

THE PBF IN GUINEA BISSAU



Women voting in Presidential elections in Guinea-Bissau. Photo: UNDP Guinea-Bissau

Peacebuilding Challenges

Guinea-Bissau has experienced persistent instability, with recurring political crises and tensions between the civilian and military leadership. Since August 2015, Guinea-Bissau has been facing another cycle of institutional crisis and political instability. After a brief period of national peacebuilding efforts under the Government's Terra Ranka program in 2014, disagreements between key political players paralyzed the implementation of urgent reforms.

The international community, led by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), has

provided strong support to the political process and the national reform agenda, in particular under the "Guinea-Bissau P5" formula (the African Union (AU), the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), ECOWAS, the European Union (EU), and the UN). But the political impasse, with 7 different prime ministers in the current legislative period alone, has paralyzed the country and made cooperation between international partners and the Government, including the work of the PBF Executive Committee, extremely difficult. The recent appointment of Aristides Gomes as a consensual Prime Minister, however, could be a major breakthrough.

PBF INVESTMENTS IN GUINEA-BISSAU:



TOTAL ALLOCATION:

\$ 40 MILLION
invested since 2008

CURRENT PORTFOLIO:

\$ 9.5 MILLION

FOCUSING ON:

-  Security Sector Reform
-  National Reconciliation

PARTNERS:

FAO, UNDP, UNIOGBIS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, UNWOMEN, WFP, Interpeace

Women Empowerment

As part of its Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative, the PBF is supporting a project implemented by Interpeace aimed at creating spaces for participation of women in conflict resolution and governance in Guinea-Bissau.

“My family used to tell me: don’t forget that you are taking the bread out of your children’s mouths”, says a female political leader in Bissau. Social pressure on women politicians is tenacious. Women who want to be part of the political dialogue often have to use their own funds to campaign during elections.

Challenges related to women’s participation in governance in Guinea-Bissau are manifold. But one must first understand the role of women in decision-making and the challenges related to it. Many people in Guinea-Bissau are simply unaware of those challenges. And without recognizing the issue, it is difficult to find common solutions to include women in decision-making.

The project started with a nation-wide consultation process, engaging more than 650 people including 53% of women from all regions of Guinea-Bissau and the autonomous Sector of Bissau.

The project strengthened the capacities of 240 women leaders, including new members of Voz di Paz’s Regional Spaces for dialogue, in conflict mediation and resolution tools, in the eight regions of Guinea-Bissau. Finally, the project includes an effort to raise awareness about the role of women in governance at the national level.

PBF Intervention

PBF funding covers different, mutually reinforcing sectors: dialogue and national reconciliation, strengthening of the formal and informal justice sectors, and women and youth empowerment, as well as strengthening professional and conflict-sensitive media as a cross-cutting issue.

The lessons learned in Guinea-Bissau, including three Peacebuilding Priority Plans that stayed behind expectations, have been useful in strengthening PBF procedures. The revised PBF guidelines build on these experiences and ensure that PBF investments are better insulated from contextual risks.

PBF came up with a new portfolio consisting of six Immediate Response Facility (IRF) projects running from January 2018, leading up to the presidential election in 2019. The projects adopt bottom-up approaches, working with civil society and local partners.

PBF Partnerships

The 2017 reprogramming exercise contributed to a closer collaboration between UN Special Political mission to Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) and the UN Country Team (UNCT). In addition, PBSO worked closely with the Global Focal Point on Police, Justice & Corrections in the development of the current justice project, which supports political and institutional stabilization for peace consolidation in Guinea-Bissau and is jointly implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

PBC Engagement

Guinea-Bissau has been on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) since 2008. Chaired by Brazil, the Guinea-Bissau Configuration has continuously followed the development and implementation of the PBF projects in the country through briefings from government officials, civil society and UN representatives on the ground. Most recently, the Deputy Representative of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) of UNIOGBIS briefed the Configuration on the inclusive process PBF employed in developing the new support packages.

About the PBF

The UN Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is the organization’s financial instrument of first resort to sustain peace in countries or situations at risk or affected by violent conflict. The PBF may invest with UN entities, governments, regional organizations, multilateral banks, national multi-donor trust funds or civil society organizations. From 2006 to 2017, the PBF has allocated \$772 million to 41 recipient countries. Since inception, 58 member states contributed to the Fund, 33 in the present 2017-2019 Business Plan. The PBF works across pillars and supports integrated UN responses to fill critical gaps; respond quickly and with flexibility to political opportunities; and catalyze processes and resources in a risk-tolerant fashion.