Lessons Learned Exercise on UN/UNDP Peacebuilding Efforts in Sri Lanka

Final Report

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Acronyms

APRC	All Party Representative Committee
ACLG	Commissioner of Local Government
CAIP	Consolidated Annual Implementation Programme
CLG	Commissioner of Local Government
CEPA	Centre for Poverty Analysis
CMO-C	Conflict-Mechanism-Outcome Configuration
CTF	Consultative Tax Force
DS	District Secretariat /Secretary
DS	Divisional Secretariat/Secretary
EPC	Eastern Provincial Council
EU	European Union
GLED	Governance for Local Economic Development
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IRF	Immediate Response Facility
LLRC	Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
LOGOPRO	Local Governance Project
MDTU	Management Development and Training Unit
MFA`	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOWCA	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
MPCLGS	Ministry of Provincial Councils, Local Government and Sports
MRRHA	Ministry of Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NIRO	National Integration and Reconciliation & Official Languages
NPC	Northern Provincial Council
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
ONUR	Office for National Unity and Reconciliation
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
PC	Provincial Council
PCA	Peacebuilding Context Assessment
PPP	Peacebuilding Priority Plan
RDS	Rural Development Society
RMS	Revenue Management Systems
RTI	Right to Information
SCRM	Secretariat for Coordination of Reconciliation Mechanism
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNPBF	United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WRDS	Women's Rural Development Society

Table of Contents

Acronyms 2
List of Annexures 4
Executive Summary 5
1. Introduction 8
1.1 Context Analysis 8
1.2 UN Resolution HR 30/1 10
1.3 The Peacebuilding Priority Plan 10
1.4 Scope of the Study 13
2. Methodological Approach 14
2.1 Realist Impact Evaluation 14
2.2 OECD-DAC Assessment (Relevance, Effectiveness Efficiency, Gender Equality) 16
2.3 Lessons Learned: Understanding Impact and Sustainability 16
2.4 Data Collection and Sampling 17
2.5 Limitations 17
3. Key Findings and Lessons Learned 19
3.1 Project 1: Support to the Sri Lanka PBF Secretariat and Government Secretariat for Coordination of Reconciliation Mechanisms 19
3.1.1 Context Related Findings 19
3.1.2 Mechanism Related Findings 20
3.1.3 Outcomes and Lessons Learned 22
3.2 Project 2: "Support to Sri Lanka to promote national unity and reconciliation efforts through targeted technical assistance to the ONUR and the Northern Provincial Administration and Eastern Provincial Administration." 27
3.2.1 Output 1: Key Mechanisms and Processes (Elements of a Roadmap) for National Unity and Reconciliation Commenced Under the Guidance of the ONUR 27
3.2.1.1 Context Related Findings 27
3.2.1.2 Mechanism Related Findings 28
3.2.1.3 Outcome Related Findings 32
3.2.1.4 Lessons Learned 33
3.2.2 Output 2:Northern Provincial administration and Eastern Provincial administration enabled to produce strategic plans and strengthen revenue generation to support development activities that address the priorities of conflict affected people 37
3.2.2.1 Context Related Findings 37
3.2.2.2 Mechanism Related Findings 43
3.2.2.3 Outcome Related Findings 44
3.2.2.4 Lessons Learned 45
4. Recommendations 47
References 50
Annexures 51

List of Annexures

Annex 01	Work Plan
Annex 02	Documents Requested and Received for Evaluation
Annex 03	Activity Plan
Annex 04	Proposed Flow of Activities and Data Collection Instrument
Annex 05	List of Interviewees/Participants at the Workshop
Annex 06	Terms of Reference

Executive Summary

The Geneva Resolution 30/1 and the change of government in 2015, provided a more conducive platform for UN's broader engagement with the newly elected political leaders while the country itself embarked on a wide democratization process. The Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP), that was formulated as a result of these consequential developments constitutes all processes of UN's current interventions in Sri Lanka. The Immediate Response Fund (IRF) of the UN's Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF), from 2015 to 2016 is an initiative taken in this backdrop. The UN and the Sri Lankan Government partners, later worked on three IRF projects, funded by the PBF. One, led by Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) was in support of the accountability and transitional justice process. The second one led by the UNDP and the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO) is referred to herein as - Project 1: "Support to the Sri Lanka PBF Secretariat and Government Secretariat for Coordination of Reconciliation Mechanisms" (SCRM). The third project for this 'lessons' learned'/evaluation exercise is referred to as Project 2: "Support to Sri Lanka to promote national unity and reconciliation efforts through targeted technical assistance to the ONUR and the Northern Provincial administration and Eastern Provincial Administration." At the end of the second year of its interventions, the UNDP commissioned an evaluation of Projects 1 and 2 as a lessons learned exercise concerning ongoing peacebuilding efforts undertaken in Sri Lanka. The Evaluation Team carried out a 'lessons learned' exercise informed primarily by a realist impact evaluation approach to derive reliable evidence in understanding the context and the underlying mechanism of action and outputs from the project, services and interventions.

Detailed findings have been described in the document. Key lessons learned and recommendations emanating from the two projects are as follows:

The Peacebuilding Priority Plan has been successfully positioned as an anchoring framework for donors, development partners and the UN community. However, local partners express a wish for a more home-grown 'non-linear' framework.

The UN Peace Building Fund (PBF) and the SCRM have enjoyed a generally positive relationship. Technical assistance provided to the SCRM through the UNPBF and the Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP) were greatly appreciated.

Need to Address Increased Polarization in Sri Lanka. During the evaluation exercise carried out, respondents shared their observation on how Sri Lanka is more polarized than it was in 2015. This instability affects the positioning of mechanisms such as Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms (SCRM) and the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR), that are embedded within government agencies. It was also observed that much of the peacebuilding and reconciliation work focused on 'quick win' initiatives and not as resilient long-term interventions. Predisposition to economic development initiatives resulted in reduced emphasis on meeting rights-based challenges. In this light, it is imperative that there be a focused and decisive shift from economic development to addressing the increased polarization in the country. The UNPBF and the PPP are well positioned to encourage national actors to address these challenges.

A longer term study to assess the effectiveness of the two mechanisms (SCRM and ONUR) at the national and local levels is also required required, to ensure that they have a positive impact upon on long-term peace building efforts in the country.

Relationship Management becomes crucial for projects working within more sensitive and politically charged environments. Relationship management and communication between UN

staff and staff at the SCRM and ONUR requires further improvement in order to ensure effective project implementation. Better relationship management between partners will ensure better delivery of the project. Managing relationships, building rapport, orientating local counterparts to UN ways of working needs to be handled formally as well as informally. People trust people, and people are more likely to be supportive or collaborate with people they can relate to. This human factor needs to be considered in projects looking to influence people and institutional change. Therefore, it is recommended that relationship building approaches and techniques be utilised to ensure project results and that the responsibility of project effectively delivered lies with UNDP.

Local capacity, at the community level, as well as at higher levels of the transitional justice process, requires stewardship and encouragement in order to set a solid foundation for the longer term goal of reconciliation.

The **UN Volunteers** embedded in crucial governmental departments is a successful model demonstrating positive impact. This is recommended as a useful strategy to be replicated.

Gender is a contentious issue. It is significantly discussed in theory in the pro docs and the PPP, however, in practice it seems to be difficult to ascertain what specific activities addressed the gender dimension. Gender programming can be enhanced by ensuring that the gender dimension is not reduced to equality of participation in workshops and project activities. There needs to be clearer understanding about gender issues and how they can be pro-actively built into specific programmes.

Programming Approach/depth – While keeping in mind the boundaries that the UN or projects such as these must operate within, it is recommended that programming takes responsibility to create lasting change especially where gaps are evident. Also in cases where the context operational in a situation poses limitations to bringing about changes, it is recommended the same degree of problem analysis be continued into designing the expected results and how it would be measured. Language used in the statement of outputs and in the results framework should not be elusive and be more substantive.

Logical Design Approach – in retrospective reflection the standard logical analysis is probably not the most appropriate approach for the types of projects evaluated here, where results cannot be logically predicted owing to the sensitive political context under which they operate. If the theory of change approach is being used, then it is recommended that it is used throughout the whole project management cycle, and not only at the conceptual/ design stage. PDIA approaches are also recommended for state crafting work dealing with a fluid context such as this one.

Proactive Monitoring and Risk Management – Proactive and continuous project monitoring, usage of monitoring findings, and strategic adaptive management to ensure the project stays on track and is effectively delivered, is found to be critical in a dynamic context.

Adaptive Management – The project activities as described for the ONUR deviated significantly from the original plan and the results framework. However, given the instable political context within which the project operated, it is expected that the predicted activity pathway may need to be adjusted and adapted depending on the available entry points and opportunities. Therefore, evaluators feel that the project implementers should focus on the delivery of the originally planned result, more than a focus on the planned activities. Accordingly, insertion of completely different activities, if its strategic enough, should be considered instead of simply redressing activities. An example of this is the M&E activity adjustment or the WHO psychosocial adjustment

made by the project. These were minor levels of change to the original activity, but negated the contribution to the expected output.

Implementation Modality – In a context like Sri Lanka where the UN and NGO's are considered suspiciously, a directly implemented project working on peacebuilding may have had less traction. Also, given the UN's approach of peacebuilding funds being a 'hinge', and their work only being facilitatory, it then raises the question about its direct implementation modality.

Documentation and Reporting; Inclusive Consultation/Internal Communication and Information Sharing need to be strengthened further. On the UN's side, limited communication is noted between the political decision making level and the working level, during the design phase as well as the implementation phase. Improvement of the commitment to keep all parties adequately briefed where necessary is seen as critical in reducing avoidable misunderstanding and improving effectiveness and efficiency of delivery. The report spells out recommendations on the lacunae addressed above to improve Documentation and Reporting; Reporting and Knowledge management; Proactive Monitoring and Risk Management, and on Inclusive Consultation and Communication from the UN RCO to the implementing agency and to the stake-holders. Recommendations are made on Documentation and Record keeping too, especially in challenging programmatic areas of non-performance and diversion of plans.

Introduction of good governance practices relating to centre-periphery relations must address existing disconnects that defeat genuine power devolution encouraging lingering distrust at the periphery and their sense of marginalisation. As these grievances are often with an ethnic undertone in the North and East, they carry the inherent risk of deepening further. Hence, the urgency and the pivotal need to handle these issues with a carefully framed strategy, (as also prudently recognised in the project theory). Introducing meaningful mechanisms to strengthen provincial and local authorities vis-a-vis the Central government's authority remains an imperative. Efforts could have been made to address such lacuna strategically under the rubric of the specialised PBF support, instead of the general capacity development work that has been carried out in the regional councils. Such strategic interventions would allow these institutions to function with a certain amount of autonomy strengthening the reconciliation process. Such conflict sensitive work remains an imperative in the UNDP's work with the two Provincial Councils. Nevertheless, the successful work in improving institutional functions and strengthening capacity of local government bodies in the region is highly commended and remains important in the regions recovering from the war. The regional governments' success stories of ownership and passionate achievements ought to be shared and replicated.

