

**Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)**

**Guidelines on PBF funds application and programming**

**2018**

1. Introduction

* 1. **What is the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)**

In 2005, at the request of the General Assembly and the Security Council (through Resolutions A/60/180 and S/RES/1645 (2005)) the Secretary-General of the United Nations established a multi-year standing Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) with the objective of ensuring release of resources needed to launch peacebuilding activities and the availability of appropriate financing for recovery. PBF continues to be 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 and other international organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations, either through direct funding or through national or regional multi-donor trust funds. The PBF works across thematic 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. PBF is managed by the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) in the UN Secretariat.

In accordance with its Terms of Reference revised in 2009 (A/63/818), the objective of PBF is to support“countries recovering from conflict or considered to be at risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict, while also supporting efforts to address immediate needs in countries emerging from conflict at a time when sufficient resources are not available from other funding mechanisms that could provide support to peacebuilding activities.” The 2016 Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on the peacebuilding architecture (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 (2016)) broaden the action of the Fund in support of *sustaining peace*. According to the resolutions, sustaining peace “should be broadly understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development”.

PBF support is fully aligned to the *Sustaining Peace* resolutions, including through: support for increased UN coherence (through joint analysis, development of strategies and programmatic interventions funded by PBF), emphasis on closer partnerships with CSOs (including by opening up the Fund to direct support to eligible CSOs), focus on inclusivity (by consideration of all vulnerabilities through conflict analysis and a specific programmatic focus on women’s and youth’s empowerment), emphasis on promoting and supporting national priorities and ownership (including through alignment to national strategies, encouraging joint steering committees and through procedures ensuring formal buy-in of Government for all projects) and, finally, support to agreed priorities, in line with PBF’s approved Priority Areas, in contexts spanning before, during and after the end of conflict.

**1.2 Purpose and overview of the Guidelines**

The purpose of the Guidelines is to provide information on the PBF, especially on accessing, programming, implementing and reporting on PBF funds. The primary audience is potential Fund recipient organizations. The Guidelines are accessible through the PBF website ([www.unpbf.org](http://www.unpbf.org)) and are accompanied by more detailed Guidance Notes as well as templates to request and report on PBF funds (see Annex II for full list of templates and Guidance Notes).

The 2018 Guidelines are the second update of the original Guidelines, first published in 2009 and revised in 2014. This version seeks to incorporate lessons learned over the past three years and orient the Fund to the new sustaining peace approach. Key changes in this version of the Guidelines include:

* Clarifying how the scope of PBF support spans the full spectrum of sustaining peace;
* Limiting PBF eligibility to five years, after which a review of context is required;
* Introducing Concept Notes as a required first step leading to full project design;
* Simplifying the Fund’s Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility by making requirements less onerous and more flexible, whilst strengthening oversight by the Peacebuilding Support Office;
* Expanding eligible recipient organizations of the Fund;
* Integrating guidance for regional and cross-border projects;
* Providing more clarity on PBF’s contributions to national and regional trust funds;
* Providing PBF project funding in tranches to increase risk management and accountability;
* Strengthening risk management of PBF projects;
* Strengthening M&E requirements and linking program evaluation to eligibility review.

**1.3 Overview of the full PBF process for accessing and using funds**

Below is a chart which summarizes the step-by-step process for accessing, designing, implementing, monitoring and reporting on PBF funds. The remaining chapters are structured to follow each of the steps in the chart and provide fuller explanation and guidance.

**STEP 6: Closing and evaluating projects**

* Procure and manage project-level independent evaluation
* For PRF allocations, portfolio evaluations are managed by PBSO as part of 5-year eligibility review
* Ensure timely project operational and financial closure, in line with MPTF-O requirements

**STEP 5: Implementing and monitoring projects**

* Conduct results based monitoring of PBF projects and strategic priorities
* Satisfy requirements for project amendments or extensions, where needed
* Report on project results bi-annually
	+ In addition, submit annual strategic sustaining peace/ PBF progress report for PRF countries
* Focus on PBF visibility and communications

**STEP 4: Obtaining project approval**

* Final decision on approval made by PBSO in consultation with UN Peacebuilding Contact Group
	+ For PRF allocation, projects first endorsed by PBF Steering Committee
* Performance based transfer of funds made in tranches, following project approval

**STEP 3: Developing full project documents**

* Following concept note endorsement, develop full project proposal, focusing on the why, how and what of intervention, implementation partners, detailed budget, risk management, monitoring and evaluation and exit strategy
* Consider requesting design surge support

**STEP 2: Preparing concept notes**

* Identify main interventions in line with conflict analysis
* Satisfy criteria for becoming a direct recipient organization for PBF funds
* Together with PBSO, consider PBF project budget requirements/ limits

**STEP 1: Satisfying basic requirements and obtaining eligibility to access funds**

* Leverage the PBF comparative advantage
* Conduct conflict analysis and identify national priorities
* Two ways to access PBF funds through two funding modalities: (i) request ‘PRF’ support by seeking country eligibility from the Secretary-General and identifying strategic needs for PBF project support; or (ii) request support to address immediate needs through project-based ‘IRF’ modality, for countries not declared eligible (limited to $3 million).
	+ For PRF support, identify/ establish in-country oversight and coordination mechanisms.

2. Satisfying basic requirements and obtaining eligibility to access funds

PBF funding is determined by assessing **the sustaining peace context as a whole**, rather than on a project-by-project basis. Requests for PBF eligibility and strategic priorities are made by the UN leadership in the country jointly with the Government. The below sections outline the key steps and considerations in the process.

**2.1 Leveraging PBF’s comparative advantage**

The starting point is to consider whether PBF is the best-placed donor to respond to the identified issues and to fund the proposed priorities, given its niche and overall mandate. UN leadership and the Government need to consider the PBF’s objectives and comparative advantage and contact PBSO in advance to discuss the situation.

In a nutshell, PBF aims to:

* Help sustain peace (before during or after a conflict): Address (potential) conflict causes, factors and/or dynamics/ political transition issues, rather than broader developmental needs (such as poverty reduction) or humanitarian needs (such as immediate assistance to vulnerable groups, including food aid), usually with a focus on specific geographic zones or stakeholders particularly affected by or with potential to affect the conflict/ transition factors and dynamics;
* Bridging the UN System (for projects implemented by the UN): Encourage integrated analysis, planning and programming, support work across peace and security, human rights and development pillars and prioritize holistic responses to sustaining peace needs that leverage the know-how of different partners across and beyond the UN and help strengthen strategic coherence of interventions and support UN’s overall political engagement strategy in the country/region;
* Fast and flexible response: Respond quickly and with flexibility to political windows of opportunities, especially when those windows are time sensitive, and as part of a political strategy of engagement – it is often the ‘investor of first resort’;
* Catalytic support: Fill strategic financing gaps where other resources are not readily available and catalyze vital peacebuilding processes and/or financial resources by supporting new initiatives or testing innovative or high-risk approaches that other partners cannot yet support;
* Foster inclusivity and partnerships for peace: Trigger inclusive peacebuilding processes and encourage broad-based partnerships amongst various actors and stakeholders through a consideration of all vulnerabilities, on the basis of conflict/ context analysis.

