

The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) Terms of Reference (ToR) Template for Project Evaluation

Last Updated: September 2023

Important Note to Evaluation Managers:

- Each ToR **will need to be adapted to the specific context**, purpose and focus of a specific evaluation – there are no hard and fast blueprints, so please take the time to adapt to your needs.
- The ToR template only covers the content – managerial and operational aspects such as timing, reporting lines etc. will need to be added based on context.
- Evaluation managers are asked to distribute the PBF Project Evaluation Checklist with the selected evaluator(s), as each project evaluation commissioned in and after 2022 will be subject to external quality assessment to determine the credibility of all final evaluations. Evaluation quality scores will be publicly available on [PBF website](#), alongside the evaluation report.

Title: Peacebuilding Project Evaluator
Duration: X days over X months [start month-end month, year]
Location: [Home-based or City, Country], with X-days mission (if applies)
Type of Contract: [International or National Consultant]
Languages Required: [English and/or national language, if required]
Estimated budget: According to PBF Evaluation Policy: \$50,000 (for \$1.5-\$1.99M projects), \$65,000 (for \$2-\$3.99M projects), \$80,000 (for \$4-\$7.99M projects), and \$100,000 (for \$8M projects and over).

BACKGROUND

This section should include:

- A description of the country context/conflict analysis. This should be sufficiently detailed in order to be a reference point for evaluator(s) to assess the project's relevance and degree to which the theory of change addresses a conflict factor.
- Background about the PBF-funded project to be evaluated, including project code and title, budget, implementation timeframe and stage, if the project falls under one of the PBF priority windows (cross-border, transitions, gender and youth empowerment/Gender and Youth Promotion Initiatives), if the project has an affiliated Strategic Results Framework, project's geographic and beneficiary targeting, and key thematic focus areas. Keep these details at a summary level and include hyperlinks to other documents to provide more background on the project in order to keep the actual ToR succinct.
- Key partners and stakeholders (funds' recipients, implementing partners, local communities, etc.) of the project that the evaluation will be expected to engage.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

Purpose

This project evaluation presents an opportunity to assess the achievements of project "X" in an inclusive way and to determine its overall added value to peacebuilding in **country X**, in the areas of **[mention**

sectors/thematic areas that are under evaluation]. In assessing the degree to which the project met its intended peacebuilding objectives and results, the evaluation will provide key lessons about successful peacebuilding approaches and operational practices, as well as highlight areas where the project performed less effectively than anticipated. In that sense, this project evaluation is equally about accountability as well as learning.

Objectives of the evaluation:

- Assess the relevance and appropriateness of the project in terms of: 1) addressing key drivers of conflict and the most relevant peacebuilding issues; 2) alignment with National Peacebuilding Policy and national priorities of **country X**; 3) whether the project capitalized on the UN's added value in **country X**; and 4) the degree to which the project addressed cross-cutting issues such as conflict and gender equality in **country X**.
- Assess to what extent the PBF-funded project has made a concrete contribution to reducing a conflict factor in **country X**. With respect to PBF's contribution, the evaluation should evaluate whether the project helped advance achievement of the SDGs, and in particular SDG 16.
- Evaluate the project's efficiency, including its implementation strategy, institutional arrangements as well as its management and operational systems and value for money.
- Assess whether the support provided by the PBF has promoted the Women, Peace and Security agenda (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda, allowed a specific focus on women's and young people's participation in peacebuilding processes, and whether it was accountable to gender equality.
- Assess whether the project has been implemented through a conflict-sensitive approach.
- Document good practices, innovations and lessons emerging from the project.
- Provide actionable recommendations for future programming.

SCOPE OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION

This evaluation will examine the project's implementation process and peacebuilding results, drawing upon the project's results framework as well as other monitoring data collected on the project outputs and outcomes as well as context. Evaluation questions are based on the OECD DAC evaluation criteria as well as PBF-specific evaluation criteria, which have been adapted to the context.

Evaluator(s) should ensure that evaluation of the peacebuilding results is the main line of inquiry. Peacebuilding projects frequently employ approaches that work through thematic areas that overlap with development or humanitarian goals. An evaluation of peacebuilding projects, however, must include not only reflection on progress within the thematic area but the degree to which such progress may or may not have contributed to addressing a relevant conflict factor.