This 'lessons learned' document endeavours to encapsulate the hopes for the future, concerns of the present and the experiences of the past, with the view of expanding the worthy reconciliation efforts of the PBF interventions on a larger scale, that the country needs. Recommendations spelt out in detail in the end of this report would hopefully serve as contextual information and become part of the formal architecture of projects for successful future interventions.

1. Introduction

At the end of a savage civil war fought for three decades, the populace settled into a quiet withdrawal from the war psyche but, the then government, immediately post-war, found the rule by diktat more enticing than the rule by democratic consent. They lost an unprecedented opportunity to adopt an inclusive strategy to bring about reconciliation amongst all communities, strengthen rule of law and affect constitutional reforms to devolve and share power between the majority and ethnic minority communities especially in the regions of the North and East. However, the commitment and the intension of the incumbent government, to achieve an all-embracing transition into a fully functional democratic process is evident, although painstakingly slow. It still remains a challenge for the government to become a shining example of embedded democratic institutions that can be the beacon to other advanced democracies in the region.

On the other hand, the UN Human Rights Council resolution on Sri Lanka tabled at its 30th session on the 24th of September 2015, maintained that peace, security and prosperity with justice, equality and freedom prevail for all citizens. This resolution and the formation of a national government created a rare opening to set the course of the country on a transformative trajectory to address the core grievances of victims from all communities and tackle the root causes of conflict. The setting up of institutional mechanisms as pledged by the Government of Sri Lanka, is anticipated to eventually pave the way to a meaningful reconciliation, restorative justice and reparations for the victims. The UN's intervention in this context, with the resources from the Immediate Response Facility (IRF) and Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), for primarily transitional justice and reconciliation related work objectives are what the two projects up for review sought to accomplish.

This introductory section of the report provides a brief context analysis of the reconciliation and transitional justice situation in Sri Lanka, and introduces certain key pieces and informative sources for the UN PBF's work in Sri Lanka, such as the Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP) and UN Resolution HR 30/1.

1.1 Context Analysis

Since the end of the war in 2009, Sri Lanka has been inching forward towards reconciliation and transformative justice, a process that involves a multiplicity of actors, voices, and a socio-political history that includes not only the ethnic conflict, but insurrections and large scale disasters like the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami. As the National Policy on Reconciliation notes, it is a process that necessarily involves attention to a diverse history and an ongoing reality of cultural pluralism. The Peacebuilding Priority Plan itself notes that "peacebuilding in Sri Lanka requires a complex and multi-level national political consensus in order to achieve sustainable peace" (PPP 2016: 6). In 2018, Sri Lanka is a country that is still seeking a new identity, looking in many directions for the meaning of its existence without a decades long war. Ideological debates, thereby, abound, and the crux of these debates circle the tensions between development and reconciliation. The academic and policy dialogue surrounding the post-war climate in Sri Lanka is, therefore, quite wide-ranging. In a recent talk at the International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES), Uyangoda (2017) noted the uniqueness of Sri Lanka's process, calling for a home-grown solution that speaks to a polity that does not as yet have a singular idea of what reconciliation should mean. Thiranagama (2013) argues that reconciliation has not been linked to ethnic reconciliation, but is, instead, a response to international pressure regarding the lack of political reform. Kottegoda (2012), amongst others, notes that pervasive gender inequity is another aspect that troubles reconciliation. The terms 'transitional justice', 'durable solutions', 'sustainable peacebuilding' and 'reconciliation' have been gaining traction in common policy parlance, producing a wealth of programming, government led interventions, and academic and civil society discussion.

However, as Fonseka (2017) notes, the process in Sri Lanka has been beset with challenges since its inception. Much of this can be attributed to the fact that there has been, for significant periods of time, a lack of a coherent national strategy for transitional justice and reconciliation. There are a variety of different efforts being made, but how reconciliation and justice in this context is defined and articulated is, as yet, difficult to ascertain. Indeed, it is this lack of coherence that led the UNPBF to support the Government's efforts to establish the Secretariat for the Coordination of Reconciliation Mechanisms, a body that is meant to act as a centralised hub for reconciliation efforts between various agencies, both governmental and non-governmental.

Theoretical and empirical engagement on the subject of Sri Lanka's transition from war to post-war suggests necessary engagement with a host of considerations. Amongst them are, understanding what reconciliation means in a growing politics of resentment; in non-traditional political narratives; in unrecognised minority voices; the complexity of identity; and the significant issue of double alienation, where there are many who's participation is unrecognised and made invisible. Colouring all of this is the fact that there is no particular set of goals that the country is moving towards in terms of reconciliation. Several studies (Thaheer et al. 2016, Fernando 2014) note that whilst all parties agree that reconciliation is needed, they disagree as to its substantive meaning. It is also important to note at this juncture that programmatically and policy-wise there are a plethora of formal, informal, governmental and non-governmental efforts that are seeking to 'build' reconciliation in Sri Lanka. There are also many unresolved issues with regards to discrimination stemming from the pre-war years, as well as high levels of militarisation that occurred during the war, and in the immediate post-war period. For example, an ongoing CEPA study in Jaffna and Trincomalee confirms the above trends and particularly highlight caste based discrimination, especially in access to education, lack of safety, lack of employment opportunities for women-headed households as pressing issues. At the policy level, the Office of Missing Persons, is only now beginning to operationalise, and has faced a series of political challenges. Many activists and families of the missing and the disappeared are still engaging in sit-ins and long-term protests to note their dissatisfaction with the slowness of the transitional justice mechanism.

There are perceptions of political and economic power and patronisation, assessed through interviews and narratives of lived experience, for this evaluation and other studies at CEPA, that are also limiting to reconciliation. There is also the challenge of trust in institutions, leadership and fellow citizens, offering a critical reflection of the levels to which individuals and groups feel excluded from or included in the social, economic and political system.

Academics and policy analysts typically break the post-war period into two phases.

The immediate post-war period: The first time period, 2009-2014, is seen as overwhelmingly characterised by a defensive approach to transitional justice at the international level and a lack of commitment to transformative justice at the domestic level (Uyangoda 2010, Goodhand 2013). As the UN Peacebuilding Priority Plan notes, although the 2009-2014 period contained measures such as the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) and the Presidential Commission to Investigate Missing Persons, many of these initiatives fell short of meeting the needs and expectations of the affected. Neither did these efforts adhere to international standards of peacebuilding and conflict transformation (PPP 2016: 5). The overwhelming focus on economic development at this time did little to address structural grievances, and the immediate post-war period is seen as one of 'missed opportunity' (ibid). This is not only related to the economy, but also to the national policy on languages, secondary and tertiary education, new and re-emergent social conflicts, and the effect of a long-term lack of a cohesive transitional justice process, cases of the missing and the disappeared, and the widespread militarisation that manifested in the immediate aftermath of the war. Ideological debates also abound, and the crux of these debates circle the tensions between economic development and reconciliation (Ranawana 2017).

The post- 2015 period: In the post-2015 or *yahapalanaya* period, the government is seen as being comparatively progressive with regard to its commitment to transitional justice and human rights at the international level (Samaratne 2017). The advent of the Sirisena-Wickremasinghe government suggested a 'window of opportunity' for peacebuilding, and since, many different efforts and initiatives have taken on new life in the post-2015 period.

It is within the immediate advent of the Sirisena-Wickremasinghe government that the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) committed to provide flexible and strategic Peacebuilding Funding (PBF) that would support the government's peacebuilding priority plan (PPP). The PPP is meant to serve as the framework for a "coordinated Government, UN and development partners' response to secure durable peace in Sri Lanka" (PPP 2016: 10). Another significant influence for the development of the national and government led mechanisms has also been the results of the Consultative Task Force (CTF) process. Although the CTF is separate to the PPP and the Peacebuilding Context Assessment (PCA) process, it has also fed in significantly to the 'on-the-ground' work done by the Secretariat for Coordination of Reconciliation Mechanism (SCRM) and the Office of National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR). The CTF was a wide ranging consultation with victims/civil society on Transitional Justice processes and mechanisms. It recommended the following four bodies be set up: The Office of Reparations, The Office of Missing Persons, Accountability Mechanisms, and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

1.2 UN Resolution HR 30/1

UN Resolution HR 30/1 was adopted by the human rights council in October 2015 with a view to promote reconciliation, human rights and accountability in Sri Lanka. It recognises and promotes the Sri Lankan government's September 2015 pledge to work toward a "meaningful reconciliation, strengthening democratic institutions, good governance, the rule of law, and confidence building among communities affected by conflict for many years" (PPP 2016: 12). The process acknowledged the fact that dealing with the past and establishing a new human rights culture is an enormous task and that the GoSL, together with the guidance and support of the UN would work together to strategically move forward with a nationally owned and victim-centric process that addressed the grievances of victims, allegations of systematic violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law all the while advancing accountability and reconciliation. (PPP 2016: 15). The resolution emphasises the importance of a comprehensive approach to dealing with the past, incorporating the full range of judicial and non-judicial measures, including, *inter alia*, individual prosecutions, reparations, truth-seeking and institutional reform. The resolution also noted the need for consultative and participatory methods that include the views of all relevant stakeholders in the transitional justice process.

1.3 The Peacebuilding Priority Plan

The Peacebuilding Priority Plan was designed in order to guide the wider and longer-term support for peacebuilding, and is a framework that was developed by United Nations Sri Lanka and the Government of Sri Lanka. This plan reflects also the close consultation that was conducted with civil society and local and international development partners. The PPP is informed by the Peacebuilding Context Assessment (PCA) of 2016 and is intended to be a common framework, through which the UN and other development partners can align their support towards nationally identified priorities, and in so doing ensure a coordinated approach to peacebuilding and reconciliation in the country. Key to the larger framework of the PPP is the PCA's understanding that Sri Lanka requires a complex and multi-level national political consensus in order for peacebuilding and reconciliation to manifest and be sustainable. There is then, a necessity for consensus building across the ethnic divide as well as at 'elite' intra-ethnic or cross-party level (between Sinhalese political parties, and between Tamil political

leadership). Such 'horizontal consensus' will need to be buttressed by 'vertical consensus', or support for peacebuilding at the grassroots level, particularly the Sinhalese, without which it will 'lack legitimacy and risk being fragile' (ibid). The PPP thereby identified a need for transformative reform of political culture.