In terms of thematic priorities, PBF supports four thematic Priority Areas, as identified in its TOR:

* **Implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue**, including SSR, DDR, rule of law and political dialogue;
* **Coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflict**, including national reconciliation; democratic governance; and conflict management;
* **Revitalization of the economy and generation of immediate peace dividends** through support to employment and equitable access to basic services;
* **Re-establishment of essential administrative services** through strengthening essential state capacity and supporting decentralization of state authority and services.

In addition, PBF Strategic Plans may identify specific **priority windows** for PBF support, which will benefit from dedicated financing. The 2017-2019 Strategic Plan prioritizes three Priority Windows, as follows:

* Facilitating women and youth’s inclusion and empowerment;
* Facilitating transitions between different UN configurations;
* Tackling transnational drivers of conflict through cross-border or regional initiatives.

**2.2 Conflict analysis and national priorities**

Once PBF is determined as the right source of support, the starting point for identifying areas for PBF funding is a rigorous and – ideally – participatory conflict analysis. PBF also requires an analysis of the national peacebuilding strategies or priorities to ensure national ownership of PBF interventions.

1. Conflict/ sustaining peace analysis

A conflict/ sustaining peace analysis should be undertaken by the UN system jointly between different UN entities, in consultation with the Government and other stakeholders, including the local civil society, where feasible, and using existing data from other sources. The analysis needs to clearly explain the country’s sustaining peace context and specificities of the current moment; identify and prioritize conflict causes, factors, triggers and risks, including human rights violations; and identify key actors and stakeholders, paying attention to all major vulnerabilities. The conflict analysis can be conducted as a specific PBF exercise or undertaken as part of UN system or joint needs assessment missions, strategic reviews, peacekeeping and special political mission mandates and regular analysis (e.g. by the Peace and Development Advisers). All conflict analyses must be gender and age sensitive, and provide a sufficiently nuanced analysis of the context to enable a strategic vision for PBF support, ensuring that PBF responds to the relevant findings in an integrated manner.

1. National priorities/ national ownership

PBF support is aligned with national peacebuilding priorities and commitments, and requires national ownership to help ensure the most effective peacebuilding interventions. Requests for PBF support need to consider and be aligned with/ support any existing national and international strategies which include peacebuilding priorities and need to build on, encourage and support national commitments for peace, whilst complementing support from other partners. If no such strategies exist, requests for PBF financing (especially where more than one project is being requested) should be used as a trigger to support a joint prioritization process by the UN system, together with the Government and other relevant stakeholders, such as conflict-affected populations, civil society and development partners. Ultimately, any PBF support needs to strengthen inclusive local processes for sustaining peace.

**2.3 Two pathways and modalities for a country to access PBF funds:**

Countries may access PBF funds through one of two pathways: (i) an eligibility request process with the final decision made by the UN Secretary-General; or (ii) through an ad hoc request for targeted support of no more than $3 million in active projects. If a country has never accessed PBF funds before, it is encouraged to first apply through the second pathway before going through the eligibility process.

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| **SUMMARY** | **Non-eligible countries** | **Eligible Countries** |
| Request made to: | PBSO | UN Secretary-General, through PBSO for eligibility and to PBSO for funding support once eligibility is granted |
| Request made by: | National government and UN Resident Coordinator jointly, with early coordination with PBSO. (Potentially eligible CSOs need to first approach UN and the Government with their ideas.) |
| Duration of access to PBF: | Max. 18 months project timespan | Once declared eligible[[1]](#footnote-1), eligibility to receive funds lasts for 5 years, after which eligibility is subject to review/renewal[[2]](#footnote-2); max. 36 months project timespan |
| Funding facility used to get PBF funds: | Immediate Response Facility (IRF)  | Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility (PRF) Immediate Response Facility (IRF) projects for: (i) special calls for proposals like PBF’s Gender and Youth initiative and (ii) cross-border projects |
| Max. funding amount: | Up to $3 million in active projects if not eligible or in new active projects after eligibility ends | No specific ceiling |

1. **Eligibility Requests leading to PRF support**

The eligibility request builds on findings of a conflict analysis to summarize the country’s peacebuilding situation, identify the major peacebuilding needs and articulate why the PBF is an appropriate financing instrument. The request is accompanied by draft initial Concept Notes on proposed projects for the first phase of PBF support, typically the first two to three years of an eligibility cycle. PBSO reviews the request, and provides advice to the UN Secretary-General who takes the final decision. Once a country is declared eligible, it is able to receive funding from the Fund’s Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility (PRF) subject to project approval. Eligible countries are also expected to make a presentation at the UN Peacebuilding Commission.

Individual PRF projects can last up to 3 years. Nonetheless, during this time, if required, new PBF PRF allocations may be proposed on an annual basis through an annual strategic report of the in-country Steering Committee, based on the country context and level of implementation of existing PBF support.

Any country declared eligible is also able to participate in the Fund’s special, competitive calls for proposals, such as the periodic Gender and Youth Promotion initiatives, which are funded through the Fund’s Immediate Response Facility (IRF).

In determining eligibility, it should be noted that PBF can invest in countries which are at any point of the sustaining peace cycle. PBSO takes the following considerations into account in making the recommendation to the Secretary-General:

* Government leadership and commitment towards sustaining peace through agreements, clear policies or publicly communicated priorities and peace champions;
* Country/ situation is high on the UN’s agenda, including as part of Executive Committee discussions, Senior Peacebuilding Group discussions, Regional Monthly Reviews, deployment of UN Peacekeeping or Special Political Missions, or is the subject of an Inter-Agency Task Force;
* UN leadership on peacebuilding and positioning in the country for sustaining peace, including mandate, capacity, previous role and Government and development partner expectations;
* Size/scope of the country’s overall peacebuilding needs and gaps, and the likelihood of achieving tangible and/or catalytic results and influencing change through PBF;
* Significance of current circumstances in the country’s sustaining peace context, including transition or high-risk moments and specific opportunities to effect change;
* Size of a country’s own financial resources and readily available funds from other sources;
* Likelihood of PBF fully and effectively utilizing its niche/ added value in the country, including results from any previous PBF support to the country/ situation;
* PBF’s current portfolio of countries and its overall global financial position.

If eligibility is granted, PRF projects are prepared at the country level and approved in line with the explanations in the next chapters. Moreover, prior to preparing projects and ideally at the time of submitting the request for PBF eligibility, in-country PBF oversight and coordination mechanisms need to be identified or set up, as follows:

