**Sample Terms of Reference (TORs) for Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) portfolio evaluation**

Country X, Evaluation years X to X

-Estimated timelines of the evaluation:

-Contract type:

-Languages required to conduct the evaluation:

- Estimated budget (including trips, field visits):

*Important note the evaluation managers:*

*- These TORs are an example for a portfolio evaluation. Each TOR will need to be adapted to the specific context.*

*- Managerial and operational aspects such as timing, reporting lines, etc. should also be added according to the context.*

*- Portfolio evaluations or assessment exercises are managed by the BPF in New York, in close collaboration with the Resident Coordinator offices and the BPF secretariats. The evaluation process, including finalization of these TORs and approval of deliverables, must be carried out jointly.*

1. **Background**

This section should include:

-A summary of the key elements of the Secretary's Peacebuilding Fund in country X, and of previous portfolios (dates and priorities) where applicable.

-A description of the country context/conflict analysis. This should be sufficiently detailed to serve as a reference point for evaluators to assess the relevance of the portfolio and the degree to which the theory(s) of change address specific conflict factors and government-approved Peacebuilding Fund eligibility priorities.

-Information on the PBF projects to be evaluated, and the eligibility period, including scope, budget, implementation period and stage, key areas of intervention, etc. Keep these details at a summary level and include hyperlinks to other documents to provide more context on the portfolio to keep the actual TOR succinct.

-Key partners and stakeholders (RUNOS, NUNOs, local partners, local communities, etc.) in the portfolio with whom the evaluation will need to interact.

1. **Purpose of the evaluation**

The Peacebuilding Financing Branch of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) is requesting an independent evaluation of the PBF Country X portfolio over period X-X. This exercise will assess the PBF's achievements, overall success and added value to prevention efforts and peacebuilding results in Country X over this period. This evaluation will also contribute to a better understanding of the effectiveness of PBF's strategic decision-making, its alignment with national frameworks and international processes, joint implementation modalities and partnerships, and whether PBF has succeeded in leveraging its role as a catalytic, innovative and risk-taking actor in Country X.

Evaluators will need to consider links with UN integrated planning processes in Country X, such as the updating of the Common Country Analysis (CCA), and the development of a new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). These exercises can run in parallel or be sequenced and can provide opportunities for joint data collection and analysis, and information sharing with different stakeholders.

Consequently, the aim of this evaluation is to:

Assess the extent to which the PBF portfolio from year X to year X has had a concrete and positive impact in terms of conflict management and prevention in Country X ;

Assess the extent to which the portfolio has been nationally and internationally appropriate and supported and/or expanded, including through catalytic effects;

Assess the extent to which the PBF project portfolio has been relevant, efficient, effective, coherent and sustainable, including in periods of political transition.

Assess the extent to which the PBF project portfolio was risk-tolerant and jointly implemented in a way that took gender issues into account in a cross-cutting manner, in line with human rights principles.

Define best practices, innovations and lessons learned, and identify persistent gaps in peacebuilding initiatives in Country X.

Assess the effectiveness of coordination between UN agencies implementing PBB projects.

Assess the effectiveness of coordination between UN agencies and peacebuilding actors in Country X, including national authorities, technical and financial partners and civil society.

The evaluation is aimed at three main clients, to whom the recommendations will be addressed: (i) the UN leadership and management team in Country X, including its partners and the Steering Committee; (ii) the Peacebuilding Support Office and its Financing Branch (PBF); (iii) national authorities.

1. **Evaluation scope**

Given the purpose of the evaluation, the scope of the evaluation will be the PBF portfolio from year X to year X, including, where appropriate, consideration of the cumulative effects of funded initiatives over time and collectively within a given priority area. In addition, this evaluation will analyze the evidence of peacebuilding results that have been achieved by individual projects over the period year X to year X.

The evaluation will be framed by the evaluation criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD-DAC) and the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) (including criteria related to human rights, equity and gender mainstreaming/gender transformative action), which have been adapted to the context. Sample questions are provided below, but the evaluation team should adapt and expand on them in the inception report, noting where appropriate the relative evaluability of each criterion. Evaluability questions, and proposed revisions to the evaluation approach, will be crucial given the largely remote nature of the evaluation process.