As such, the PCA and the PPP are closely attuned to governance reform as a means through which to effect reconciliation. Such reform is seen to be done through building the capacity of the various mechanisms and organisations at local and national levels of government. Indeed, capacity building appears as a key element for UN assistance to the Government of Sri Lanka in affecting its reconciliation plan. There are three strategic priorities articulated here. These are seen as vital confidence building interventions and also critical enablers for durable solutions.

A) The first is technical support to the Government to operationalise the new National Policy on Durable Solutions for Conflict Affected Displacement. The policy articulates the Government's commitment to re-build the lives of conflict-affected families using a rights-based approach, and provides direction for all relevant stakeholders to work collectively and coherently in support of resettlement processes.
B) The second priority is in support of access to land, and includes highly focused and targeted support for surveying that has the potential to catalyse the resolution of up to approximately 40,000 cases over a three-year period. It also includes provision of legal aid to assist the most vulnerable families, especially those headed by women, to resolve often complex legal and documentation issues.
C) The third focus for is livelihoods. Without livelihood options many families find themselves in a highly precarious situation in the newly released areas, or are forced to postpone their return, and thus further delay getting their lives back on track and realising the dividends of peace. The focus on livelihoods links directly to the problem of indebtedness that is being understood by the PPP, as well as actors in the government and at the SCRM and ONUR as a 'hotspot' for emergent conflict. "Next to security, social and economic issues are paramount, in particular access to land and housing, a lack of sustainable livelihoods, and indebtedness." (PPP 2016: 6).

Thereby, economic development, governance reform and trust restoration are understood as key components of peacebuilding. The 'restorative framework' described by the PCA and the PPP identifies four target groups in particular for economic upliftment. They are:

- people of all communities who have suffered in the main theatre of war;
- soldiers and families of soldiers;
- victims of LTTE atrocities outside the theatre of war;
- and those displaced from their homes and forced outside the theatre of war.

The PPP also notes the need for including more women at decision making levels in governance and policymaking processes. It highlights the need to, "include leveraging women's capacities and contributions, and developing strategies for inclusion which recognise their roles, and diverse experiences of conflict" as "without women's engagement at the stages of peace consolidation, the dangers of relapse are greatly heightened" (PPP 2016:16).

As such, the PPP has four overarching outcomes:

1. Transitional Justice implemented to help reconcile and heal Sri Lankan society;
2. Sri Lankan society with peaceful co-existence and a sense of belonging;
3. All Sri Lankan people feel safe, and trust the Government to effectively, efficiently, equitably and transparently respond to their needs;
4. People displaced by the conflict (IDPs, IDP returnees and refugee returnees) have a core grievance addressed through access to land and rebuilding of their lives.

The primary focus for conflict transformation, drawing from the Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP), is on Four Pillars: Transitional Justice, Reconciliation, Good Governance and Resettlement Durable Solutions. Guiding this process then, are the following principles, as articulated in the Peacebuilding Priority Plan. These principles are drawn up to be consistent and supplementary to the accountability/transitional justice agenda:

- Victim centric: reconciliation and transitional justice approaches will all aim at dealing with the consequences of the inter-ethnic conflict and legacies of systematic human rights violations and abuses so as to provide healing and redress for all victims;
- National ownership: the design and implementation of both the reconciliation and transitional justice agenda is first and foremost an exercise for Sri Lankans, and has to be led by Sri Lankans;
- Holistic, comprehensive approach: the multidimensional nature of the transitional justice agenda requires careful identification of linkages between interdependent and mutually reinforcing processes, such as justice and security sector reforms and democratic governance;
- Coordinated: a strategic, coordinated and sequenced approach ensures that the limited resources and capacities are utilised most effectively and help sustain long-term multilateral and bilateral support to Sri Lanka's transitional justice agenda, with the United Nations Country Team playing a central role;
- Civil Society: engagement with civil society will be mainstreamed across the four pillars of the PPP, with civil society taking on an important role during the project development, implementation and monitoring stages. The PPP will also include dedicated support for strengthening the role of civil society and volunteerism in peacebuilding;
- National focus: The PPP will adopt an evidence based approach to covering different parts of the country, depending on the issue;
- Gender sensitive: throughout all stages, it is important to recognise the critical role of women, especially those from marginalised communities, as well as the specific violations they have suffered and their specific needs of redress;
- Periodically reviewed: it is essential to regularly reflect the evolving Sri Lankan context and adopt mechanisms that are capable of responding to change and of proposing appropriate adjustments to priorities and activities;
- Contribute to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 on justice, peace and strong institutions and SDG 5 on gender equality: The initiatives supported under the PPP will be included in a wider framework of support to the SDGs, and will seek to coordinate with other initiatives contributing to the same goals. (PPP 2016: 15-16).

The support that the UN provides to the Government of Sri Lanka is influenced by the priorities and overarching outcomes of the PPP and is, therefore intended to provide technical assistance and capacity development support, through the UN system, to identified institutions and processes and, as such, to reinforce pressure points that address obstacles to long-term peace and reconciliation as well as sustaining the country on the path to social transformation.

As a part of this overall peacebuilding plan, the UNPBF intervened to offer support to two particular conflict transformation and transitional justice mechanisms. They are:

a. **The Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR**), comes under the agenda for 'non-recurrence', functions as a catalyst and aims towards long–term systematic change and building programmatic agendas for peace. The programmatic aims of the ONUR include art and culture, conflict transformation, interfaith dialogue, university engagement, livelihood support, community development, public outreach, women for reconciliation and psychosocial support. The ONUR's programmes are meant to be designed and implemented in a collaborative process between the government and affected communities.

b. **The Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms (SCRM**) is tasked with the design, creation and coordination of mechanisms to achieve truth, justice, reparations and non-recurrence. The Secretariat comes under the Prime Minister's Office, and was formed on 18 December 2015. The SCRM is also meant to liaise and work with development partners, UN agencies, relevant ministries and reconciliation arms such as the ONUR to ensure that the fabric for Transitional Justice mechanisms percolate throughout different efforts for economic development and reconciliation in Sri Lanka. The Offices for the Missing Persons, the Accountability Mechanisms and the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions fall under the purview of this unit.

In 2018, the UN decided to commission an independent third-party lesson learned exercise of the Projects' performance, that would provide evidence of the project's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability in achieving its objectives. This also fulfils the PBF's mandate of conducting periodic review of the outcomes and outputs of the UNPBF. Following a proposal process, the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) won a bid to perform this evaluation process. The next sections detail the methodology, analytical framework and other particulars of the evaluation that CEPA deployed in collating this lessons learned document.

1.4 Scope of the Study

In July 2018, the UN commissioned an independent third-party lesson learned exercise of the two peacebuilding projects mentioned above that would provide evidence of the project's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability in achieving its objectives. This also fulfils the PBF's mandate of conducting periodic review of the outcomes and outputs of the UNPBF. These projects were implemented by the UNDP and included the institutional establishment of the Secretariat for Coordination of Reconciliation Mechanisms (SCRM), specialised technical assistance to the Office of National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR), and each of the Northern and Eastern provincial administrations. These projects were set up to support the State to ensure progress of its peacebuilding and reforms agenda in the country.

2. Methodological Approach

Peacebuilding is a complex and multifaceted process of change, and understanding the effectiveness and sustainability of such work involves a variety of tools of inquiry, as well as a built-in framework that allows for reflective practice. Reflecting on peacebuilding and reconciliation activities requires an understanding of the context within which the activities were undertaken. In spaces in which there are deep-rooted and long-standing conflicts such as in Sri Lanka, violence can unexpectedly spiral out, and therefore, trust and partnership building can take significant amounts of time. What this requires of the evaluative process is the building of knowledge, and also the understanding and improvement of practice through structured reflection and feedback. Therefore, embedded into the proposed methodology is a theme of ongoing and continued reflection, where the research tool will guide the evaluators to ask questions such as 'how are factors connected and interrelated? What are the visible and invisible factors, in this context?' Such a reflective process also brings with it the additional advantage of a method that is implicitly attuned to the variety of social factors (ethnicity, class, caste, religion and gender) affecting the process of peacebuilding.

To be able to evaluate the programmatic outcomes and the outputs referred to in Project 1 and Project 2, the exercise deployed a combination of approaches specific for evaluating them. These evaluations were informed by the Development and Cooperation Directorate of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD DAC approach) to evaluate "relevance," "efficiency" "effectiveness" of the projects mentioned in the TOR. However, the main approach being adopted for the evaluation of the project's outputs was, the Realist Impact Evaluation method from a critical realist stand point, (a branch of the '*Theory of Change'* approach). This helped carry out a meaningful evaluation of the "impact" and "sustainability" aspects of the identified projects, where deploying the OECD DAC approach alone was not helpful to appraise the assumptions and theories behind these aspects. The theory underlying the interventions was located at the centre of the evaluation exercise here. However, as Westhrop (2014) elucidates, the Realist Impact Evaluation "*focuses on interventions which are harder to evaluate because of their diversity and complexity or where traditional impact evaluation approaches may not be feasible, with the broader aim of identifying lessons with wider application potential*". This approach was also important to explain why projects fail or succeed in different settings by comparing the 'before and after' effects of interventions through this approach. Eg: It helped understand 'what were the circumstances in which the project interventions worked? What were the underlying mechanisms that built trust, or established access to services after the project intervention?'

2.1 Realist Impact Evaluation

The Realist Impact Evaluation strategy, is a specific branch of the 'theory of change' approach and increases the specificity of our understanding of how a project accomplishes change. It intensifies the understanding of a project's 'context' that influences programme 'mechanism'; and expands the preciseness of forecasting project 'outcomes'. This 'realistic explanatory triad' will help open the 'black box' (the 'space' between the actual project inputs and the eventual result) of project mechanism.

In a Realist Evaluation what is revealed are elements of a context that are, exceedingly important. Such knowledge needs to be imparted and those elements ought to be incorporated as part of the formal architecture or be made the blue print of the programme for future interventions. This could especially include those elements that were under-theorized and were not realised as imperative parts of the context that help make a difference.

This method is based on the assumption that regularities in social actions are brought about by underlying mechanisms that spring from people's reasoning, and the resources they are able to summon in a particular context for those actions (or their project interventions). Hence, an evaluation

of such programmes and projects needs to involve the task of testing the underpinned theories and especially those theories which were manifestly applied as well as the overall lessons learned.

I. Context

First, the team tried to understand the impact of the projects by establishing the programme context. Contextual conditions under which projects are implemented are critical, critical such as the change of Government, the Human Rights Resolution (30/1) that was brought against Sri Lanka, etc. Sometimes, there is no awareness of the usage of pre-existing resources for the functioning as we only see the tip of the iceberg. Hence, one has to theorise those resources in a proper manner from the context. It would then also be helpful to scale up the project in a context where those resources exist compared to another context where the project failed. Implementers and evaluators would prefer to know why it failed as one does not have any reason to explain why something failed. This is why, it becomes imperative to theorise the impact of context and understand what is under-theorised with regards to resources, in the context that would help explain the outcome better.