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|  | **PBF Steering Committee** | **PBF Secretariat** |
| **When to establish** | PBF Steering Committee is generally required for PRF allocations. If PBSO and the UN Resident Coordinator jointly determine that a Committee is not feasible, then PBSO will instead rely on the good offices of the RC to guide PBF investment, in consultation with government, civil society and other donors, when feasible. Ideally, PBF Steering Committee is designated or established at the time of preparing a PBF eligibility request. | The Secretariat set up is to be discussed with PBSO. Ideally, the initial set-up might be supported through existing UNCT funds in the interim. Once eligibility is approved, one of the PRF projects can fund the PBF Secretariat. |
| **Composition** | Where suitable, it can be an existing steering mechanism with oversight of peacebuilding initiatives, co-chaired by the Government and the UN. If no such mechanism exists, PBSO requires setting up a Steering Committee as part of the preparation of PBF contribution, subject to Government capacity. Such committees typically are co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Government, and includes civil society and development partners.  | Where suitable, an existing UN Secretariat with existing peacebuilding responsibilities can be used as a PBF Secretariat. Otherwise, a PBF Secretariat needs to be set up, usually located in the Resident Coordinator office, typically including a coordinator, an M&E officer and some administrative support. The need for the Secretariat, its size and structure will depend on the context and will be approved by PBSO. The Secretariat reports both to the Resident Coordinator and PBSO. |
| **Role** | - recommends the strategic direction for PBF investments in the country;- endorses projects submitted for PBSO approval;- reviews project progress and offers guidance for overcoming implementation obstacles;- approves and submits annual PBF strategic progress reports, including any requests for additional financial support. | - provides quality assurance, coordination and other technical support to PBF projects and implementing partners; - offers strategic advice to PBSO and PBF Steering Committee on PBF support;- monitors progress of the peacebuilding context, needs and risks and in PBF priority areas;- briefs PBSO and manages logistical support for PBSO and PBC visits. |
| **Funding** | N/A | Where it exists, the Secretariat is funded or co-funded by PBF, usually through a separate PBF coordination project, which includes funding for Secretariat staff, coordination activities, and Secretariat and PBSO monitoring. |

1. **Targeted IRF support for countries not eligible**

Countries which decide not to go through the eligibility process outlined above, or which are not granted eligibility, or which have finished their eligibility cycle may contact PBSO to discuss the possibility of obtaining financial support using’s the Fund’s Immediate Response Facility (IRF). IRF interventions aim to respond to more immediate and well targeted needs in line with the PBF’s comparative advantage and have a limit of $3 million in projects in countries that are not eligible at any one time, or $3 million in new post end of eligibility projects for countries whose eligibility has come to an end. Such projects are limited to a duration of 18 months (with the exception of cross-border projects which may last up to 24 months). To discuss the possibility of accessing IRF support, UN leadership in consultation with the Government needs to contact PBSO. Any potential CSO proposals need to first be discussed with the UN and the Government. If PBSO agrees that the situation warrants IRF support, the design and approval of individual projects is done in accordance with the processes outlined in the following chapters, in the same way as PRF projects.

1. **IRF support for PBF global special calls for proposals and regional/ cross-border projects**

In addition to being used to support targeted sustaining peace interventions in countries which have not been declared eligible for PBF support, the IRF modality is also used for funding in the following two specific circumstances:

1. Regional or cross-border support

In addition to its country-based support, PBF can also provide funding for regional or cross-border priorities, where cooperation between two or more countries is necessary. Support will be based on consultation and agreement of all concerned UN leadership and Governments regarding common priorities and possible interventions. In such cases, strategic results, implementation arrangements and reporting will need to be joint. Nonetheless, allocations are made at national levels (rather than to regional offices) through agreements with each country’s UN Resident Coordinator and Government. Such support is provided through the IRF modality, as it may involve non-eligible and eligible countries and as such projects are aimed to pilot new ideas and approaches. A [**Guidance Note on cross-border projects**](https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_guidance_note_on_cross_border_and_regional_programming_-_2020.pdf) provides more information.

1. Special calls for proposals

In addition to its support to each country developed through dedicated processes for that country discussed in this and following chapters, PBSO may make special global calls for PBF project proposals to promote a specific area within its comparative niche or its priority thematic windows. Such proposals are generally global and competitive and open only to countries which are declared eligible for PBF. They may have to comply with specific pre-identified criteria in addition to general PBF quality criteria and they will need to demonstrate that they complement any existing PBF support to that country. One example of such a special call is PBF’s gender and youth promotion initiative.

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| **SUMMARY** | **Immediate Response Facility (IRF)** | **Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility (PRF)** |
| **WHEN?** | For countries not eligible or no longer eligible for PBF support, to support targeted project interventions.For countries eligible for PBF support:(i) as part of PBF special calls for proposals like the gender and youth promotion initiative;(ii) for cross-border or regional projects. | For countries declared eligible by the S-G, to support a country’s strategic sustaining peace priorities through various projects. |
| **HOW?** | Following agreement with PBSO, projects submitted as need arises by the UN Resident Coordinator, endorsed by the Government counter-part, for PBSO for approval. UN Peacebuilding Contact Group consulted as part of PBSO project approval. | Projects prepared in support of already agreed peacebuilding priorities for PBF, in line with conflict analysis and national priorities. These priorities are set out through: 1. the eligibility request (first or renewal);
2. the annual strategic report on overall PBF progress, which may include additional requests for PBF support, if necessary;

Projects are endorsed at the country level by the PBF Steering Committee, where it exists, or UN and Government leadership, where it does not, and then submitted to PBSO for approval. UN Peacebuilding Contact Group consulted as part of PBSO project approval. |
| **WHO GETS FUNDING?** | Both modalities have the same potential Fund recipient organizations, which can be UN entities or eligible non-UN organizations |
| **DURATION?** | 18 months per project maximum (with exception of cross-border projects which can last for up to 24 months) | 36 months per project maximum within a 5-year eligibility window |
| **MAX. AMOUNT?** | $3 million if not eligible or $3 million in new active approvals once eligibility ends | No specific maximum ceiling, envelope determined by PBSO for each country context.  |

3. Preparing PBF Concept Notes

Unless otherwise agreed, development of a Concept Note is a required first step in the project approval process (PRF or IRF) and allows stakeholders (Government, UN leadership, implementing organizations and PBSO) to have a common understanding of what will be funded.

**3.1 Process for preparing and approving Concept Notes**

* **For PRF projects:** Concept Notes are generally submitted to PBSO in a package at the same time as a proposal on PBF strategic priorities in the country. This is done at the time of the eligibility request or as part of the annual strategic review/report. Concept notes are submitted to PBSO by or on behalf of the UN Resident Coordinator, following consultation with Government and any other key stakeholders.
* **For IRF projects:** Concept Note(s) are submitted to PBSO by or on behalf of the UN Resident Coordinator once there is general agreement between the UN Resident Coordinator and PBSO that: 1) the country and the specific issue(s) are suitable for IRF support, and 2) PBF financial support is available. Government should be consulted prior to submission of Concept Notes.

For both IRF and PRF projects, Concept Note preparation can be done in two ways:

1. a collaborative process managed by the UN Resident Coordinator’s office supported by the PBF Secretariat (if it exists) through local identification of best expertise, UN or otherwise, to implement the strategic priorities;
2. a competitive process managed by the UN Resident Coordinator’s office supported by the PBF Secretariat (if it exists) whereby potential recipients, UN or otherwise, are invited to propose potential partnerships and approaches to implementing strategic priorities, which will be reviewed against clear criteria.

For either approach, the process must:

* Be transparent and consultative and involve active participation of government counterparts, civil society and implementing partners and, where possible, future beneficiaries;
* Focus on identifying the most effective and innovative ideas for addressing the strategic priorities;
* Consider existing UN mandate, experience and capacity as well as gaps and, where gaps exist, approach relevant non-UN partners, such as civil society organizations, who fit PBF eligibility criteria and may be best placed to implement components of agreed UN strategic priorities for sustaining peace in the country.

