



South Sudan

September 2023



PBF Investments in

 **TOTAL APPROVED** **\$64.7 M**

 **CURRENTLY ACTIVE:** **\$26.9 M**

Focusing on

-  Security sector reform
-  National reconciliation
-  Preventing violent extremism, conflict prevention, social cohesion
-  Women and youth empowerment

Partners



PEACEBUILDING CHALLENGES

The signature of the Revitalized Agreement to Resolve the Conflict in South Sudan in September 2018 and the establishment of the Transitional Government of National Unity in February 2020 are important achievements in South Sudan's state building process but multiple challenges threaten to erode a fragile peace and could trigger a relapse into conflict. These challenges include political and ethnic tensions and lack of socio-economic opportunities, ongoing humanitarian crises, lack of effective decentralized political and government structures, displacement, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, high levels of gender-based violence (GBV) as well as climate change.

Addressing and preventing conflicts in South Sudan will require continued investments in tackling the root causes and drivers of instability while promoting sustainable peace and a renewed social contract for the country at national, subnational and local levels. This is particularly important in the current extended transitional period leading up to planned elections in 2024.

PEACEBUILDING FUND IN ACTION

The UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) has supported South Sudan since 2011 to fund urgent peacebuilding activities before and immediately after independence, based on the Peacebuilding Support Plan. In May 2021, following a request from the government, South Sudan was declared eligible for support under the Peacebuilding and Resilience Facility (PRF) of the PBF for a period of five years. In 2021 alone, the PBF approved over \$16 million in peacebuilding investments, making the country the largest recipient of PBF funds this year, and the 12th largest since its inception.

Through its investments, the PBF supports the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement to Resolve the Conflict in South Sudan.

The PBF currently has 9 active projects totaling \$26.9m in approved funding, focused on strengthening national democratization, justice and accountability processes, fostering youth and women participation in national political and peacebuilding processes, addressing conflict related to displacement and strengthening local peace and conflict prevention mechanisms.

Through its projects, the PBF supports urgent peacebuilding processes across South Sudan that enable progress towards state and nation building, transitional justice, local peacebuilding, management of conflicts related to housing, land and property, gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response, and mental health and psychosocial support and the negative impact of climate shocks on existing conflict dynamics.

■ PEACEBUILDING FUND IMPACT AND INVESTMENTS

Women's empowerment in the security sector: In support of the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, a PBF project helped to mainstream women's representation and needs into security sector reform and institutions. Women in uniform have become more visible after forming a network of 178 women in the security sector in 2022. For the women, this has been the first opportunity in their professional lives to convene and organize together, and an avenue for networking and peer learning. Their work is now strengthening gender responsiveness and accountability in the security institutions. The project also helped activate 41 police community relations committees and deploy women to special protection units. In those areas, reductions in the prevalence of GBV cases and improved relationships and levels of trust between communities and uniformed personnel have been reported.

Youth Action for Reduced Violence: In Wau, in July 2021, following the implementation of gender transformative sessions as part of a \$2.8 million project to reduce gang violence, nine youth groups from across the city independently organised a peace party and agreed to cease all hostilities and to positively contribute to their communities. 210 youth successfully completed vocational skills training and positively impacted their community, for instance by producing and distributing face masks and soap to help fight COVID-19. Community leaders and parents confirmed improvements in non-violence among youth participants. The state government, convinced by the project's positive impact, is exploring strategies to scale up youth-centric interventions going forward.

Support to the constitution making process: The PBF provides timely support to a peaceful and transparent, gender-responsive, people centered, participatory and inclusive constitution making process that is informed by locally contextualized constitution knowledge. The Government of South Sudan, the main constitution making institutions, as well as non-government and community organizations is supported to build consensus among stakeholders on substantive constitutional issues. Project resources are also dedicated to ensuring that vulnerable groups in all ten states and three administrative areas, including women, youth, internally displaced people, refugees, people with disabilities and the rural poor contribute effectively to the constitution making process.

The Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing: The Government has committed to improving accountability and addressing the legacy of large-scale human rights violations. To support these efforts, a PBF project stands ready to support the operationalization of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing (CTRH), one of the transitional justice mechanisms envisaged under Chapter V of the Revitalized Peace Agreement. The project plans to provide technical support to the Commission and to support its efforts to implement its programme of work based on a transparent, gender-sensitive and victim-centered approach.

■ PBC ENGAGEMENT

In October 2022, the government of South Sudan engaged for the first time with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and briefed at a meeting on "Building Peace through Institutions and Governance in South Sudan". This was followed by a visit of the Chair and Vice Chairs of the PBC to South Sudan in December 2022, where they engaged with diverse South Sudanese stakeholders and visited one PBF project in Wau. At a following meeting of the PBC on "Building Peace in Communities through local governance and community reconciliation in South Sudan", the Commission renewed its commitment, within its mandate, to accompany South Sudan in its nationally-led peacebuilding efforts at all levels.

■ 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.