This is a lessons learnt exercise to understand that there are explicit/implicit conditions that contribute towards either making or breaking "context-mechanism" association. Hence, the evaluators, armed with appropriate tools attempted to elicit knowledge of such explicit/implicit contexts that helped the mechanism to produce positive, negative or neutral outcomes. The planning of the evaluation of such projects is an attempt to elicit knowledge to identify 'what works' for 'whom' in 'what context' and in 'what respects?' Contexts also influence the ways in which intended beneficiaries respond to government or non-government projects. Variations within target populations can influence which mechanisms operate (gender, class, caster, ethno-religious culture etc). "A realist evaluation therefore, hypothesis which features of context are likely to affect 'how', and for 'whom', a project is expected to work and collects data about those features of context" (Westhorp 2014: 7). As the next step, it sets off to seek for data and analytic strategies to examine the interaction between context and mechanism.

II. Mechanism

Understanding project mechanisms is critical in understanding how projects work. Understanding how subjects interpret and act upon the intervention stratagem is known as the programme 'mechanism' and it is the pivot around which realist research revolves (Pawson et al., 2004). Mechanisms can be intended or unintended (and ought not to be confused with project strategies/resources/activities). Amidst other levels of concepts, the realist evaluation helps understand and interpret the 'main' mechanisms generating the main patterns of outcomes.

For this purpose, the OECD-DAC method was used as a tool to strengthen the process of knowledge collection by probing deeper to elicit project-related information with regards to: relevance, effectiveness and efficiency where this approach has proven to be successful in many other evaluations in the past. The evaluation included questions such as i.e. what mechanisms are needed for the programme to work? Did the programme incorporate knowledge of such mechanisms in its design?

III. Outcome (CMO-Configuration)

The CMO-Configuration imparts a certain aspect of knowledge that would help[1] build a repository of success and failures, providing policy makers with theories and typologies of successful 'context-mechanism-outcome' configurations or patterns known as CMO, by way of a Lessons Learnt Exercise for this purpose. This approach articulates assumptions that underpin the work; uncovers differing

[1] This would also help analyse 'Impact and Sustainability' in the lexicon of the OCED-DAC approach.

views on theories of change; the principle factors influencing the achievement or non-achievements of the project outputs, and most importantly helps find answers to the question "why"? The application of this evaluation method would help distinguish the flaws and strength of the theory (open the black box) behind the implementation. It also helps identify, articulate and explain the transformation process.

The exercise looked into positive and negative, primary and secondary, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended long-term effects produced by the interventions. Thus, the theories of change approach with the critical realist evaluation method in particular was applied for gaining deeper insights into its positive or negative impact and their intended outcomes, impact and sustainability.

The Flow of Activities and Data Collection Instrument (Annex 04), provides the details of the questions asked under each of the above category from relevant stake holders of the project.

2.2 OECD-DAC Assessment (Relevance, Effectiveness Efficiency, Gender Equality)

The evaluation took into consideration an appraisal of the Results Framework of the Project developed for this exercise. The logical link with the activities and results were also assessed keeping to the requirements of the beneficiaries and the local development needs. The OECD DAC evaluation criteria was mostly helpful to evaluate relevance and effectiveness, efficiency.

- **Relevance:** The evaluation attempted to understand the extent to which the objectives of the intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies. What has been done? Were the right things done? What is the relevance or significance of the intervention regarding local and national requirements and priorities?
- **Effectiveness:** The extent to which the intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance will be analysed through this component. The endeavored to understand the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives efficiently in a sustainable manner and with a positive institutional developmental impact. How proportional are the results of the project compared to the objectives planned?
- **Efficiency:** The exercise helped establish a measure of how economically resources/ inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) converted to results. Are the objectives achieved in a cost-efficient manner by the development intervention? Was it value for money? How big is the efficiency or utilisation ratio of the utilised resources?
- **Gender Equality:** The exercise also tried to understand whether gender equality was explicitly promoted through specific measures such as whether it a) reduced social, economic or political power inequalities between women and men; or ensured that women benefited equally with men from the activity, or were compensated for past discrimination; or b) developed or strengthened gender equality or anti-discrimination policies or institution systems. The exercise approached this aspect by analysing gender inequalities through interventions undertaken and as an integral part of agencies' standard procedures.

2.3 Lessons Learned: Understanding Impact and Sustainability

The overarching aim of this exercise is to share lessons learned in the evaluation process of the given projects, with the UNPBF. The 'lessons learned' exercise involved the presentation of the systematic discovery of how circumstantial influences stimulate the connection between the intervention and the final outcome. The team endeavoured to learn 'how' the project implementation scenario has actually taken place with a combination of approaches: i.e. Realist Impact Evaluation and some aspects of the OCED-DAC approach to supplement knowledge related to mechanisms at work. It also

endeavored to unearth the causal path leading to outcomes; unearthing the contextual determinants; compare contexts; theorise mechanism; scope out the outcomes and present them as lessons learnt.

The Realist Impact Evaluation findings are also helpful to inform policy, practice and assist in the effective tailoring of future programmes/projects of certain realist contexts. The knowledge they help elicit on which programmes worked under what context and 'how', will help make recommendations on how to refine policies and projects to improve their effectiveness, their impacts, and also more importantly inform interventions on how to adapt projects to new contexts in future interventions.

(Please see Annex 4 for Proposed Flow of Activities and Data Collection Instrument)

2.4 Data Collection and Sampling

In order to find responses to the complex set of questions under each of the afore mentioned aspects to be evaluated (i.e. relevance, effectiveness, efficiency etc.), qualitative and limited secondary quantitative work were carried out. Two strategies were used for data collection to solicit knowledge about mechanisms. Firstly, data from existing project documents at the organisational level was utilised to understand why the project was expected to work differently for the stakeholders identified in the project theory. For example, a segregated understanding of why this project was expected to work for the Northern and Eastern Provinces differently from the rest of the country as it was originally designed for the regions under the PBF.

Secondly, through key stake holder interviews in Colombo and the Northern Province and through a workshop with stakeholders in the Eastern Province, the team was able to reason if values and priorities changed as a result of the project and the resources provided through the interventions. This was an intra programmatic exercise with comparisons on programme-theory constructs.

The qualitative method formed the heart of the exercise given the team of researchers with relevant experience involved in this process, to conduct key stakeholder interviews in Colombo and the regions including a workshop with stakeholders in the Eastern Province. However, as for the quantitative data-collection, given the time constraints, the data was solicited from secondary sources for analysis of opinion polls and pilot studies, based on previous national peace and reconciliation work carried out in the relevant areas.

2.5 Limitations

Some limitations that the project experienced were related to meeting the relevant individuals who were involved in the project during its design and thereafter in the implementation phase. From the initial review of documents, the team understood that there were changes in staff both at UN RCO/UNDP as well as with Government partners i.e. the ONUR. However, the team was able to interview most of the relevant individuals to understand the context, as well as the reasoning behind certain key decisions and certain mechanisms that were adopted or modified. The team made all efforts to interview these key officials to gain an understanding of the bigger picture as well as to ascertain the C-M-O aspects of lessons that could be learnt and applied in future interventions. Relevant to this is the very short time frame for this assignment, which needs to in actual fact evaluate the lessons of three separate mini projects. Therefore, the time frame in which to identify, contact and obtain appointments for four separate sets of interviews was also limited, especially when it comes to meetings in the East as well as the North. The absence of documents to provide complete information on some of the key aspects/turn of events in the projects was another challenge that the team faced. They however, intensified the need to hold more stakeholder interviews than anticipated. Hence, the team carried out as many stake holder interviews as possible to obtain information to bridge the gap. As a result, the team required additional work days for the completion of data collection and analyses. One of the other limitations is related to how knowledge and decision making

has been institutionalized as well as how it can be documented. Comments that were received on the report, post-validation meeting have been incorporated in this version to the best of the team's ability.

3. Key Findings and Lessons Learned

3.1 Project 1: Support to the Sri Lanka PBF Secretariat and Government Secretariat for Coordination of Reconciliation Mechanisms

Although the Project 1 comprises 2 Outcomes, the scope of the assignment is to conduct the lessons learnt exercise of Outcome 1 of this project, which is:

Outcome 1 – United Nations Peacebuilding Support in Sri Lanka is strategically positioned to support national priorities, arrived at through a fully consultative and inclusive process, and is effectively delivered in a coordinated and harmonised manner

- *Output 1* – Peacebuilding Priority Plan developed and mechanism established to support coordinated project development and implementation.
- *Output 2* – Effective implementation of the UN's Peacebuilding initiatives, with attention to coordination, evidence based interventions and high-impact results.
- *Output 3* – Secretariat for Coordinating the Reconciliation Mechanisms established within the Prime Minister's Office to ensure coordinated and coherent Government strategy to progress reconciliation and develop and implement transitional justice mechanisms.

3.1.1 Context Related Findings

a. **Wide consultation in the architecture of the PPP**: At the design stage of the Peacebuilding Priority Plan, there was wide consultation, especially through engagement with government and civil society actors at both the national and provincial level.

b. **Dynamic nature of the PPP:** The dynamism of refocussing and opening up the document to new contextual realities is appreciated by this evaluative report. When the PPP was initially designed and pulled together, it was oriented towards securing the IRF funding for Sri Lanka, and suggested a broad based and ambitious design for Sri Lanka's reconciliation process. In 2018, the document as it now sits shows a maturity of process and consultation, noting the slowness of the Transitional Justice process overall, and the challenges brought about by political instability in the country. It has also taken on new dimensions. This did not entail changing the dynamics of the PPP itself, but refocusing on rapid impact initiatives (such as implementation of tri-lingual initiatives), more effective entry points (such as mapping and archiving efforts towards transitional justice), as well as non-recurrence initiatives. These changes were made using results from Peacebuilding Surveys and ongoing stakeholder consultations. However, it does raise a query with regards to why the focus is more attuned to '*quick,* high impact' rather than long-term high impact results.

c. **Polarised 2018 context:** In terms of the 2018 context, many respondents highlighted the problem of increasing polarisation and political instability. Respondents noted that political momentum since 2015 has decelerated, that there is now a 'paralysis' as to accountability and doubts as to whether there will be any transformative constitutional changes at all.

d. **SCRM project design and implementation:** SCRM was established in order to ensure that the reconciliation agenda championed by the new government and the UN would be coordinated and taken forward. According to interviews with SCRM staff, SCRM draws guidance from the four pillars of the PPP document, but relies also on other ongoing consultations and its liaising with other reconciliation related government actors such as the Ministry for Resettlement, the ONUR, Ministry for National Integration and Reconciliation and so on.