Country teams are required to exchange with designated PBSO program officers on Concept Notes content prior to their finalization and submission to PBSO to make sure that PBSO is receptive to the idea. This is normally done through the PBF Secretariats or the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office. Once the Concept Note is submitted and PBSO endorses it, recipient organizations (UN or non-UN) are then cleared to begin preparing full project documents. In endorsing a Concept Note, PBSO will provide comments for project development and agree with the Resident Coordinator and proposed recipient organizations on a timeframe for project preparation and approval, as well as any surge support that PBSO can offer for project development. PBSO’s approval of Concept Notes is valid for a maximum of six months (although projects are generally expected to be submitted within three months of a Concept Note endorsement), after which teams must reapply for approval and provide a convincing justification for the delay.

**3.2 Concept Note content**

The Concept Note template includes the following information:

* A brief rationale for the intervention, on the basis of joined-up cross-pillar conflict analysis, that justifies the proposed approach;
* A brief description of the project idea with main interventions and intended results, demonstrating how they reflect the agreed strategic priorities and address conflict dynamics;
* Geographic and beneficiary targeting with clear criteria in line with conflict analysis and going beyond broad categories of populations, such as ‘women’ or ‘youth’;
* Proposed budget and some overall budget considerations to enable a judgment on whether the approach provides value for money;
* Project duration;
* Expected Fund Recipient Organizations, including justification for selection and any proposed partnerships.

**3.3 PBF Recipient organizations and implementing partners**

Fund recipient organizations and implementing partners should be selected on the basis of their suitability to implement the proposed peacebuilding priorities, including their mandate, specific expertise, previous experience and previous PBF performance, local know-how, local reputation, existing capacity and ability to mobilize quickly and create partnerships.

While PBF also provides direct funding to non-UN entities, its primary focus is on enabling a more coordinated and effective UN peacebuilding response, based on a common political strategy and added value of the UN. PBF also continues to have a specific focus on countries or regions in situations of transition between different UN configurations to help fill gaps which may follow such transitions. Eligible non-UN entities may receive PBF funds in support of the UN peacebuilding strategy and joint priorities where non-UN organizations have a particular advantage and where UN leadership approves their support. The key consideration in determining whether funding will go through the UN or non-UN entities will be who is best placed to deliver outcomes.

Any PBF recipient organization can and should, where possible, partner with government agencies and local civil society for implementation purposes and to help strengthen local capacity. When PBF recipient organizations enter into partnerships with local implementing partners, the Fund direct recipient retains full fiduciary responsibility for the funds received from the PBF.

PBF encourages joint proposals (with two to three direct recipients) as its core niche is to strengthen coherence of UN and international responses. Single recipient proposals are discouraged and need to demonstrate experience with multiple themes that feature in the proposal and cooperation with other entities, even if those are not direct recipients. At the same time project teams are urged to restrict themselves to no more than three direct recipient organizations to avoid fragmentation; proposals with more than three recipients will only be approved exceptionally. Ultimately, the UN Resident Coordinator needs to ensure that the proposed recipient organizations and implementing partners are the most appropriate for contributing to the peacebuilding priorities agreed between the Government and the UN.

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| **Criteria for an organization being a direct recipient of PBF funds****(in addition to sign-off by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Government counterpart)** |
| **UN agencies, funds or programs** | **Non-UN organizations (NUNOs)** |
| Any UN organization, fund or program can be a recipient of PBF funds if it has signed the PBF Memorandum of Understanding with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office. | * NUNO has previously received funding from the UN, the PBF, or any of the contributors to the PBF, in the country of project implementation;
* NUNO has a current valid registration as a non-profit, tax exempt organization with a social based mission in both the country where headquarter is located and in country of project implementation for the duration of the proposed grant. (NOTE: If registration is done on an annual basis in the country, the organization must have the current registration and obtain renewals for the duration of the project, in order to receive subsequent funding tranches);
* NUNO produces an annual report that includes the proposed country for the grant NUNO has audited financial statements of the last two years, including the auditor opinion letter. The financial statements should include the legal organisation that will sign the agreement (and oversee the country of implementation, if applicable) as well as the activities of the country of implementation. (NOTE: If these are not available for the country of proposed project implementation, the CSO will also need to provide the latest two audit reports for a program or project-based audit in country.) The letter from the auditor should also state whether the auditor firm is part of the nationally qualified audit firms.
* For the previous two calendar years, NUNO can demonstrate an annual CSO budget in the country of proposed project implementation is at least twice the annualized budget sought from PBF;
* NUNO can demonstrate at least 3 years of experience in the country where grant is sought;
* NUNO can provide an explanation of its legal structure, including the specific entity which will enter into the legal financing agreement with the MPTF-O for the PBF grant.

A NUNO which has satisfied the above requirements will also need to enter into a Financing Agreement with the Multi-Partner Fund Office. |

PBF will also consider funding proposals that have mixed CSO and UN recipients, if this makes sense for the intervention and the country.

In some circumstances, if strategic priorities align, PBF will consider providing funding directly to a regional or country-based trust fund, managed by the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, hence acting as a ‘feeder’ fund – see the box below.

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| **PBF as Feeder Fund**The reasons for the PBF to act as a ‘feeder fund’ to a country or regional trust fund which deals with sustaining peace priorities include, but are not limited to:* To play a catalytic role to leverage other funds, as PBF may be among the first donors contributing to the Trust Fund;
* To fund a particularly high-risk or innovative component of a Trust Fund strategy;
* To further strengthen coordination and coherence in achieving joint sustaining peace priorities.

In these cases, PBF will enter into a funding agreement with the relevant Trust Fund, which then becomes PBF’s direct funding recipient. Such agreements imply that both Fund’s allocation, disbursement and reporting processes will be aligned, and to do so, a short guidance note will be developed on a case-by-case basis. The note will outline/describe the specific requirements along the project life cycle processes. (e.g. governance structure, transfers, reporting, etc). Furthermore, on a case-by-case basis, PBSO may require to be a member of the other Trust Fund’s Steering Committee. |

**3.4 PBF project budget**

Concept Notes must propose a draft budget which takes into account the proposed results, types of interventions, geographic and beneficiary focus and Fund recipient organizations. In proposing a budget, proposed recipients should keep in mind that PBF is not a small grants mechanism and has established minimum budget requirements to ensure efficiency.

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| **Minimum PBF project budgets**  |
| **Single recipient organization project** | $800,000  |
| **Joint project** | $1 million  |
| **Single project tranche to any recipient organization (minimum of two tranches)** | $100,000  |

These minimum budgets do not apply to PBF Secretariat projects and may be reduced for special calls for proposals such as the gender and youth promotion initiative. Any other reductions will be agreed only on an exceptional basis.

4. Developing full project documents

Once PBSO has endorsed a Concept Note, the go-ahead is provided for project development. Project preparation must be based on an inclusive and consultative process, which includes government counterparts, civil society, potential beneficiaries and development partners, especially those working in same areas or that can help ensure catalytic effects of PBF projects. Draft project documents need to be sent to PBSO program officer for review and comments to help strengthen project clarity and quality and ensure its consistency with the agreed strategic priorities. Only once PBSO approves a project document does it provide a formal funding commitment to the country.