Important note for evaluators and country colleagues:

*Not all of these evaluation criteria will be relevant to all evaluations. What follows is a range of options from which specific issues will need to be selected for the specific needs of the evaluation in question, and customized as needed. Finalize the list of issues in cooperation with operational managers, BPF secretariats, resident coordinator offices (or equivalents) and DPPA regional and country offices.*

If possible, identify priority projects as well as locations for the fieldwork.

***Indicative questions:***

1. **Relevance:**

* To what extent was the PBF portfolio integrated with, took into account and supported the existing Government and UN framework?
* To what extent did the portfolio address well-identified root causes, needs and drivers of conflict? Were they informed by an adequate, up-to-date situation analysis and gender-sensitive conflict analysis?
* How relevant was the proposed (or inferred) theory of change to the PBF portfolio and expected outcomes?
* Did the assumptions on which the activities were based make sense in this context at the time? Did changes in context lead to changes in relevance? Were the results in line with conflict reduction or prevention objectives?
* To what extent did the portfolio respond to urgent and emerging peacebuilding needs and identified gaps, particularly in light of the global pandemic and political transition?
* To what extent has the PBF portfolio supported its stakeholders in thinking critically about gender mainstreaming (for example, in order to provide interest to all categories tailored to their specific needs and tailor-made with the mitigation of gender inequality factors in the short and long term).

**Effectiveness:**

* What peacebuilding effect, if any, has been achieved? Was the transformation towards peace-building the result of humanitarian improvement or development? Were changes at individual level translated into socio-political changes? Was the project timeframe sufficient to observe changes in peacebuilding?
* What efforts were made to ensure continued measurement of results to demonstrate effectiveness and were projects open to changes based on monitoring findings?
* For impact on peacebuilding, what worked and what were the factors that influenced its effectiveness in a positive and negative way.
* As relevant, separate what worked at the national level from community level? Why were some elements more effective then others. Demonstrate with evidence.
* To what extent have the initiatives benefited the intended target groups?
* To what extent has portfolio governance contributed to the effectiveness of the PBF portfolio?
* Did the interventions positively influence key factors and actors in the conflict or peace? Were these factors and actors identified through conflict analysis? Were these factors and actors validated with stakeholders, including at community level?

1. **Efficiency:**

* How well was the PBF portfolio managed in relation to available resources, from design to evaluation?
* To what extent were joint initiatives effective and delivered value for money, particularly in light of the selection of beneficiaries and implementing partners?
* To what extent have the various stakeholders (beneficiaries, national counterparts, implementing partners, etc.) worked together towards common peace-building goals?
* Have stakeholders organized themselves in a concerted manner to maximize efficiency (particularly in terms of cost and time)?

1. **Coherence and complementarity:**

* To what extent does the portfolio correspond to national and UN priorities in Country X and the region (national policies, frameworks, national action plans on women, peace and security, on youth, peace and security, gender policy, transition roadmap, UNDAF, etc.)? ) How did the intervention fit in with other policy instruments and commitments, such as peace agreements, peacebuilding outcomes within UN Strategic Development Frameworks, or other peace and security priorities?
* What difference has the PBF portfolio made, including beyond prevention and peacebuilding? To what extent did PBF projects complement each other and have a strategically coherent approach?
* To what extent did the PBF portfolio complement other peacebuilding programs and interventions in the country?
* Did PBF’s implementing partner actually work together beyond joint project design or periodic coordination? Has the program complemented, duplicated or undermined the work of other actors? What partners worked better with others?
* Was coherence more evident at national or subnational levels and what were the contributing factors for the same.

**5- Impact:**

* Has the intervention caused a significant change in the lives of the intended beneficiaries?
* How did the intervention cause higher-level effects (such as changes in norms or systems)?
* Did all the intended target groups, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, benefit equally from the intervention?
* Is the intervention transformative – does it create enduring changes in norms – including gender norms – and systems, whether intended or not?
* Did the intervention address factors toward social and behavior change?
* Did the intervention caused unintended impacts?
* What evidence do we have for the changes mentioned?

