) the pressure on natural resources and limited economic opportunities which are a sources of inter- and intra community tensions between host communities, refugees and IDPs and leave particularly young people vulnerable to the discourses of violent extremism in the region.
- II. **“Consolidation de la paix à travers le renforcement de la cohésion sociale et l’amélioration de l’accès équitable aux ressources naturelles dans les zones frontalières du Guidimakha”** implemented by WFP and FAO for a budget of \$1.5m over 18 months. The project aims at preventing conflicts related to transhumance and natural resources by setting up early warning and inclusive dialogue mechanisms to strengthen social cohesion, joint management and equitable access of shared resources.
- III. PBF cross-border project **“Gestion des conflits et renforcement de la résilience agro-pastorale à la frontière Mauritano-Malienne”** implemented by IOM and FAO in both countries for \$3 million over 24 months. This project addresses the increase of conflicts between pastoral, agro-pastoral and agricultural populations around access to natural resources on both sides of the border through i) the collection and analysis of transhumance data; ii) the strengthening of community resilience and improved access and management of natural resources; as well as iii) the creation of locally-led and nationally-supported conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms to strengthen social cohesion.
- IV. **“Prévention de l’extrémisme violent à travers le renforcement du leadership des femmes à Nouakchott et dans les zones frontalières à risque (Trarza, Hodh El Gharbi, Hodh El Chargui et Guidimakha)”** implemented by UNODC and UNESCO for \$999,329. The project strengthens gender equality in the prevention and fight against violent extremism by integrating the gender dimension into the criminal justice system so that women can be recognized in all of their multiple roles as law enforcement officers, offenders, victims or mere witnesses, in order to overcome gender stereotypes related to violent extremism. Additionally, the project promotes the traditional roles of Mauritanian women as carriers of the message of conciliation and social cohesion, through innovative cultural initiatives for young people.

## PEACEBUILDING FUND IMPACT

PBF continued to promote social cohesion between host communities and Malian refugees who have been living in the Moughataa of Bassiknou. The tensions once observed between the two community groups have reduced in a context characterized by demographic pressure and the negative impact of livestock on scarce natural resources, in an area largely affected by desertification and climate change. Training on the pastoral code and joint management of natural resources combined with investments around pastoral hydraulics and the development of an integrated management plan of natural resources, increased local conflict prevention capacity and the amicable settlement of conflicts between farmers and herders. PBF further supported local economic development by supporting 14 groupings representing 795 beneficiaries from nearby villages and the M'Berra camp in market gardening techniques, agricultural and horticultural equipment, and the development and implementation of a local economic development plan. 67 peace clubs targeting youth from the M'Berra camp and host communities promoted a culture a peace and social cohesion. Theatre and video activities further engaged 12,496 teenagers (6,000 at the camp and 6,496 in the host community) on social cohesion. 125 (70 for the camp and 25 for the upper community) recreational kits were distributed to facilitate social and recreational activities and early learning for young children in the centres since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the continuity of the school year. 1,864 out-of-school children (931 at camp level and 933 at host community level) benefited from literacy classes and young people vocational training. 100 Koranic schools were supported on issues such as resilience, culture of peace, child protection and child-centred pedagogy. PBF continued to work on the empowerment of women and young people in conflict resolution through the support to 49 inclusive village committees that are monitoring and documenting human rights violation, conflict resolution and facilitating exchanges between both communities. Distance education was facilitated to ensure the continuity of children's learning at home and the Bassiknou community radio was used to raise awareness on human rights and social cohesion.

## 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.