**4.1 Content of project document**

As provided in the proposal template, key components of the project document are as follows, building on the Concept Note content:

* Rationale for the intervention clearly identifying the problem that needs to be addressed on the basis of a conflict analysis and the PBF niche;
* Justification for the selected interventions (the “why”), the results, outputs and activities (the “what”), and the implementation strategy (the “how);
* Implementation partners and project coordination/ oversight mechanisms;
* Detailed budget, including an indication of the specific amount of funds that will be allocated to gender equality and women’s empowerment within the overall project budget (and to youth for projects with a youth flag);
* Risk management matrix;
* M&E arrangements including a result framework and a break-down of the M&E budget;
* Project exit strategy, including sustainability considerations.

More information on the result framework requirements is provided in the Monitoring chapter of the Guidelines. More information on project design and theories of change is provided in the Theories of Change Guidance Note.

**4.2 Support for project preparation**

In preparing project documents, recipient organizations should contact their respective regional and headquarters’ colleagues to take advantage of their guidance, global lessons and specialized sectoral support. They should also use the expertise of UN Peace and Development Advisers, Political Affairs Officers, Human Rights Advisers and PBF Secretariats, where these are available, for political, human rights and peacebuilding guidance. PBSO program officers and other UN Secretariat experts should also be brought in to accompany the process of project design and provide guidance and support where needed.

Depending on the size of the PBF envelope and capacity gaps, PBSO may be able to facilitate access to additional technical support from peacebuilding and sectoral experts. If such surge support is not available, PBSO may be able to provide funding to the country for a PBF Secretariat, even before eligibility is formally granted – this will need to be discussed with PBSO directly.

**4.3 Ensuring project quality**

The following are the key criteria that PBF will consider when reviewing a project. They relate to both the process of project preparation and the content of the project document.

* How well does the proposal **leverage PBF’s unique role/added value**? (refer to section 2.1 of the Guidelines);
* Does the proposal clearly explain **Partner Government and UN senior leadership’s peacebuilding strategy** and demonstrate national ownership and commitment to this strategy and peacebuilding priorities? (through relevant plans, frameworks, budgets, identification of champions etc);
* Are the proposed interventions based on an **updated conflict analysis**?
* Were the strategic aims of the proposal identified through a **transparent and participatory process**?
* Does the proposal demonstrate a **sense of urgency/significance of the request** for the country’s sustaining peace agenda (including seizing specific political windows of opportunity for engagement);
* How **clear and achievable are the results** of the proposal and the proposed implementation approach?
* Does the proposal give **realistic timeframes** for project implementation (including steps taken by recipient organizations to prepare for speedy implementation)?
* Is the proposal **conflict sensitive** (including consideration of Do No Harm principles; UN’s Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on UN support to non-UN security forces; and Guiding Principles on Human Rights and Business, where relevant)?
* Does the proposal justify the **selection of recipient organizations**, including through demonstrated recipient organization capacity, and adequacy of implementing partnerships (including local know-how and a clear division of roles and responsibilities) and demonstrate the break-down of organizational silos in support of collective outcomes to sustain peace?
* Does the proposal demonstrate **Value for money** including an appropriate balance between different types of costs and a justification of various cost categories? (Reference should be made to PBF’s Value for Money Checklist. Please note that value for money considerations include cost efficiency with the need for recipient organizations to demonstrate efforts to find economies of scale, share resources, contribute to personnel and operational costs from other sources, use local expertise whenever possible, but also the need to ensure that adequate and quality inputs and expertise are provided, often in difficult, complex, remote and high risk environments.)
* Does the proposal include **robust monitoring and evaluation system** (including indicators which allow monitoring of outcome level process and a recommended M&E budget of 5-7% of the total project budget, with a clearly indicated independent evaluation budget)?
* Does the project provide a sufficient **risk management analysis** including identification of the project level of risk and appropriate monitoring and mitigation strategies?
* Does the project consider **an exit strategy** including sustainability considerations where relevant?
* Does the project demonstrate **gender sensitivity and responsiveness**? This should include an appropriate gender marker score. (Note: proposals with gender marker “0” will not be accepted and proposals with gender marker “1” are discouraged; a minimum of 30 per cent of any project budget should be specifically directed to empowering women and addressing gender issues in order to be considered a Gender Marker 2 project.) A Guidance Note on PBF Gender Marker provides further information.
* Does the proposal clarify any **relevant environmental considerations** (for proposals dealing with land or natural resources)?

5. Obtaining project approval

**5.1 PBF project approval process**

The Head of the UN Country Team formally submits the project(s) for PBSO approval. These are submitted by email without signatures, and addressed to the PBF Chief. In the case of PRF projects, prior to formal submission to PBSO, the PBF Steering Committee, where it exists, needs to have reviewed and endorsed the project proposal. For any project, all in-country consultations must have taken place prior to project submission for approval by PBSO and be reflected in the proposal.

Once a project is submitted for approval, PBSO shares the proposal with the Headquarters-based UN Peacebuilding Contact Group for review and comments. Then a PBSO Project Appraisal Committee convenes to consider the proposal. Following the assessment, the Committee makes one of the following recommendations to the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support:

1. Approval, with or without recommendations (such recommendations can be integrated in the project document or considered as part of implementation);
2. Conditional approval with a list of specific conditions which need to be addressed and integrated into the project document before the project may be re-submitted for approval;
3. Rejection.

The Committee’s decision is communicated by the PBF Chief via email to the Head of the UN Country Team and the implementing partner where it is a non-UN recipient organization, within three weeks from the formal submission in the case of proposals for UN recipient organizations and within six weeks for non-UN recipient organizations (due to the need to verify eligibility of the organization).

If the project has been conditionally approved, conditions will need to be addressed and the final document cleared by the designated PBSO Program Officer prior to re-submission.

Finalized, signed projects then need to be re-submitted to PBSO by email for sign-off by the Assistant Secretary-General for peacebuilding. PBSO then requests its Administrative Agent, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, to initiate the transfer of funds.

**5.2 Transfer of funds through performance-based tranches**

For the vast majority of its approvals, PBSO has introduced a tranche approach to project funding, which are specified in the project budget. Only the first tranche is considered fully committed by PBF. Subsequent tranches will depend on transfer conditions, which are also clearly indicated in the project document, and availability of PBF funds.

Prior to transferring the funds to the recipient organization (for first or subsequent tranches), MPTF-O verifies whether:

* An MOU has been signed with the RUNO’s headquarters or a NUNO agreement signed with the relevant counterpart;
* A project document is duly signed by all project signatories and includes a project budget by UNDG categories with an indirect cost of 7% (as per PBF project template);

In addition, MPTF-O and PBSO will verify that:

* The organization has satisfied all financial and narrative reporting requirements and operational and financial closure requirements for any current or previous PBF-funded project with the same organization in that country;
* Each recipient organization has complied with operational and financial closure conditions of previous projects by the recipient organization in the same country.

Once the above conditions have been satisfied, MPTF-O transfers the first tranche of the budget to the recipient organizations’ headquarters’ accounts, in line with the project budget and in accordance with agreed tranches. This is generally done within 5 business days of MPTF-O receipt of the Fund Transfer Request supporting documents from PBSO for UN recipient organizations and within 15 business days for non-UN organizations. The date of initial transfer is the formal date of project commencement and the duration is as per the project document.