e. **Generally positive relationship between UN and the SCRM:** The SCRM officials and staff provide a generally positive review of the UNPBF and the relationship between various entities. The PPP and the PBF were noted as providing significant assistance through foreign

experts. Respondents noted that the PBF and related UN staff are very helpful and are always in constant dialogue with them. Respondents noted their appreciation for assistance with conducting situational risk assessments that identify 'hot spots' for emergent conflict, policymaking and general perception surveys. This good relationship is also corroborated by interviews with UN officials who note that when a request is made by the SCRM, it is considered by key persons on the PBF and actioned if and when possible. UN Peacebuilding officials also noted that the success of the SCRM was also in the ways that United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) had been introduced to and able to ascend within the secretariat, staffing the SCRM initiatives such as the Media Unit.

f. **Relationship management and communication:** When asked about the everyday working relationship between the SCRM and the UN, respondents from within the SCRM noted that some UN agencies are challenging to work with. As such, the SCRM has often relied on the office of the RCO to lobby on the SCRM's behalf at the PBF level. It was noted that assistance and willingness to work fluctuated depending on which UN agency one was attempting to work with.

g. **Acknowledged limitations of SCRM:** UN officials also note that an acknowledged limitation of the SCRM is that it operates within a small window of political opportunity. The SCRM's mandate is only renewed on a yearly basis due to the fluid nature of the political scenario in Sri Lanka. This certainly raises concerns with regards to the SCRM's long-term effectiveness.

h. **Initial teething issues:** The SCRM officials also noted that while the UNPBF and SCRM now enjoy a positive relationship, there were a few teething issues in the initial set up until such time as all parties were clear as to what came under the UN's purview, and what came under the Government's purview. The SCRM officials also noted the difficulties associated with their own limitations. As an example, when there is a conflation such as the events in Digana in March 2018, the SCRM felt constrained as their mandate did not allow them to create a preventive role. The SCRM was not envisioned to work on these matters, but there is capacity to intervene and work with ministries if that is so desired.

i. **Technical assistance more helpful than financial assistance, 'gaps of uncertainty':** The SCRM and UN officials also noted that it is more difficult to ascertain the SCRM's actual role, especially in comparison to the more specific role that the ONUR occupies. As such, the SCRM officials noted that the most useful assistance that they received was technical assistance, as opposed to financial assistance. As the SCRM's role is very diverse, financial assistance is more difficult for the UN to operationalise. UN officials also noted 'gaps of uncertainty' and a certain amount of flexibility that is required in this ongoing relationship. Flexible funds from the IRF were deployed for the SCRM due to this ambiguity. It should be noted that SCRM officials noted that they did not receive significant financial assistance from the UN.

3.1.2 Mechanism Related Findings

a. **Effectiveness of the PPP at national level:** It was noted that the PPP was very helpful in initiating dialogue with the military and building a partnership with them, especially in terms of work to animate military officers towards peacebuilding work. There is sustained dialogue between the PPP and SCRM, through the UNPBF. The PPP is articulated and clearly exists as a space where things get anchored. As an example, the idea of 'victim centredness', directly derived from the PPP is seen reflected in policy documentation at the SCRM level, as well as in interviews with certain SCRM officials. It was difficult to ascertain if this was the same for the ONUR. This evaluation was methodologically limited in being unable to speak to other reconciliation related ministries in order to gauge the everyday and rolling effects that the PPP has within the government machinery.

b. **Catalytic funding:** Catalytic funding from the PBF has been very good at triggering quick 'high impact' projects with the Sri Lankan government.
c. **Effectiveness of the PPP at the donor and UN community level:** The PPP is also a key document for external (foreign) donors seeking to provide development aid to Sri Lanka. It has been leveraged by the RCO as a conduit through which such donors can identify ongoing needs, as well as formulate criteria for deploying aid. As an example, the marrying of economic development needs to reconciliation goals is a central thematic influencing current donor practice, and is at the heart of the PPP. Mapping done at the level of development actors evidences that the four pillars of the PPP have affected the language of many donors now providing livelihood and economic development support to Sri Lanka, as can be seen in ILO, UN agency and ADB projects that are investing in the country. In comparison to the pre 2015 political scenario, it can be said that this is a key milestone of the project.
d. **The SCRM design and implementation utilises many sources:** SCRM officials noted that they draw from the four pillars of the PPP in their ongoing work, specifically in guiding the 'style and contours' of the work that the SCRM engages in. However, other documentation, consultation and knowledge products are also named as playing a key part in mobilising the work that the SCRM does. Named specifically in our key interviews were the transitional justice documents drawn up by Professor Savitri Goonesekere and Dr Manori Mutthuwetugama, as well as the results of the consultative task force and the ongoing dialogue with civil society leaders. SCRM officials noted that a full day workshop with civil society leaders, as well as on-going and ad-hoc consultations as being key to planning initiatives at the SCRM. As many respondents noted, it is difficult to identify which document is the 'key anchor' for the SCRM. Some of this, however, has to do with the fact that the actual role of the SCRM itself took a while to be defined. It is a strength of the design that the peacebuilding initiatives allow for the SCRM to take on such autonomy.
e. **Criticism of PPP assumptions:** There is criticism from local development actors of one of the assumptions within the PPP. This is in relation to the idea that when livelihoods are attended to, reconciliation can be achieved. This is seen as ignoring the rights based and access challenges that are faced on a quotidian level. There was criticism with regards to the amount of money being poured into such livelihood development projects without enough assessment of whether CSOs and cooperatives who eventually receive such funds from external agents have the capacity to absorb and manage such money. This level of critique also challenged what was termed as the 'project-based' nature of peacebuilding initiatives that are linked to a singular framework.
f. **A need to attend to transformative change:** It was also noted that a better leveraging of the funds from the PBF could have been towards more 'transformative' attitudinal change rather than economic development activities. To clarify, this is because there are many development actors and financial investments that are being made towards economic development, and that the PBF's connection and alliance with the state machinery could have been more effective if focussed towards addressing rights based and horizontal inequalities experienced on the ground. This is especially urgent as many respondents raised the fact that the Sri Lankan polity is now more polarised than ever before.
g. **Short –term projects do not create the space for trust–building:** There were also concerns raised as to the need for more 'trust building'. It was noted that building trust between government actors (national and local), as well as the different communities in the country is essential for peacebuilding. However, as funds for peacebuilding activities are often tied to the duration of a project, or the priorities of international governance, there is not enough time given for such trust building to take place. Trust building cannot be put into a time frame or achieved within the limited framework of a project based activity. Respondents noted that the linear assumptions of project based work do not meet the complex realities and circularity of time of the quotidian level. There was criticism of the fact that 'complex realities' do not

fit in with the UN systemic approach to peacebuilding such that there is a 'mismatch between the task ahead and the institutions that are tasked to do it'. To clarify, what this is critiquing is the imposition of a peacebuilding framework 'from above', and one which is allied to universalised standards.

h. **'Quick' decision making:** While the SCRM and certain key decision makers on the UNPBF enjoy a good relationship, some decisions are not made by the full board. Much of this is because the board only meets every three months and there is a need to take 'quick' action on certain items. As such, when requests are made of the UNPBF, there are three key personnel who are consulted to provide approval or refusal. However, board members felt that making quick decisions hampers project choices that truly address the needs within targeted communities.

i. **Gender programming:** Gender is challenging point in this evaluation. According to interviews with UN officials, the UN did not have much say when it came to how gender priorities were actioned through the SCRM, but the RCO office provided support for workshops and trainings to ensure that they were gender sensitive. According to SCRM officials, there was no push by the UN to look into the gender aspect. However, SCRM officials note that, there is a close focus on referring to the gender dimension from within the secretariat, when projects are enacted. However, they say they were not provided with any specific examples. This ambiguity also extends to project documents and log frames. According to a PBF board member, gender issues are not significantly highlighted through the ONUR or SCRM in the overall project design, but the member noted that the ILO EMPOWER project, funded by the UNPBF, seems to be having strong positive results with regards to women's economic development.

j. **Local capacity building:** There was much discussion also, with board members and SCRM officials, about the need to build local capacity. As such, in these conversations, there was a flag raised about the level of technical assistance that keeps coming in through the UNPBF. While it is appreciated and there are many lessons to be learned, ongoing reliance on international experts was found to not build internal and local capacity for juridical and monitoring processes.

3.1.3 Outcomes and Lessons Learned

a. **Methodological limitations:** While PPP language can be seen in project and policy documentation guides, this evaluation was not able to map actual effectiveness of the PPP, through implementation actors, to the 'ground level'. It is recommended that a second and longer evaluation be done to ascertain actual 'ground level' effectiveness of the percolation of the PPP principles and of the mobilisation capacity of the PPP from design to grassroots. Understanding 'effective implementation' necessitates a more in-depth study of the key ministries, development actors and donors working alongside the UNPBF and the SCRM. This evaluation was unable to do triangulation with the ministries that the SCRM works alongside to study the roll out of the SCRM programming and mobilisation.

b. **Gender:** Gender is a key guiding principle of the PPP, and Gender scoring is professed as a main activity when developing PPP as a main element was consultation across four pillars so there is sufficient female and male participation. It has been difficult, however, for this evaluation to ascertain what specific programmes were done from a gender lens outside of equal inclusion in workshops and other events. However, in the 2018 iteration of the PPP there seems to be more attention paid to the specific challenges being faced by women headed households. Gender programming, if placed as a higher marker, must be highlighted not only as simply 'equality of participation', there needs to be active mobilisation on gender

dimensions. It is concerning that replies from both UN officials and SCRM officials were ambiguous at best in terms of gender programming.

c. **Dynamism of the PPP:** This report appreciates the dynamic nature of the PPP, in that its' 2018 iteration has picked up on the need to address indebtedness, working with vulnerable women headed households, and also fast-tracking durable resettlement plans. The significant effectiveness of the PPP as a standing framework has been that it allows a base from which the UN can mobilise and rally government partners and other development partners around the identified strategic interventions.

d. **Quick win approaches:** There is general criticism from all parties with regards to a default approach to taking on 'quick-win' 'high impact' initiatives, rather than investing in long-term goals. Peacebuilding was identified over and over again as a complex process, and not one that can be achieved through a plan that is focused on for one or two years. As such, the best that can be envisioned through the entire process is one of 'sowing' initial seeds.

e. **Independence of the SCRM:** This evaluation highlights the fact that making the SCRM a national, but more independent mechanism may allow for more long-term implementation. SCRM officials noted that a necessary next step for the Secretariat would be to build local capacity for long term peacebuilding and transitional justice mechanisms.

f. **The prudence of relying on foreign expertise:** Respondents across the board queried the usefulness and practicality of an international strategic expert when there are many local experts who have been immersed in the Sri Lankan situation and who have a more grounded intuition for local needs. No one particular group of experts or workshops were especially highlighted. Indeed, this query is very much attuned to ongoing reflexivity on what is most useful and pertinent to developing and utilising local capacity for transitional justice, as well as asking, broadly, C is this process too reliant on external assistance?'. To quote from an interview with a member of the UNPBF board, "Peace work requires an intensive presence on the ground with peace strategies, if the UNDP is serious about something they need to have strong people who understand the culture, analyse, and understand the different things that are happening there and to give support for something to evolve". Respondents found that reliance on foreign expertise detracted significantly from a 'home-grown' and community grounded peacebuilding process. As an example, SCRM officials noted the need to train local prosecutors on how to handle reparations and transitional justice cases, a need that will manifest once truth commissions and other accountability mechanisms are operationalised. There was also concern with regards to the financial expenditure incurred in bringing in experts from other conflict related countries as, in many ways these are moneys that could be expended elsewhere, perhaps at the necessary community level. There was also sustained criticism of the 'workshop culture' associated with bringing in foreign expertise.