The evaluation should **assess the project's theory of change** (see [PBF Theory of Change Guidance Note](#)), and, if shortcomings are found, the theory of change must be reformulated/improved by the evaluator(s). Evaluator(s) are expected to create a theory of change for projects that did not have one at the design stage. **Assumptions behind the project's theory of change** must be clearly articulated and assessed for validity by evaluator(s).

Important Note to Evaluation Managers: Not all of the following evaluation criteria will be relevant for all evaluations. Nor will it be possible to fully assess all of these criteria in a single evaluation. The below

provides a menu of options of which specific issues that will need to be chosen for the specific purposes of the evaluation at hand.

Evaluation Questions (within OECD DAC criteria)

RELEVANCE:

- Was the project relevant in addressing conflict drivers and factors for peace identified in a conflict analysis?
- Was the project appropriate and strategic to the main peacebuilding goals and challenges in the country at the time of the project's design? Did relevance continue throughout implementation?
- Was the project relevant to the UN's peacebuilding mandate and the SDGs, in particular SDG 16?
- Was the project relevant to the needs and priorities of the target groups/beneficiaries? Were they consulted during design and implementation of the project?
- How relevant and responsive has the project been to supporting peacebuilding priorities in **country X**?
- Did the project's theory of change clearly articulate assumptions about why the project approach is expected to produce the desired change? Was the theory of change grounded in evidence?
- To what extent did the project respond to peacebuilding gaps?

EFFICIENCY:

- How efficient was the overall staffing, planning and coordination within the project (including between the implementing agencies and with stakeholders)? Have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?
- How efficient and successful was the project's implementation approach, including procurement, number of implementing partners and other activities?
- How well did the project collect and use data to monitor results? How effectively was updated data used to manage the project?
- How well did the project team communicate with implementing partners, stakeholders and project beneficiaries on its progress?
- Did the project provide value for money? Have resources been used efficiently?
- To what extent did the project ensure synergies within different programs of UN agencies and other implementing organizations and donors?

EFFECTIVENESS:

- To what extent did the project achieve its intended objectives and contribute to the project's strategic vision?
- To what extent did the project substantively mainstream gender and support gender- and youth-responsive peacebuilding?
- How appropriate and clear was the project's targeting strategy in terms of geographic and beneficiary targeting?
- Was the project monitoring system adequately capturing data on **peacebuilding** results at an appropriate outcome level?

SUSTAINABILITY

- To what extent did the project contribute to the broader strategic outcomes identified in nationally owned strategic plans, legislative agendas and policies?
- Did the intervention design include an appropriate sustainability and exit strategy (including promoting national/local ownership, use of national capacity etc.) to support positive changes in peacebuilding after the end of the project?
- How strong is the commitment of the government and other stakeholders to sustaining the results of PBF support and continuing initiatives?
- How has the project enhanced and contributed to the development of national capacity in order to ensure suitability of efforts and benefits?

COHERENCE:

- To what extent did the PBF project complement work among different entities, especially with other UN actors?
- If the project was part of a broader package of PBF, to what degree were the project's design, implementation, monitoring, and reporting aligned with that of other projects?
- How were stakeholders involved in the project's design and implementation?

CONFLICT-SENSITIVITY

- Did the project have an explicit approach to conflict-sensitivity?
- Were funds' recipients' internal capacities adequate for ensuring an ongoing conflict-sensitive approach?
- Was the project responsible for any unintended negative impacts?
- Was an ongoing process of context monitoring and a monitoring system that allows for monitoring of unintended impacts established?

In addition to the above standard OECD DAC criteria, the following additional PBF-specific evaluation criteria should also be assessed by the evaluation:

Important Note to Evaluation Managers: Within the structure of the report, the below criteria may either be reflected separately or integrated into the above evaluation criteria. Regardless, the evaluation must identify specific evaluation questions on the below criteria.

CATALYTIC:

- Was the project financially and/or programmatically catalytic?¹
- Has PBF funding been used to scale-up other peacebuilding work and/or has it helped to create broader platforms for peacebuilding?