The below table explains the process of releasing subsequent tranches to UN and non-UN recipient organizations alike. These are authorized by the PBF Chief upon the submission of the required documents by the Convening Agency on behalf of all the project recipient organizations.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **How are tranches organized** | Project budget is usually divided into two tranches (70/30) for UN and three tranches (35/35/30) for Non-UN recipient organizations, unless the project is high risk in which case the first tranche may be lower or more tranches may be required. |
| **What needs to be submitted to PBSO to trigger subsequent tranche** | * Submission of a signed Request for Release of Subsequent Tranches template;
* Non-certified financial report demonstrating at least 75% expenditure/ commitment rate of the total amount of previous project tranche(s) (can be latest quarterly financial or ad-hoc financial report);
* Compliance with the submission of required narrative and financial reports under the PBF reporting calendar;
* Submission of ad hoc narrative report in the case where a narrative report has not yet been submitted, which will include an expenditure update demonstrating the project financial needs;
* Any other specific requirement agreed in the project document, if any;
* For NUNOs only, submission of a renewed in-country registration document, if registration has expired before the release of the subsequent tranche.
 |
| **Who needs to submit** | The Convening agency for the project (in the case of joint projects) is responsible for coordinating overall project budget expenditure and submitting the request for the release of the subsequent tranche to PBSO on behalf of all recipient organizations. The request should be copied to the PBF Secretariat, where it exists, and the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office. If one organization is significantly delayed with implementation, the decision on the subsequent tranche will be at PBSO’s discretion. |

6. Implementing and monitoring projects

**6.1 Use of funds**

Each recipient organization is fully accountable for the funds received under a PBF project, in accordance with its rules and regulations and in line with the project document and budget. Fund recipients are accountable for funds they transfer to implementing organizations. The recipient organization will use its own financial and fiduciary rules and will comply with the provisions of the MOU signed between that organization and the MPTF-O. For joint projects, recipient organizations need to communicate their progress and level of expenditure with the designated Convening Agency and the PBF Secretariat, where it exists, to facilitate coordination.

Importantly, project funds may not be transferred between UN funds, agencies or programs. It is against the MOU rules for a direct recipient organization to sub-grant a part of the project funds it receives to a UN fund, agency or program. If funds need to be re-distributed between different direct recipient organizations, the Convening agency will need to request a project amendment with a budgetary revision. Funds will then need to be returned to MPTF-O before they may be transferred to a new recipient organization.

**6.2 Project results monitoring**

Direct recipient organizations are responsible for monitoring project results. For joint projects, Convening agencies are responsible for coordinating all recipient organizations for joint monitoring of the project. PBF Secretariats, where they exist, help to coordinate monitoring approaches between projects and monitor progress against the peacebuilding context, the risks and the high-level peacebuilding priorities supported by PBF. PBSO places an emphasis on monitoring of results and ensuring there is enough evidence to support analysis of progress. A minimum of 5-7% of the project budget should be put aside for monitoring and evaluation activities.

Project result monitoring requires:

1. A strong results framework contains the following:
* **Outcomes** are the project’s results. They should denote clear changes in behavior or attitudes/perceptions and address the conflict factors identified in the project’s justification. Results formulation should be as specific and as measurable as possible. While results can be broader than what a single PBF project may achieve and may depend on factors outside the direct control of project implementing organizations, the expected PBF contribution, assumptions and risk management need to be made clear.
* **Outputs** are a set of clear deliverables or necessary steps which the project will take to achieve a result. They should be within the direct control of project implementers. They are composed of specific activities enumerated in the project document.
* Both results and outputs must have a set of measurable **indicators**, which enable measurement of progress. They can be quantitative and/or qualitative, but need to measure progress against results or outputs, rather than merely measuring activities. They should be sex and age disaggregated.
* **Means of verification** indicate how data for the indicators will be obtained. This can include routine data already collected, for example by the Government, CSOs or other organizations or specific means of verification for the project, including activity monitoring and questionnaires and also perception surveys.
* Indicators need to have **baselines,** **targets and milestones**, which state what the situation is at the start of the project and the progress the project intends to make.
1. Monitoring approaches:

Specific means of monitoring will depend on the types of interventions supported and existing data. It will be very important to coordinate monitoring approaches within and between PBF projects, to ensure coherence and economies of scale. An M&E Plan is a helpful tool in this regard and will need to include specific ways of collecting data against various indicators, including:

* An exercise to collect the baselines for all indicators. There are likely to be some perception type indicators, which may require a dedicated perception survey. The Fund encourages wherever possible the inclusion of control group populations in data collection for baselines and end lines.
* A plan for collecting data along the way, including routine or administrative data already being collected and through site visits and discussions with stakeholders.
* An exercise to collect end of project progress for all the indicators. This is the same exercise that is done at the start of the projects, but is now done in the final months and enables project implementers, evaluators and decision-makers to observe progress.

In setting up the M&E Plan, the project managers should seek support and advice from PBF Secretariats where they exist and always consider if any monitoring methodology can serve more than one project.

1. Data analysis and strategic use

Any kind of data collection exercise should be followed by in-depth data analysis and a user-friendly presentation of findings for different audiences. There also needs to be a strategy for the most effective use of findings. Findings need to be used for project management and adjustment, if need be; for accountability to project beneficiaries and authorities; for broader program learning; and for strategic communications by the Country Team and PBSO. Implementing organizations need to ensure that evidence of progress from monitoring is clearly conveyed through project reports or stories, which need to be shared with PBSO.

**6.3 PRF support: Additional monitoring requirements**

In the case of PRF support, in addition to project level monitoring, two additional monitoring requirements exist:

1. Monitoring of the country context/conflict analysis and of the PBF priorities, as agreed through eligibility requests and/or annual strategic progress reports: The PBF Secretariat will need to prepare an M&E Plan which will propose high-level indicators and monitoring approaches to keep track of progress at this higher level to get a better understanding of the overall contribution of the PBF support as well as of the changing context. The Secretariat will receive a monitoring budget for this purpose. It is expected that perception surveys and community based monitoring approaches will be necessary to monitor higher level progress. Community based monitoring basically collects relevant data on the peacebuilding context or high lever issues that PBF is aiming to tackle through existing community institutions or representatives. There is a more detailed Guidance Note on perception surveys and community based monitoring for PBF, but any data collection at the community level needs to be done in a manner which ensures that targeted communities are not exposed to harm and so as to engender downward accountability from project implementers and decision-makers. In setting up these approaches, the PBF Secretariat will need to work with implementing agencies for PBF projects to ensure coordination.
2. Evaluability and/ or mid-term review assessment: PBF will procure and manage an evaluability assessment of the PBF portfolio approximately 9 months after initial project approvals. Evaluability assessments offer an opportunity to review project outcomes, level of resources and monitoring plans against an updated conflict analysis in order to ensure that projects are well placed to achieve relevant results and that the portfolio is well placed to be evaluated. This assessment will be conducted in a selection of PRF countries, depending on the size and complexity of the portfolio. Sometimes this assessment may be merged into a mid term review assessment, depending on timing and PBSO priorities. PBF Secretariats are expected to assist in the logistics and in-country coordination of stakeholders in support of the assessment.

PBSO needs to approve PRF monitoring plans, including data collection mechanisms, and may provide comments on TORs, participate in selection panels and provide feedback on draft reports.