**6- Sustainability/ national ownership and localization:**

Sustainability:

* What concrete evidence is there of the commitment of the Government and other stakeholders to sustain the results of the PBF portfolio?
* Is there evidence that the peacebuilding outcome will be sustained after donor support ends?
* Has the intervention addressed the role of "spoilers", i.e. those who profit from the ongoing conflict?
* Have sustainable, long-term peacebuilding processes, structures, institutions and capacities been created?

National ownership:

* To what extent have national stakeholders (including government, civil society, women's organizations, youth and adolescents) been effectively involved in PBF portfolio management, from Theory of Change design to evaluation, including governance at national and local levels? To what extent do the Theory of Change and/or strategic priorities take into account sustainability objectives?
* Is there evidence of national actors taking the initiative to advance key aspects of the project, or are national actors dependent on UN convening or management to maintain their ongoing commitment?
* Did the project include mechanisms for accountability to national or community stakeholders?

Localization

* To what extent have portfolio projects contributed to the engagement of local and national civil society organizations? In particular, but not exclusively, through capacity building.
* Have local partners been involved in project design and monitoring? (See PBF note on community involvement in monitoring and evaluation) Have project funds been allocated to local civil society, and if so, in what proportion?

**7- Catalytic effects:**

See full catalytic effects guidelines available here: [PBF Catalytic Effect Guidelines (un.org)](https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_catalytic_effect_guidelines_final_03-20-24.pdf)

PBF allocations can have: 1) no catalytic effect; 2) some catalytic effect; or 3) significant catalytic effects. Prior to assessing how significant PBF catalytic effects have been, it is necessary to determine whether a claimed catalytic effect is, indeed, a consequence of the specific PBF allocation being evaluated.

**Determining the catalytic effects requires three-steps:**

**STEP ONE:** Determine whether a claimed effect is effectively a PBF catalytic effect.

*Rating:* **(1)** no catalytic effect **(2)** yes, catalytic effect

**STEP TWO:** For projects rated a two, assess if the PBF catalytic effect/s identified in step one is Significant, then rate as **(3)** Significant catalytic effect

**STEP THREE:** If relevant, calculate financial catalytic effect.

***Use PBF’s Catalytic Effect guidelines for further information.***

**8- Conflict sensitivity and risk management:**

* Did the PBF portfolio, beneficiaries and implementing partners have an explicit and adequate approach to conflict sensitivity?
* Did the portfolio have any unintended negative impacts? If so, to what extent did stakeholders mitigate these negative impacts?
* To what extent were risk assessment, mitigation and monitoring adequate and applied at both programmatic and institutional levels (beneficiaries, national counterparts, implementing partners, etc.)?
* How were unintended negative impacts on the project context and communities mitigated? To what extent have risks related to conflict dynamics been taken into account in the project's approach and in the monitoring of its implementation?
* Did the risk management approach take into account differentiated risks for women, men, girls, boys and marginalized or hard-to-reach populations?

**9- Cross-cutting issues human rights, equity and gender, youth, innovation and inclusion:**

* To what extent has the PBF portfolio promoted innovative approaches to address identified peacebuilding priorities?
* To what extent has the PBF portfolio contributed to the inclusion of the WPS agenda in joint agency programming?
* To what extent has the human rights-based approach been taken into account in project implementation?
* To what extent has program targeting reproduced or overcome traditional norms or practices that exclude key stakeholders such as women, youth, people with disabilities, and stakeholders representing a wide range of gender identities?
* Have special measures been taken to accommodate specific groups to ensure their participation (e.g., childcare for young mothers, or carrying out activities in locations accessible to people with disabilities)? If applicable, to what extent has the project attempted to involve the "hard-to-reach" (combatants, extremists, etc.)?
* To what extent has the portfolio contributed to the inclusion of gender issues, in particular groups marginalized on the basis of gender?

**Assessment of management and control structures in Country X and PBSO**

In addition to the OECD-DAC criteria above, the evaluation will examine the management of PBF support to determine the overall adequacy of management arrangements, both in-country and between PBSO/PBF and the Country Team. Criteria to be considered will include funding, programming and decision-making arrangements between all relevant actors, as well as the quality and inclusiveness of national ownership of processes.