¹ Catalytic function of the PBF can be understood as mobilising additional financial funds, and/or unblocking of political or peacebuilding related processes. For the first part of the definition (financial catalytic effect), two approaches are considered: 1) direct amounts mobilised, i.e., funds that have been catalysed to scale up or extend a specific PBF-funded project, and 2) indirect amounts mobilised, i.e., donors' contributions to the same sector, theme, or approach *after* the PBF-funded project.

LOCALIZATION:

- Were national and local stakeholders sufficiently consulted and involved throughout the project cycle?

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- Did the project strengthen capacities of national and local stakeholders (national and local governments and CSOs)?
 - How useful did national and local stakeholders perceive PBF's support?

TIME-SENSITIVITY:

- Was the project well-timed to address a conflict factor or capitalize on a specific window of opportunity?
- Was PBF funding used to leverage political windows of opportunity for engagement?

RISK-TOLERANCE AND INNOVATION:

- If the project was characterized as "high risk", were risks adequately monitored and mitigated?
- How novel or innovative was the project approach? Can lessons be drawn to inform similar approaches elsewhere?

The evaluation must identify lessons learned that would have wider applicability and relevance to other similar interventions in **country X** and in other contexts, and provide no more than 10 useful, realistic and actionable recommendations (including on cross-cutting themes and M&E system), with clear identification of responsible stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The evaluation will be summative and will employ a participatory approach whereby discussions with and surveys of key stakeholders provide and/or verify the substance of the findings. The evaluation should be based on a mixed method approach to data collection and analysis, employing various forms of evidence vis-à-vis each other to triangulate gathered information.

The methodology for data collection may include but not necessarily be limited to:

- Desk review of key documents (including progress and monitoring reports)
- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), as appropriate, with major stakeholders including PBF Secretariat, funds' recipients, officials from key ministries and the government, representatives of civil society organizations, community and religious leaders. Evaluator(s) should ensure equal participation among men and women and across age groups.
- Systematic review of baseline, endline and monitoring data, and internal assessments.
- Systematic review of PBF Eligibility Requests and Annual Strategic Reports.
- On-site field visits.
- Online surveys.

The evaluation approach must be responsive to human rights, gender equality, age sensitivity, disability inclusion and Leave No One Behind principles, and based on UN Evaluation Group’s (UNEG) obligation of evaluators and UNEG Ethical Guidelines. Conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm considerations must be apparent within the conduct of the evaluation.

DELIVERABLES AND TIMEFRAME

Inception Report: The Inception Report should refine the evaluation questions and detail the methodological approach, including data collection instruments. The Inception Report must be approved by both the evaluation manager and PBF in-country Secretariats (where applicable) prior to commencement of data collection in the field.

The inception report should include the following key elements:

- Updated conflict/context analysis, including a stakeholder map to outline key stakeholders engaged in the project and linkages between them.
- Light evaluability assessment to identify existing data gaps for the purpose of the evaluation.
- Evaluation matrix that would refine questions and sub-questions per evaluative criterion, respective methods for data collection/data sources (e.g., KIIs, FGDs, project monitoring reports, surveys, etc.), and evaluation-specific indicators and benchmarks to assess a given question/subquestion.
- Detailed methodology, including data collection methods and tools, sampling strategy, methods of analysis and triangulation.
- Proposed list of interviewees and FGD participants, disaggregated by stakeholder group and gender.
- Workplan outlining anticipated timelines and expected Level of Effort for each phase of work.

Presentation/validation of preliminary findings with relevant in-country stakeholders and PBF.

Draft and Final Report: When preparing Draft Report, evaluator(s) should consult the PBF Project Evaluation Checklist. Draft Report will be shared with an Evaluation Reference Group, composed of representatives of all direct funds’ recipients and the PBF (at a minimum), for their comments. The final accepted version of the report will reflect ERG’s comments. The Final Report must be approved by both the evaluation manager and in-country PBF Secretariats. The Final Report should be no longer than 30 pages (excluding annexes) and include an Executive Summary of no more than 5 pages.

One-pager on project achievements and lessons learned: Evaluator(s) must also develop a stand-alone document (no more than one page long) to outline the main project results at the outcome level as well as key programmatic lessons learned.