**6.4 Project amendments/ extensions**

PBF offers flexible funding and is open to consider adjustment during project implementation if called for by changes in context and emerging windows of opportunity for engagement. Changes that are relatively minor and do not affect project results, the overall implementation strategy, the duration or the budget, can be made directly by the implementing organizations through a Note to File. More significant change, however, requires approval and should be discussed with PBSO prior to submitting a formal request. A project amendment requires approval and sign off by the same parties as the original project, using the original project document and highlighting any changes with a brief justification. Project amendments are prepared and requested using the original project document template and ticking the amendment option, which asks for a brief justification and highlights of result/ budget change in the original project document. Project amendment is required for the following conditions:

1. No-cost extension of project duration

A no cost extension of project duration can be requested, usually for a maximum of 6 months (with the exception of the PBF Secretariat projects, which can be extended for longer if need be). Such an extension should be requested in exceptional circumstances, at least two months before project end, and needs to be justified by issues beyond delays with implementing agency administrative processes. Original project signatory entities need to endorse the extension, whilst the PBF Chief will approve it on behalf of PBSO.

1. Change of project scope or a budget re-allocation

New circumstances may require a change within project scope or a re-allocation of activities or the budget to better address the context. If the requested change does not affect the overall results of the project; does not change the total budget of any outcome by more than 15%; and does not change any of the UN budget categories by more than 15%, the revision can be made by the implementing agencies without the need for approval (a note to file will suffice). If the change does affect one of the above, then a formal project revision must be submitted to PBSO, endorsed by the original signatories and submitted for approval by PBF Chief on behalf of the ASG for Peacebuilding Support.

1. Cost increase to the project, with or without extension of duration

If additional funds are being sought for the project, whether to implement the same activities or to add new activities, a clear explanation will be needed, including what circumstance led to the change and how it may impact the rest of the project. Any additional funding to the project through a project revision will go through the same endorsement process in-country and approval process by PBSO as the original approval. For PRF projects, PBSO expects such changes to be flagged by the annual strategic progress review/report submitted to PBSO at the end of each year.

**6.5 PBF reporting**

The main purpose of reporting is to offer evidence, based on the sound analysis of data, of progress against results to help with project implementation and learning. Whilst PBF recipient organizations will need to keep more detailed records of project implementation and progress of all activities in line with their own rules and regulations, PBF project reports need to be succinct and focused on results with clear illustrations of change.

1. PBF narrative reporting

The following narrative reports are required by PBSO from recipient organizations:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of report** | **Due when** | **Submitted by** |
| Bi-annual project progress report | 15 June  | Convening agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/quality assured by PBF Secretariats, where they exist. |
| Annual project progress report | 15 November | Convening agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/quality assured by PBF Secretariats, where they exist. |
| End of project report covering entire project duration | Within three months from the operational project closure (may be submitted instead of a bi-annual or annual report if timing coincides) | Convening agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/quality assured by PBF Secretariats, where they exist. |
| For eligible countries only: Annual strategic peacebuilding progress report. Annual report should include any requests for additional PBF allocations in the next calendar year. | 31 December | PBF Secretariat on behalf of the UN Resident Coordinator |

All narrative reports must be uploaded onto the MPTF-O Gateway by the PBF Secretariat or PBF focal point in the country.

1. PBF financial reporting

Financial reporting is done by each individual recipient organization directly to MPTF-O. Non-UN recipient organizations are required to report uncertified quarterly financial information, provide uncertified financial reports with tranche requests, and provide a certified final financial report to the MPTF Office. All financial reporting, except for tranche requests, is submitted electronically for all projects, through MPTF Office’s UNEX (“UN EXpense”) system. MPTF-O compiles quarterly and annual financial reporting on the Fund, in accordance with the IATI standards (<https://www.aidtransparency.net/>).

UN recipient organization financial reporting timeline:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Timeline** | **Event** |
| **March - April** | Annual reporting – Report **Q4 expenses** (Jan. to Dec. of previous year) |
| ***Certified final financial report to be provided by 30 June of the calendar year after project closure*** |

UNEX also opens for voluntary financial reporting for UN recipient organizations the following dates

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **31 July** | Voluntary Q2 expenses (January to June) |
| **31 October** | Voluntary Q3 expenses (January to September) |

Non-UN recipient organization financial reporting timeline:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Timeline** | **Event** |
| **28 February** | Annual reporting – Report **Q4 expenses** (Jan. to Dec. of previous year) |
| **30 April** | Report **Q1 expenses** (January to March)  |
| **31 July**  | Report **Q2 expenses** (January to June) |
| **31 October** | Report **Q3 expenses** (January to September) |
| ***Certified final financial report to be provided at the quarter following the project financial closure*** |

**6.7 Project communications and PBF visibility**

In addition to the above requirements, all organizations receiving an allocation from the PBF are required to ensure the visibility of the Fund. This should include both the identification of success stories within routine reporting as well as through the recipient organization’s strategic communications products, which should make reference to PBF and use the Fund’s logo. More detail is provided in a Guidance Note on PBF visibility and communications.

7. PBF project closure and evaluation

**7.1 Project and PBF portfolio evaluation**

Independent evaluations provide an impartial assessment of the project/portfolio in accordance with the OECD DAC evaluation criteria and UNDG Guidance. Every PBF project needs to undertake an independent evaluation, the funds for which must be included and clearly visible in the project M&E budget in order to be approved by PBSO.

Factors to consider in planning for a high-quality evaluation include: 1) procuring teams with adequate peacebuilding, regional and subject matter expertise; and 2) providing for sufficient numbers of days for the consultant(s) to complete an inception phase, field work, and data analysis/ report writing (usually more than 4 weeks). Evaluation TORs and draft reports should be shared with PBSO for comment and quality assurance. In PRF allocations, PBF Secretariats may play a management and quality assurance role for project evaluations and a joint evaluation can be organized for several PRF Projects. Evaluation findings should be included in the final project report and serve to highlight PBF results as well as areas for improvement and learning. Recipient organizations, with the support of PBF Secretariats in PRF countries, are required to produce a management response to the evaluation recommendations within one month of the approval of the final report.

Moreover, PBSO will organize a separate portfolio-wide evaluation every 5 years as part of the PBF eligibility review. Such evaluations will be funded and managed by PBSO directly and will be an important step in considering continuing eligibility, if requested.

**7.2 Project closure**

Once project implementation has ended, recipient organizations commence operational and financial closure of the project. The convening agency for the project is responsible for communicating to PBSO and MPTF-O the operational project closure. After operational closure, funds that are not already committed cannot be spent. It is important, therefore, to ensure that an evaluation takes place or is at least under way/committed before the operational closure of the project.

Any unspent project funds (above USD 250) must be returned to PBF through MPTF-O. Funds may not be re-allocated to new activities or new projects.

An end of project report must be submitted to PBSO within three months of the end of the operational activities of the project. Financial project closure includes reimbursement of unspent project funds over USD 250, ensuring that indirect project cost does not exceed 7%, and submission of a certified final financial statement by the recipient organizations’ headquarters to the MPTF-O, which is due by 30 June of the calendar year after project closure.

More detail on project closure is provided on the MPTF Office website and through a Project closure Guidance Note. Project closure is a crucial step and failure to comply with the requirements in a timely manner will result in a block of future funds transfer to the same recipient organization in the country until the situation is rectified.

For non-UN recipient organizations, an independent project audit will be required by the end of the project. The audit report needs to be attached to the final narrative project report. The cost of such activity must be included in the initial project budget. For UN recipient organizations, provision of an audit will depend on the organizations’ financial rules and obligations.