Evaluation Matrix:
Project One: "Support to the Sri Lanka PBF Secretariat and the Government Secretariat for Coordination of Reconciliation Mechanisms".

Output 1: Peacebuilding Priority Plan developed and mechanism established to support coordinated project development and implementation

Context-Mechanism-Output Configuration	***Category***	***Remarks***
Context	*The theory at work*	*Relevant in 2015 based on the context assessment. In 2018 there has been a refocussing towards more resettlement and economic development initiatives. However, between 2015 and 2018, the country has become more polarised and there is a need to refocus on rights based challenges versus rapid development initiatives.*
Mechanism	*Relevance*	*The project has maintained its relevance as a project document through incorporating information from surveys and ongoing context assessment. However, there are queries as to whether these refocuses adequately address the everyday needs and wants of communities.*
	Effectiveness	*The PPP is an anchoring framework for the UN community, the SCRM, and the donor/diplomatic community. It is difficult to access its effectiveness outside of these groups.*
	Efficiency	*The PPP is an anchoring framework for the UN community, the SCRM, and the donor/diplomatic community. It is difficult to access its efficiency outside of these groups.*
	Gender Dimension	*Gender is a guiding principle of the document and there is plenty of theoretical evidence for*

		'gender' related markers. However, in practice, these effects are not very visible. Gender must be understood, programmatically, as more than rates of participation and attending to WHHs.
Outcome **(Impact and Sustainability)**	*Positive?* *Negative?* *Neutral?*	*Impact scores a positive as the document has positioned itself as a key framework for the UN, SCRM and the donor/diplomatic community.* *Sustainability scores a neutral. The PPP has incorporated new challenges such as indebtedness and rapid resettlement needs, but remain within a particular linear and systematic framework that can be queried in terms of its ability to speak to the complexities of the Sri Lankan situation.*

Output 2 – Effective implementation of the UN's Peacebuilding initiatives, with attention to coordination, evidenced based interventions and high-impact results.

Output 3 – Secretariat for Coordinating the Reconciliation Mechanisms established within the Prime Minister's Office to ensure coordinated and coherent Government strategy to progress reconciliation and develop and implement transitional justice mechanisms.

Context-Mechanism-Output Configuration	***Category***	***Remarks***
Context	*The theory at work*	*The SCRM currently has a relevant role in coordinating state level reconciliation mechanisms. However, it's role is tied to this particular post-2015 situation. It is difficult to assess whether it will have a role post-2019.*

Mechanism	*Relevance*	*The SCRM operates and is relevant at the level of the state and the UN community. It also does work at the local government level. We were able to assess relevance at the former but not at the latter.*
	Effectiveness	*Effectiveness outside the UN and with limited stakeholders was not assessed in-depth. Community level impact is not immediately visible.*
	Efficiency	*Flexible funding assisted the SCRM to build staff capacities. Received wide ranging technical assistance. The SCRM also has the capacity and autonomy to access specialist assistance from outside the UN community. The SCRM has set up different units such as Research and Media that are efficient on a medium scale.*
	Gender Dimension	*Theoretically apparent. Practically ambiguous. Please see comment related to the PPP in table above. Equal participation at workshops is not gender focussed programming.*
Outcome	*Positive? Negative? Neutral?*	*The result here is neutral. The SCRM has been successful in pushing forward certain state level activities but there are queries as to its longevity politically, and it's relevance outside of the state, UN and diplomatic/donor community.*

3.2 Project 2: "Support to Sri Lanka to promote national unity and reconciliation efforts through targeted technical assistance to the ONUR and the Northern Provincial Administration and Eastern Provincial Administration."

Project 2 is to be considered for the exercise completely.

Outcome 1 - "Sri Lanka society with a well-coordinated and coherent system to advance national unity and reconciliation among its people."

- *Output 1:* Key mechanisms and processes (elements of a roadmap) for national unity and reconciliation commenced under the guidance of the ONUR
- *Output 2:* Northern Provincial administration and Eastern Provincial administration enabled to produce strategic plans and strengthen revenue generation to support development activities that address the priorities of conflict affected people.

3.2.1 Output 1: Key Mechanisms and Processes (Elements of a Roadmap) for National Unity and Reconciliation Commenced Under the Guidance of the ONUR

3.2.1.1 Context Related Findings

a. **Project Design and Strategy** - The Office of National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR) was established under the former President Kumaratunga, and its main role is to coordinate and catalyse action to advance national unity and reconciliation. It has prioritised social cohesion, peace education, psychosocial support, livelihoods and trilingual language policy as areas to take forward. During the design stage of the project, officials at the ONUR were widely consulted and the project document was developed based on their identified needs. Efforts to interview former President and Head of the ONUR, Chandrika Kumaratunga for the evaluation were unsuccessful. However, ONUR officials spoke positively about initial level collaboration with the UNRCO and about how they were provided with peacebuilding related knowledge and skills during that phase.

   i. However, it seems that this initial level of collaboration didn't continue from mid-2016 onwards. ONUR officials also felt that their inputs and needs which were taken on board in 2015, before the project started, were not well reflected in the final design that was submitted for PBF funding. UNDP officials report that once the project design was formalised they were brought into the picture and the project handed over to them. The UNDP reported, in terms of effectiveness, that they believed that the project design phase didn't adequately brief the ONUR that the project would be managed directly by UNDP. Thereafter once the project was initiated, the UNDP and ONUR were locked in detailed negotiations about working modalities for a long duration, especially because the ONUR felt that the fund management should have come to them. There was also a lack of awareness of UNDP working modalities, rules and regulations, as well as what a directly managed project entailed within the ONUR.

   ii. UNDP officials report that communication and collaboration between the UN RCO and UNDP during the design phase was limited, limiting effectiveness of the project. Misunderstanding and lack of clarity because the implementing agency UNDP, was not as involved as much as it thought necessary during the design stage, seems to

have critically influenced relations negatively between the two parties – UNDP and ONUR. [2]

iii. The UNDP reflects that the project design could have incorporated more strategic support to the ONUR and been more relevant. They felt that since the ONUR was a newly set up body, support should have been laid more squarely on institutional building. This, they felt would have helped set up the ONUR to undertake its functions more effectively. This they believe would have supported a stronger partnership with the UNDP and strong absorption of the project activities.

b. **Project Document** – The project document is well thought out, highly relevant, and clearly describes the context and the window of opportunity that the UN hoped to further catalyse with timely support through the IFR and PBF funds. The design utilises the theory of change concept and a results framework analysis to measure project success.

i. Evaluators find that the high level of expectations that are described in the narrative of the project document and in the outcome and outputs, does not adequately translate, with the same sort of intensity, into the design of the activities. For an ambitious 18 month project, the activities described are not sufficient to deliver the expected result, limiting its effectiveness. While its understood that the activities themselves are reasonable given the UNDP's position and access, the output promises commencement of mechanisms and processes, which is more than the activities can deliver.

3.2.1.2 Mechanism Related Findings

a. **Project Implementation** - When the project came into being in mid 2016, the UNDP was charged with directly implementing it, while the ONUR believed the project was going to be implemented by themselves. Thereafter, ONUR officials felt that they were not well informed about the project, not clearly told what their role was, what funds and support was available to them, etc. Based on this misunderstanding, working relations between the two partners were strained, and the effectiveness of the project reduced.

i. The UNDP project documentation shows the Letter of Agreement (LOA) signed between UNDP and ONUR, roughly accounting for about 200,000 USD (dependent on the exchange rate at the time of transfer). These funds were used by the ONUR for a part of the quick-win activities such as the Dialogue Initiative, the trilingual language translation service, and for the inter-school pilot work, with credible efficiency. The incumbent officials at the ONUR claim not to be aware of the full project, but only aware of what was agreed and signed with them – as per the LOA. This is not in keeping with the full output of this project related to developing mechanisms and processes for national unity and reconciliation under the guidance of the ONUR.

ii. During this phase, evaluators find that there were two main levels of communication and working between the UNDP and ONUR. One between senior politicians and decision makers and another between working level officials. While they worked effectively at each level, within each organisation there was very limited collaboration

[2] UN/UNDP Officials reviewing this report, post-validation meeting, commented on this issue as follows. (It is incorporated for the sake of providing more clarity on this issue): "UNDP were there at many of the planning/design discussions. There were several workshops for example in the UN to develop the RRF etc and finalize the strategy. UNDP were very present…[The] issue was more than UNDP and RCO were not meeting the leadership of ONUR together, and this led to different understandings at the higher level"

and engagement vertically, between senior decision makers and working level officers. This led to a lack of coherence between decisions that were being made and what was being implemented, as well as to misunderstandings. The UNDP reports that some of its working level decisions were sometimes countermanded based on political requests, and on the whole, the effectiveness of the project was affected.

b. **Activity on Provision of Technical Assistance** - The first activity related to providing technical assistance is to support the ONUR on peacebuilding issues, and communication and is of high relevance. There are three key actions identified within: 1) on a communication strategy which is also part of the risk mitigation work; 2) on improving the monitoring capacity to track reconciliation work; 3) provision of conflict transformation and peacebuilding technical expertise.
    i. According to UNDP officers "ONUR failed to access UN technical and financial support"; while the ONUR in turn claims to not have been aware of the availability of such support. The UNDP in several meetings with the ONUR brought up the availability of funds for securing technical assistance on peacebuilding, communication and Monitoring and Evaluation (M and E). While the activity is judged to be relevant by all parties, it raises the question as to why the ONUR then didn't make use of the opportunity and resources.
    ii. On the M&E support, a training on monitoring was conducted for ONUR officers which they found very useful for their work. The UNDP however identifies that their attempts to help reinforce the monitoring capacity within the ONUR was not enthusiastically received. Thereafter the UNDP had made attempts to work with another partner to undertake the monitoring work on reconciliation. However, due to changes in government this too has not been successfully completed. While again the reasoning behind the action is relevant, it is not clear if it was the effectiveness of delivery that caused it to be irrelevant.
    iii. On the communication aspect, the project document clearly describes the need for a communication strategy to manage expectations about the reconciliation process. However, due to non-traction on the ONUR side, this was not completed, raising the earlier question on effectiveness and relevance.
    iv. Peacebuilding and conflict transformation related technical assistance was not sought by the ONUR according to the UNDP. The ONUR maintains it was not aware of the availability of support; raising earlier questions on effectiveness of delivery limiting relevance of the activity.