**Concerning national PBF mechanisms:**

The PBF Secretariat:

* How effective and efficient was the support provided to Fund beneficiaries in terms of high-level monitoring, coordination and quality assurance of project implementation and reporting?
* Was the Secretariat adequately resourced and supported (in terms of human and financial resources, as well as political support)?
* How effective was the Secretariat's support for PBF portfolio governance mechanisms?
* To what extent was the PBF Secretariat positioned to support the UN system (anchoring within the RCO, partnership within the UNCT and with UNOWAS, etc.)?

Portfolio governance mechanisms:

* How was the national ownership of the peacebuilding portfolio and what key decisions were made by the JSCs?
* How transparent, effective and efficient is the Joint Committee's decision-making process regarding support for the portfolio?
* To what extent was the composition of the Steering Committee appropriate to its role, and how has the Steering Committee evolved over time?
* How strong was government leadership/ownership of the Steering Committee?
* How effective was the strategic oversight of in-country projects through the Steering Committee mechanism?
* How can collaboration between agencies be assessed in terms of comparative advantages and complementary strengths?

1. **Findings and recommendations**

The evaluation must provide a clear, triangulated and evidence-based assessment of its findings. Based on these findings, the evaluation should make concrete recommendations, tailored to the relevant stakeholders, including the PBSO, the PBC, the Joint Steering Committee, the PBF National Secretariat, the Resident Coordinator's Office, the UN Country Team, national authorities and, where appropriate, non-UN beneficiaries of the Fund.

* The conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation should cover
* The main factors in the success of programming;
* The main factors of programming failure;
* The main factors of success in implementation and administration;
* The main factors of failure in implementation and administration;
* Key challenges and how to overcome them;
* Recommendations will emphasize, where relevant, issues of inclusion and gender.
* Opportunities and projections for defining the strategic positioning of the United Nations system for the new period of eligibility for PBF, based on the main findings and recommendations.

The main findings and recommendations should be made clear in the evaluation summary, which will be provided in the evaluations required for the evaluation.

1. **Evaluation methodology and approach**

The evaluation will use, as far as possible, a participatory approach in which discussions with and surveys of key stakeholders provide/verify the substance of the findings. Evaluators should explain the extent to which the approach used is expected to include marginalized groups.

A mission to Country X (locations to be defined) for a minimum period of x weeks will be required to carry out the data collection. The analysis should include both qualitative and quantitative aspects.

The methodology should include, but not be limited to, the following:

* Review of documentation provided by PBSO, the PBF Secretariat and the UN Country Team, including:
* The PBF Country X eligibility file and all its annexes;
* All project documents and additional project documentation, including progress reports and external evaluations (list of projects to be annexed); Monitoring reports, surveys, edata collection interventions, communications stories
* Preliminary results and data from the conflict analysis undertaken by the UN Country Team and in the conflict analysis update exercises;
* Common country analysis
* Review of monitoring data from implementing partners, the Steering Committee and other sources
* Additional research by the evaluation team of documentation on the peace context in Country X, if necessary;

Key informant interviews and focus groups, as appropriate, with key stakeholders, including the country's PFP team, key ministry and government officials, representatives of civil society organizations, community and religious leaders. Evaluators should be careful not to use key informant interviews only with officials, professionals and other high-level stakeholders, while relegating grassroots stakeholders to focus group discussions. The ToR should specify that the different approaches must be meaningfully related to the different types of data generated by each and their link to the evaluation questions. The ToR should specify that evaluators should ensure the participation of men and women and all age groups.

* Teleconferences with key stakeholders in New York,
* Teleconference with key stakeholders based in Country X, including the
* Teleconference with the evaluation teams who carried out the final evaluations of each PBF project;
* Partners and national and subnational levels must be interviewed.
* Dircet and indirect civil society actors must be intereviewed with regards to the localization agenda.
* Field visits (including focus groups and other methodologies);
* Surveys (with particular reference to including women and marginilied groups)
* Management arrangements and quality assurance processes

**VI. Management arrangements and quality assurance process**

The PBSO PBF DM&E unit will assign an Evaluation Manager to manage and supervise the evaluation process. The day-to-day work of the evaluation team and its logistics will be supported by PBSO PBF, with assistance from the Country X RCO and Secretariat. Although the evaluation is totally independent, a member of the RCO / PBF Secretariat may accompany the evaluation team during data collection to ensure quality.