**ANNEX I: List of PBF key actors and stakeholders**

**UN in-country leadership:** UN in-country leadership (especially the Resident Coordinator) has the high level responsibility for selection and implementation of PBF support in the country. This includes ensuring that strategic priorities are clear and in line with Government and UN priorities, that they respond to the most important peacebuilding needs, and that the most capable implementing partners are identified, whether UN or not. UN leadership needs to ensure high level risks are identified and managed and needs to play an active role in implementing politically sensitive components of the program and ensuring activities are accompanied by a political strategy. UN leadership also needs to provide high level direction in case projects run into implementation obstacles. The Head of the UN Country Team co-chairs the PBF Steering Committee in PRF countries where it exists.

**Broader UN System:** The broader UN system (in the country but also at Headquarters, including non-resident UN entities) provides an important accompaniment role to PBF projects, both during design and implementation, through – for example - provision of technical support, suppot for conduct of political and conflict analysis, political engagement and advice, context and risk monitoring, ensuring alignment with various relevant strategic frameworks.

**Government counter-parts:** Government counterparts play an important role in determining the strategic priorities to be implemented with PBF support and ensuring that projects benefit from the Government know-how and support to achieve results. The Government plays a role of quality assurance and it needs to provide the relevant accompaniment, including staffing, political support and maintenance costs to ensure projects can achieve results and be sustained.

**Civil society:** Civil society provides guidance to the UN on strategic priorities and the best ways to implement projects as part of consultative prioritization and design processes. It also plays a role in implementation, either as direct recipients when the UN is not best placed to implement a priority or as implementing partners for specific zones or activities.

**Peacebuilding Secretariats:** Secretariats are set up in PRF countries, usually in Resident Coordinator’s offices and funded or co-funded through PBF. They have peacebuilding, coordination and M&E expertise so as to facilitate the preparation, approval and overall coordination/M&E of the PBF package.

**PBF Steering Mechanism or Joint Steering Committee (in PRF countries):** It can be an existing steering mechanism with oversight of peacebuilding, co-chaired by the Government and the UN. If no such mechanism exists, in PRF countries it needs to be set up to oversee the PBF contribution and is usually referred to as the PBF *Joint Steering Committee.* It is co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Government and includes civil society and development partners. The Committee provides strategic direction for PBF support and oversight of implementation, including submission of an annual strategic progress report which may include requests for additional PBF funding.

**Country level development partners:** Development partners help to determine PBF country level priorities through consultation by the UN. They are also part of Joint Steering Committees and, hence, decisions on project approvals. Ideally, they should encourage PBF to be used for high risk or catalytic interventions that they can take over or expand following results.

**PBSO:** PBSO manages PBF and acts as both a donor and a peacebuilding adviser for its investment. Initially, it works with senior UN leadership on peacebuilding priorities in the country as part of an eligibility request. Subsequently, it provides support and oversight/quality assurance to the development of projects, injecting the process with peacebuilding expertise and experiences from other countries. PBSO is the ultimate approver of all PBF projects, PRF or IRF. PBSO also monitors the project progress, together with PBF Secretariats, in whose hiring and management it is closely involved.

**MPTF-O:** It is the Administrative Agent of PBF and holds all contributions to the PBF in trust. It disburses PBF funds upon PBSO request, provides PBSO with financial overviews, reports annually to donors, signs MOUs with recipient organizations and monitors recipient agency financial compliance.

**UN Senior Peacebuilding Contact Group (SPG):** It is a New York based group of high level UN representatives who are consulted by PBSO when countries or situations are considered for PBF eligibility.

**UN Peacebuilding Contact Group (PCG):** It is a New York based group which consists of peacebuilding experts of the UN family. PCG is consulted by PBSO in approving any Priority Plans and IRF or PRF projects.

**PBF Advisory Group:** It is an independent group comprised of ten eminent personalities from different countries, appointed by the Secretary-General to provide strategic advice and accompaniment to the PBF.

**ANNEX II:** **List of PBF Countries and eligibility as of 1 January 2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PBF Funded Countries** | **1st declaration of eligibility**  | **Renewal of eligibility**  | **Eligible until \*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Burundi | 2007 |   | n/a (old PBC/PBF agreement) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Not eligible  |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Burkina Faso | Not eligible  |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Central African Republic | 2007 |   | n/a (old PBC/PBF agreement) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Chad | 2011 | 2017 | 2022 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Colombia | 2017 |   | 2022 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Comoros | 2008 |   | No longer eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Congo, The Democratic Republic | 2009 |   | 2019 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cote d’Ivoire | 2008 |   | 2020 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| El Salvador | Not eligible  |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gambia | Not eligible  |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Guinea | 2007 | 2017 | 2022 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Guinea-Bissau | 2008 |   | n/a (old PBC/PBF agreement) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Guatemala | 2010 |   | 2019 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Haiti | Not eligible  |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Kenya | Not eligible  |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Kyrgyzstan | 2012 |   | 2019 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lebanon | 2010 |   | No longer eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Liberia | 2007 |   | n/a (old PBC/PBF agreement) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Libya | Not eligible  |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Madagascar | 2015 |   | 2020 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mali | 2014 |   | 2019 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Myanmar | 2013 |   | 2019 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Niger | 2013 |   | 2019 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Nepal | 2007 |   | No longer eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Papua New Guinea | 2013 |   | 2019 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Philippines  | Not eligible  |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sierra Leone | 2007 |   | n/a (old PBC/PBF agreement) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Solomon Islands | 2017 |   | 2022 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Somalia | 2014 |   | 2019 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sri Lanka | 2015 |   | 2020 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tajikistan | Not eligible  |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sudan | Not eligible  |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| South Sudan | 2012 |   | 2019 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Timor-Leste  | Not eligible  |   | 2020 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Uganda | 2010 |   | Not eligible |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Yemen | 2013 |   | 2019 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| \* Note: Countries that were declared eligible in 2014 will remain eligible until the end of the current PBF Strategic Plan (end 2019).  |

**ANNEX III: List of PBF Templates and Guidance Notes**

**PBF templates**

Template 1: Eligibility request

Template 2: Concept Note

Template 3: Project Document and budget

Template 4: Subsequent Tranche request template

Template 5: Narrative project progress report (semi-annual, annual and final) template

Template 6: Strategic peacebuilding and PBF progress review report template (eligible countries only)

**PBF Guidance Notes (accessible here:** [**https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/fund/documents/guidelines**](https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/fund/documents/guidelines)**)**

- PBF gender marker

- PBF and youth programming

- PBF Theory of change

- Cross-border/ regional projects

- PBF monitoring approaches: Perception surveys and community based monitoring

- PBF visibility and communications

- PBF Value for money checklist

- PBF evaluations

- Project operational and financial closure

1. NOTE: In addition to the formal eligibility process are considered eligible to the PBF those countries formally on the Peacebuilding Commission agenda. Their PBF eligibility continues during that period and for five years after their PBC Country Configuration is closed. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. NOTE: For countries declared eligible in 2014 or earlier, eligibility will be deemed valid until the end of the present PBF Strategic Plan (end 2019). See Annex I for a list of timelines as of 1 January 2018. Once their eligibility ends and if it is not being renewed, the PBF may approve up to $3 million in new active projects as part of post-eligibility transition. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)