c. **Activity on Quick-Win Confidence Building Initiatives** – The logic and relevance for confidence building activities is clearly justified. On the whole this activity was well implemented by the ONUR. The UNDP reports that the ONUR had the basic designs of the dialogue initiative, developed when the project was started. The ONUR also worked on inter-school work and inter-cultural activities and a trilingual translation service called *Bashawa.com*. These activities were assessed separately by the UNDP, and found to have been satisfactorily completed. The ONUR is now continuing the dialogue initiative and the inter-school/ inter-cultural activities. The language work was taken over by the new Ministry of National Languages, however its reported to have not been utilised by the Ministry thereafter. The WHO led psychosocial work was also developed when the project started. Accordingly, these activities were implemented smoothly once UNDP working modalities was understood. Some delays were experienced though on the psychosocial work, contributing to the need for a No Cost Extension of the project. This is explained below:

The project document recognises the need for psycho-social support to communities in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, Anuradhapura and Galle districts, and aims to target a 100 people per target district. The original design envisages that WHO will assist the ONUR Task Force on Psychosocial Well-being. In addition, a strategic plan to build the capacity of Provincial authorities, government agencies and civil society to establish the long term coordinated psychosocial support mechanism was also part of the design. This design is in keeping with the originally envisaged goal of supporting the development of mechanisms and processes under the guidance of the ONUR, and found to be highly relevant.

i. Evaluators found that the psychosocial work conducted by the project was not known to the ONUR or used to build the ONUR Task Force on Psychosocial Wellbeing. From interviews with multiple parties and internal reports[3], it becomes clear that there was a disagreement between the ONUR and WHO. The report refers to the disagreement being about WHO working modalities through the Ministry of Health (MoH). Due to the lack of clarity on this, further interviews with previous ONUR staff revealed that the WHO had already identified subcontracted parties and were insistent upon managing the psychosocial work as per their normal Ministry of Health working modalities. Thereafter, the UNDP and WHO had signed an agreement and a project document which by-passed the ONUR and its Task Force on Psychosocial Wellbeing. It is not clear as to why the UNDP would choose to continue with the WHO, without looking for another partner to support the strengthening of the ONUR's Task Force. This change of how the activity was done is found to reduce the relevance and the effectiveness of the action, as well as contribute to the strained relationship between the ONUR and UNDP.

ii. Project document related deliverables were modified based on WHO working modalities and amended in a LOA and attached project document. Amended tasks were found to have been well conducted as per an assessment of the activity. Activities were limited to two districts, Killinochchi and Mullaithivu, and the strategic plan that was to be put in place was not fulfilled. The processes and mechanisms were not put in place, and the target of a minimum 100 people per district was also not met. The alternate activities conducted by the WHO nevertheless are of value in itself and seem to adequately support MoH with its work.

iii. While the work is considered effective against the amended expectations; when considered against the original expected output of strengthening processes and mechanisms under the guidance of the ONUR, especially in a situation where it had a body to take forward the work - the results are considered to be less relevant or effective. The action is not in keeping with this goal and undermines the usefulness of their Task Force.

d. **Activity on National Reconciliation Policy** – The UNDP had informed the ONUR about the availability of funds to secure technical assistance to support the development of the policy. However, the ONUR did not access these funds, as is reported by the UNDP. ONUR officials stated that funds were available from the national budget for the activity and they also wanted it to be a nationally driven and developed policy. The ONUR official in charge of developing this policy could not be contacted for this evaluation purpose.

i. It is not clear as to why the ONUR did not seek the available technical and financial support for the activity. It's probable they believed that usage of national resources would make the policy more legitimate, but then that raises the question as to why

[3] Annual Report 2016

this decision was not directly conveyed to the UNDP. The UNDP was unaware that the ONUR was proceeding with the activity until the policy was almost complete. This raises a question of buy-in from the ONUR to the overall project, the trust between partners and the seeming lack of requirement.

ii. The UNDP reports that they find the Policy developed by the ONUR was of adequate standard. However, they judged that the policy does not seem to have mobilised much support or traction behind it. Therefore, they noted that it is not effectively steering the reconciliation work in the country. Different actors, civil society and development partners in the sector are working on reconciliation in a piece-meal/ add hoc manner and there is no broad level coherence to the work.

e. **Project Monitoring** – No dedicated project monitoring records were made available for the evaluation by the UNDP. The project document design clearly describes the plan to set up two technical committees, one for the UNDP-ONUR and the other for the UNDP-Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils. While the one with the Provincial Authorities were set up, the evaluators find that the UNDP did not set up this technical committee with the ONUR formally. The UNDP however did hold meetings with the ONUR to discuss project implementation, as recorded in meeting minutes. However, the UNDP reported that attendance for meetings after the initial few, were limited and only responsible officials for a particular activity would attend, based on the agenda. Overall buy-in of the wider project deliverables was low, with ONUR focus being mainly on the actions they took responsibility for in the LOA.

   i. The lack of a dedicated project officer to manage this directly implemented project may have affected the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation. From the meeting minutes, it appears that the UNDP expected the ONUR to lead and plan activities for Activity 1 & 3 of the project and request support where needed. However, the ONUR saw its responsibility as limited to the quick-wins delineated in the LOA.

   ii. It is noted that the ONUR took responsibility for the quick-win activities. These activities were thereafter delivered, and its individual assessments show that they were implemented with satisfactory levels of efficiency.

   iii. Though the UNDP was directly implementing the project, the activities they had to implement were dependent on ONUR. This appears to not be an effective means of implementation.

   iv. Given that the UNDP was aware of the strained relationship with the ONUR, it is not clear what proactive instruments the UNDP used to ensure that project delivery stayed on track, apart from the meetings that were set up with the ONUR. The lack of a formal project management committee, was also one of the key mechanisms that contributed to the low delivery and effectiveness of expected project results. Thus, evaluators determine there was limited effectiveness and efficiency in delivery of project results.

f. **Project Reporting** – The UNDP reports that its' ability to report was limited by the PBSO template. In a project where a lot of adaptive management, risk mitigation, and other context related issues are prevalent, the reporting template was not able to capture the nuances of why certain actions were undertaken or not. This was found to be a limitation in understanding how the project was managed better.

   i. Records capturing changes in context, issues faced, decisions made, activity changes and adaptive management measures taken, were not available. The UNDP does not seem to have maintained any internal reports apart from the donor templates.

ii. On both sides, the UNDP as well as the ONUR, there has been some staff turnover. On the UNDP side, though officers reported that there was a smooth hand over of functions from one to another, they were not aware of the reasoning behind decisions, past action or previous government officials in charge. The UNDP officers also identified that they considered this project "inherited from the UN RCO" and therefore were not aware of the reasoning behind some of the design aspects. The approach from UNDP officers was that they were not willing to take ownership or responsibility for the design, decisions, changes, adaptations made during the course of the project.

iii. Senior staff changes in the case of the Government of Sri Lanka occur regularly. Therefore, knowledge management, maintaining project documentation, monitoring and reporting functions to ensure that new staff are adequately briefed is a critical function of the responsible party, the UNDP, in this case.

The main documentation related to monitoring seemed to be through the use of Annual work plans and biannual donor reports. Limited monitoring, especially nuanced monitoring to ensure that the project was on track to deliver the expected output, further limiting activity effectiveness, was noted.

3.2.1.3 Outcome Related Findings

a. **Outcome and Output Achievement** – The overall outcome is measured by two indicators capturing perceptions of local communities in project reports. Both indicator baselines quote 2014 perceptions as the baseline, which would be during the previous administration and before the project context materialised. The indicator progress is quoted from the 2016 (September) perception survey, which is a measurement during the beginning phase of the project. These figures are not a measurement of this project's progress, and should not be used. In addition, evaluators feel that given the reach of activities conducted by this project, it's unlikely that 2017 perception survey results could have been influenced by the project.

   Under the output, the original results framework has five indicators clearly measuring all aspect of the project design. However, in subsequent project biannual reports, only two indicators are reported, related to two quick win activities, a subset of Activity 2 of the project. It's not clear why the other indicators have not been reported against in any reports.

b. **Risk Mitigation** - A risk mitigation strategy in a project like this is critical. The context is dynamic and there are inherent risks in the problem the project is trying to address. Thus the risks identified are not comprehensive, nor fully developed, nor the mitigation strategies adequately addressed in the design. Risks related to changes in key people, setting up of new institutions, political and contextual instability are not adequately thought through. Thereafter, in the biannual reporting, the mitigation strategies do not seem to have been implemented though some of the risks materialised.

   UNDP officers report that funds were reprogrammed depending on available opportunities, and admit that in some cases it was not strategic. Given UNDP perception about the need for better institutional building work, or the communication around the usage of the policy, it may have been a more strategic adaptation. On the other hand, the strained relationship between the two partners, may not have provided the windows of opportunity for the UNDP to take advantage of.

c. **UNDP Implementation Modality** – There is a lack of clarity regarding the reasoning behind why the three activities were directly implemented by the UNDP. Given the successful manner in which the ONUR actually delivered the funds provided to it, it may have been more strategic

and sustainable to allow this project to be nationally implemented, contributing to its institutional capacity building as well.

d. **Gender Equality Focused Programming** – The project has noted that gender equality is a significant objective (gender marker 2), requiring that 15% of the budget be dedicated for this function. However, the evaluators did not notice any active programming to build gender equality except in the psychosocial work. Here, 70 female headed householders were targeted and provided Training of Trainers training on psychosocial aspects. It must be noted that this, however, is a very targeted support, allowing these women to become key players in supporting their own and their community's management of psychosocial issues. In other components of the project, gender equality related programming is restricted to encouraging participation, a very passive method of programming. The fact that officers believe increased participation is adequate, indicates a lack of awareness of gender related issues and areas of concern.

e. UNDP officials used the metaphor of a 'hinge' in relation to the peacebuilding fund. The hinge allows/ facilitates the windows/ doors of opportunity to be opened but does not open it by itself. They explained that it's not the UN's place to tell Sri Lanka what to do, but to support, facilitate, advice and guide Sri Lanka when requested and where opportunity exists. The Sri Lankan peacebuilding process needs to be a nationally driven, nationally designed process. And the UN has done what is in its power to support such a process, and consciously planned its support from that perspective.

    i. The UN is aware of the suspicion with which it and other western ideas are viewed, and understands that any sort of overt manner of engaging with Sri Lanka will only undermine the effectiveness of government interventions and how its perceived. Therefore, they focus on being as discreet as possible, and limiting their engagement to facilitatory supportive functions.