An evaluation reference group made up of key stakeholders will be set up to advise the PBF on the main deliverables, including the inception and final reports. The evaluation reference group is likely to include members of the relevant coordination mechanisms, key in-country and PBF stakeholders (PBF Secretariat, key members of the Joint Steering Committee, key members of the UN Country Team who are not members of the Joint Steering Committee including IFIs where relevant, key members of the PBF Project Technical Committee) and other stakeholders (DPPA, PBSO, etc.). It is also advisable to include partners from civil society. The PBF project will approve each of the deliverables by the evaluation team, after internal quality assurance and consultation with the evaluation reference group. The evaluation team is expected to work responsively with the Evaluation Reference Group, while maintaining its independence.

The evaluation team will prepare an inception report to refine the evaluation questions and detail its methodological approach, including data collection instruments/tools. The inception report must be approved by PBSO prior to the start of the evaluation team's in-country data collection process.

In addition, before leaving the field after in-country data collection, the evaluation team will schedule a presentation of preliminary findings with the UNCT and key government stakeholders for validation. A separate validation exercise may be scheduled with the PBSO and the evaluation reference group prior to submission of the draft report.

PBSO will retain copyright of the evaluation. The final evaluation report will be made public after approval by the PBSO and incorporating comments from relevant stakeholders.

1. **Main evaluation deliverables and timetable**

**Key deliverables:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Deliverable | Content | Date |
| Inception report | The inception report will have a maximum of 20 pages and will include:  - the main challenges or limitations that the team anticipates on the basis of available information;  - the evaluation team's understanding of the terms of reference;  - the main evaluation questions and the methodological tools for answering each question; including the question matrix, which must be in line with the evaluation objectives.  -survey questions and target groups  Inception report must include seperate questions for key partners and beneficiaries.  - a list of key risks and risk management strategies for the evaluation;  - the proposed work plan for the field mission;  - the table of contents of the assessment report.  The report will be approved by the PBSO before the evaluation team launches the data collection phase. The PBSO will consult the Reference Group and will have 5 working days to provide comments on the inception report. |  |
| Aide-memoire | The aide-memoire will be a maximum of 3 pages long and will include :  - a brief summary of the purpose of the evaluation ;  - an overview of the team's work, including the activities evaluated and the stakeholders consulted;  - an overview of the main findings;  - an explanation of the next steps.  The aide-memoire will be presented to PBSO and the PBF Project Secretariat during the last week of the data collection phase. It will be accompanied by a powerpoint presentation. |  |
| Draft repot | The report outline will have a maximum of 40 pages (the summary and appendices can be completed as part of the final report). It will be presented to PBSO in New York.  The draft report will be approved by PBSO. PBSO will consult the Reference Group and will have two weeks in which to comment. |  |
| Final report | The final report will have a maximum of 50 pages plus the executive summary, title page and annexes. The team leader will be responsible for incorporating comments from PBSO, the government and the UN country office as far as possible, while preserving his or her independent viewpoint as evaluator.  The final report should include an executive summary of the main findings and recommendations, which can be used as a stand-alone document.  The final report will be evidence-based and answer all the questions in the terms of reference with clear and succinct lessons learned and recommendations.  PBSO will approve the final report, after consultation with the Reference Group.  Following acceptance of the final report, PBSO will coordinate a management response in the form of a separate document. |  |
| Communication / stories | Communications will be used to disseminate the portfolio evaluation on the PBF website. These should include quotes and photographs.  The communications should cover the evaluation process, the involvement of partners in the evaluation process, the main findings, and may refer to stories/other particularly interesting papers from portfolio projects. |  |

\*: Multiple iterations of the document may be needed until the evaluation is finalized.