Story for the PBF website: In close cooperation with the PBF communications team, evaluator(s) should also develop a story for the PBF website (1200 to 1500 words). The story should highlight lessons learned and achievements of the evaluated project and quotes from stakeholders.

| Deliverable | Level of Effort (# of days) | Due Date | Payment (%) |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------|-------------|
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------|-------------|

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| Inception Report | | | |
| Field data collection and analysis | | | |
| Validation Exercise | | | |
| Draft Report | | | |
| Final Report | | | |
| One-pager on key results and lessons learned | | | |
| Story for the PBF website | | | |

DURATION, LOCATION, AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The evaluator(s) will be [home-based or in-person] with X-days Level of Effort over X months, with X-days mission to [City, Country] expected on [tentative start and end date of the mission] for primary data collection [keep the mission information if relevant and provide more information about the expectations for the mission]. [If there will be more than one evaluator recruited for the purpose of this project evaluation, please provide the information about other evaluation team members here, including respective responsibilities and management arrangements. There must be separate ToRs for each evaluation team member.]

The evaluator(s) will be working under the overall supervision of [job title/organization]. Additional guidance on the assignment will be coordinated with [other RUNOs/NUNOs]. As managers for this assignment, [RUNOs/NUNOs] will:

- Provide the evaluator(s) with appropriate logistical support to ensure that the objective of the assignment is achieved with reasonable efficiency and effectiveness.
- Provide the evaluator(s) with relevant documents upon commencement of the assignment.
- Coordinate and communicate with government counterparts, civil society partners, and other related stakeholders as needed.
- Support in identification of key stakeholders to be interviewed, surveyed, or consulted as part of FGDs.
- Provide and consolidate feedback on deliverables and facilitate communication with the PBF.

QUALIFICATIONS

Important Note to Evaluation Managers: Each consultant profile within the ToR will need to be adapted to the specific context, purpose and focus of the evaluation. For project evaluations, it is common to recruit an International Consultant as the Evaluation Team Leader and ultimate penholder, as well as National Consultant(s) to assist with in-country data collection processes (commonly, in local languages), and the contextualization of analysis based on their country context expertise, as well as support with report drafting. If budget permits, an evaluation firm can be recruited to conduct PBF project evaluation. Please consult UNCT colleagues and/or the PBF HQ on previous experience with the select evaluation firm. Please note that if there are multiple consultants (e.g., IC + NCs), the ToR should clearly outline required qualifications for each, individual responsibilities of each member of the evaluation team, and the

respective level of effort/timeframe/compensation, as well as how they are expected to work in tandem. While some PBF funds' recipients may have independent Evaluation Offices, these are not considered external evaluators for the purposes of PBF evaluations, but RUNO/NUNO regional or HQ Evaluation Office staff should be engaged during the project evaluation, primarily as part of quality assurance processes.

Academic Qualifications:

- Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in sociology, development studies, political science, peace and conflict studies, international relations, public administration, or other related field.

Experience:

- **[For Evaluation Team Leader:]** At least 7 years of demonstrated relevant work experience with designing and conducting evaluations of development or peacebuilding interventions is required.
- **[For 2nd Evaluator:]** At least 4 years of demonstrated relevant work experience at the national level in monitoring, evaluation, reporting, or research is required.
- Extensive experience in mixed methods research and participatory, gender- and youth-sensitive data collection approaches is required.
- Knowledge of the peacebuilding and political context in **country X** or **X region** is required.
- Knowledge of and experience with **[insert theme of the project, e.g., human rights, DDR, SSR, PVE, climate security, youth empowerment, gender equality, etc.]** is required.
- Demonstrated experience with report writing is required.
- **[If home-based, even partially:]** Experience in conducting remote evaluations is an asset.
- **[If cross-border/regional project:]** Experience in conducting multi-country evaluations is an asset.
- Demonstrated familiarity with the United Nations and its Agencies, Funds and Programmes is required, with familiarity with the PBF being a strong advantage.

Languages

- **[For Evaluation Team Leader:]** Fluency in spoken and written **[English/French/Spanish, based on the language of the project and evaluation report]** is required. **[You may consider adding "Working knowledge of [national language] is preferred" for International Consultant, if different from the language of the report.]**
- **[For 2nd Evaluator:]** Fluency in spoken and written **[national language]** is required. Working knowledge of **[English/French/Spanish, based on the language of the project and evaluation report]** is required **[keep if different from the national language].**