The evaluation is expected to last approximately x months, with **the schedule broken down as follows:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Step** | **Expected Start date** | **Expected Finish date** | **Responsable** |
| Inception phase: to further refine the evaluation questions and detail the methodological approach, including data collection instruments, in consultation with the PBF. The inception report requires PBF approval. |  |  |  |
| Field mission including preparation and travel, meetings with key stakeholders, beneficiaries and partners, and site visits (various qualitative and quantitative methodologies). |  |  |  |
| Drafting of evaluation report outline and presentations (in Aide-Mémoire format), including validation workshop of key findings with several key groups, including: PBSO, Joint Steering Committee, Technical Committee, Government members |  |  |  |
| Analysis and presentation of the draft report for PBF/PBSO approval |  |  |  |
| A Communications piece on the evaluation process and recommendations |  |  |  |
| Report finalisation |  |  |  |

Payment schedule:

*The payment schedule is to be determined in agreement with the contracted evaluation team.* *It is advised to proceed in 3 payments (see example below)*

-Approval of Inception report: 30% of the total amount

-Submission & Presentation of preliminary findings (aide memoire et PPT presentation to key stakeholders): 30% of the total amount

-Approval of final evaluation report including all communications deliverables: 40% of the total amount

**VIII. Declaration of ethics**

The evaluation team will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in UNEG's "Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation". Evaluators must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing data collection and reporting. Evaluators must also ensure the security of information collected before and after the evaluation, as well as protocols to guarantee the anonymity and confidentiality of information sources where appropriate. The explicit informed consent of stakeholders must be given for the use outside the evaluation of information, knowledge and data collected during the evaluation process.

**IX.** **Expression of interest**

Service companies that have a valid system contract with PBF are requested to submit the following documents:

1. A technical proposal that would include, but not be limited to, the following key aspects:

- A detailed methodology for portfolio evaluation.

- Clear sampling strategy.

- Methodological boundaries for answering the questions outlined in the specifications.

- Methodological considerations to ensure gender and youth sensitivity throughout the evaluation.

- Estimated level of effort and timeframe for each stage of the evaluation within the five-month evaluation schedule.

- Outline of quality standards and procedures, and arrangements for navigating between projects and documents.

- Team composition, including respective responsibilities and qualifications.

2. CVs of the members of the evaluation team, in particular the team leader, to meet the desired qualifications described in the ToR.

The service firm's proposal will be evaluated on the basis of the above qualifications and the quality of the technical proposal with the key elements described above.

Contacts:

PBF Senior M&E advisor:

PBF M&E officer:

**X. (Paragraph required only when the contract is with one of the companies with which PBSO has an LTA)**

Requirements for PBF institutional long-term agreements (LTA)

This assignment will be carried out within the framework of a long-term institutional agreement (LTA). The selected institution must provide, as a minimum, an evaluation team made up of a maximum of 5 evaluators, including a team leader, and a maximum of four (4) members. Each member of the evaluation team will cover PBF projects. PBSO suggests the inclusion of a national consultant as a team member, and a consultant specializing in Country X. The team leader is also responsible for coordination between team members and for the overall coherence of the evaluation process. At least one of the team members must have a strong background in gender equality and women's empowerment. Within the team, the team leader will be responsible for the evaluation methodology, coordination of other team members, overall quality and timely submission of all deliverables.

The team leader must possess at least the following skills and expertise:

- Formal higher education (at least BAC+5) in a relevant field, including social sciences, international development, research methods or evaluation ;

- At least ten years' experience in the field of peacebuilding, including experience in gender equity and conflict prevention, and if possible in Country X;

- At least seven years' experience in evaluation, including the use of mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative);

- Demonstrated knowledge of the United Nations and its agencies, funds and programs;

- Previous experience in leading an evaluation team;

- Fluency in spoken and written languages required.

Evaluation team members must have at least the following skills and expertise:

- A Master's-level university degree in a relevant field, including social sciences, history, conflict studies, etc;

- At least five years' relevant professional experience in evaluation, research and analysis, including on gender and conflict sensitivity issues;

- Previous experience of working, if possible in Country X, with the United Nations system or an international organization;

- Excellent knowledge of the cultural, political and socio-economic context of Country X, with a focus on prevention and peacebuilding issues;

- Previous teamwork experience;

- Language skills: to be added here

**Annex I – List of portfolio projects**