3.2.1.4 Lessons Learned

a. **Logical Design Approach** - Looking backwards from the end of the project, at the very dynamic context that the project was immersed in, the type of windows of opportunities that the project was trying to catalyse, the risks inherent in this type of work, and the institutional building work at the heart of this project – standard logical analysis is probably not the most appropriate approach. Its best used in a stable context, where results can be logically predicted. In a dynamic context, with inherent risks attached to politics and power plays its difficult for results to be predicted. In a sense, the results framework may even limit the activities of the project binding it mechanically to its targets and indicators. To allow a project like this the flexibility and adaptability to maneuver in this context, the approach is not a good match. The Theory of Change approach though used in the design, doesn't seem to have been used effectively thereafter. If applied in the project management cycle it should help to adapt to contextual issues. The Problem Driven Iterative Adaption (PDIA)[4] approach is another relevant and effective fit, especially for institutional building in unstable contexts.

[4] PDIA differs from other development approaches in that it moves from critique to response. It is primarily concerned with building governance capability to deliver on complex and potentially contested reforms in areas like governance and justice. PDIA differentiates from other methods concerned with reforms implementation, also in its higher focus on the enabling background conditions that make it possible for systems to be functional. The idea of adaptation which puts under question the notion of doing reforms by adopting external rules – best practices – is also unique to the approach. For more details refer: Matt Andrews, Lant Pritchett, Salimah Samji and Michael Woolcock 2015. *Building Capability by Delivering Results: Putting Problem-Driven Iterative*

b. **Relationship Management -** The ability to influence change rests much more on the human aspects of programming, than on the technical, especially for projects working within more sensitive and politically charged environments. Therefore, managing relationships, building rapport, orientating local counterparts to UN ways of working, needs to be handled formally as well as informally, if the UN is committed to ensuring the effectiveness of their work. Review of meeting minutes especially showcase the very formal and distant relationship between the donor and the recipient. The UNDP approach to engaging counterparts need to be brought on to a more equal platform of partnership and collaboration. In cases where the UNDP is directly implementing a project, the onus to ensure that the project is effectively delivered lies with the UNDP. In complicated roles where delivery is dependent on the partner, it's imperative that the UNDP undertake more hands on relationship management as well. Without taking this aspect into the project management activities, it's unlikely that the UNDP will be able to ensure effectively delivery. Given the high overheads of 14% that the UNDP charges for project implementation, it would be more efficient and effective to have a dedicated person be responsible for a nationally critical, time-sensitive peacebuilding project.
c. **Proactive Monitoring and Risk Management –** It's noted by evaluators that with more proactive monitoring, measures to mitigate the poor relationship between its main partner could have been implemented effectively and efficiently. Monitoring from the point of view of whether the project was achieving its expected result, should have also prompted the project to re-programme into more strategic actions. Rigorous project monitoring, usage of monitoring findings, and strategic adaptive management to ensure the project stays on track and is effectively delivered, is found to be critical in a dynamic context.
d. **Adaptive Management** - The project activities as described above deviated significantly from the original plan and the results framework. However, given the instable political context within which the project operated, it's expected that the predicted activity pathway may need to be adjusted and adapted depending on the available entry points and opportunities. Therefore, evaluators feel that the project implementers should focus on the delivery of the originally planned result, more than a focus on the planned activities. Accordingly, insertion of completely different activities, if its strategic enough, should be considered instead of simply redressing activities. A good example of this, is the M&E activity adjustment or the WHO psychosocial adjustment made by the project. These are minor levels of change to the original activity, but negated a contribution to the expected output.
e. **Documentation and Reporting** – The project shifted hands between agencies, and there after between staff both within the UNDP and ONUR. Therefore, the need for very clear process level documentation, meeting and decision making records is critical for effective and efficient delivery. The lack of documentation and clear explanations for changes and amendments to project actions, also disempowers incoming new staff who are then reluctant to take responsibility for aspects that they are unaware of, which was evident with both parties. While the donor/PBSO template may be limiting, it would be well advised for the UNDP to maintain its own monitoring records clearly documenting reasoning for deviations and amendments.
f. **Inclusive Consultation/ Collaboration** – It's clear that one of the key contributing factors to the poor relationship between the UNDP and ONUR, was due to the ONUR not being briefed clearly about how the project would be implemented. Therefore, the ensuing misunderstanding caused the ONUR to adopt a less than collaborative approach to the aspects of the project it was not directly responsible for. This misunderstanding and resulting poor

Adaptation (PDIA) Principles into Practice. A Governance Practitioner's Notebook: Alternative Ideas and Approaches © OECD 2015.

relationship could have been averted to an extent if the working modalities and other implementation related matters were clearly conveyed to the partner. This in a sense compromised the effectively delivery of the project.

g. **Internal Communication and Information Sharing –** Its observed that there was poor communication and information sharing vertically, between different levels of both organisations. On the UN side, this is noted between the political decision making level and the working level, during the design phase as well as the implementation phase. Improvement of the commitment to keep all parties adequately briefed where necessary, is seen as critical in reducing avoidable misunderstanding and improving effectiveness and efficiency of delivery.

h. **Implementation Modality –** In a context like Sri Lanka, where the UN and NGO's are considered with suspicion, a directly implemented project working on peacebuilding may have had less traction. Also given the UN approach of peacebuilding funds being a 'hinge', and their work only being facilitatory, it then raises the question about its direct implementation modality. However, if the PBSO modality requires direct implementation, then activities need to be designed and implemented from that understanding. Within the project, it's noted that the component that the ONUR took responsibility for, was implemented effectively, as demonstrated by the various assessment reports.

i. **Programming Depth –** In a relative sense, it's easier to understand the overall context operational in a situation, than it is to try to change it. In this situation, it's important that the same degree of analysis in the problem analysis be continued into designing the expected results, and how it would be measured. Dedication and commitment to ensuring changes on the ground should be seen concretely in the design of the expected results. Language used in the statement of outputs and in the results framework should not be elusive and be more substantive.

   An eg. is *Activity 3: Initiation of the formulation of a National Reconciliation Policy*. Therein it appears that the UN will take responsibility only for the initiation of the policy formulation work, and not thereafter. Would simply the initiation of the policy work help address the dire contextual situation and take advantage of the window of opportunity in the country? This calls into question the commitment in reality, as opposed to what the in-depth detailed design narrative showcased as areas of concern. While keeping in mind that the UN also can only be responsible for facilitating a process, it still needs to be able to take responsibility for facilitating action in a more dedicated way. A re-written example of the above activity can possibly be – *Activity 3 – Facilitation of the development and implementation of a National Reconciliation Policy*.

j. **Gender Related Programming** – When project programming does need to address how women in particular are affected, the result tends to be the continuation of the status quo. This means that their marginalisation and disempowerment continues to be further institutionalised. In a peacebuilding context, it also means that opportunities to empower women and support the change in status quo is not taken advantage of. It's imperative that the UN proactively utilises these opportunities available through its projects to promote equality of women, and acknowledge that passive participation related approaches see limited effectiveness and impact.

Evaluation Matrix:
Project Two: "Support to Sri Lanka to promote national unity and reconciliation efforts through targeted technical assistance to the ONUR and the Northern Provincial Administration and Eastern Provincial Administration."

Output 1: Key mechanisms and processes (elements of a roadmap) for national unity and reconciliation commenced under the guidance of ONUR

CMO CONFIGURATION	***Category***	***Remarks***
Context	*Relevance*	*Highly relevant and strategic intervention to support the ONUR to put in place long term processes and mechanisms*
Mechanism	*Relevance* *Effectiveness* *Efficiency* *Gender Dimension*	*Relevant mechanics of achieving the output was designed. However, the implementation modality may need to be reconsidered.* *Only 1 of 3 key activities, the quick-wins were implemented. Project cycle monitoring and risk management was limited. Funds were reprogrammed but without much contribution towards the overall output.* *Due to limited implementation of activities, the efficiency in the use of project funds was limited.* *Focus was mainly limited to the psychosocial work within activity 2, while other activities only supported equal participation of women. Proactive gender focused programming was limited.*
Outcome	*Impact and Sustainability*	*It is unlikely that the implemented quick win activities had much depth in impact, or that it would be sustainable. Setting up processes and mechanisms under the guidance of the ONUR to promote unity and reconciliation was not achieved.*

3.2.2 *Output 2: Northern Provincial administration and Eastern Provincial administration enabled to produce strategic plans and strengthen revenue generation to support development activities that address the priorities of conflict affected people.*

3.2.2.1 Context Related Findings

Activity 1: Fielding of technical experts to support the Northern Provincial Administration and Eastern Provincial Administration to develop multi-sector development plans and mechanisms to strengthen revenue raising capacities.

The PBF support and its proposed interventions were made in the post-war context to facilitate inclusive dialogues on issues of national unity and reconciliation. It was also built on the hypothesis that "if the society can witness peacebuilding results on the ground then there will be greater confidence, trust and realisation in prospects for a sustainable peace." The Northern Province was the worst affected during the last three decades compared to the other provinces. The Eastern Province is the next war-affected region requiring focused assistance.

There seems to be an understanding at the theorising level of the project that the needs, priorities, peculiarities and their insecurities when reconstructing their lives after a devastating war is very different from the priorities of the rest of the country. However, their reconciliation-related needs are somehow lost when translating the implementation of theory to project-level activities on the ground. That the people of the Northern province, continue to hold that their rights-based grievances are yet to be addressed by the central state, is an overpowering allegation that subsumes their interest in mere development projects[5]. This is a longstanding, well-known plea from the region. That they wish to address their rights based issues along-side development goals, as a region recovering from an ethnic conflict and a civil war is widely known, in the post-war context (Fernando and Moonesinghe, (2012); Thaheer, Peiris et al. (2013); Frase (2017). At the project implementation level, it ought to have been informed by this strongly articulated grievance that provides the contextual backdrop to any intervention in the North including, the references to this in the TOC narratives of the UNs project documents. Some activities in the Northern Provincial Council (NPC), analysed below seem to reiterate the need for reflection on this aspect. Activities with the Northern and Eastern Provincial Council for improving institutional capacities, were carried out during November 2016 to May 2018.

The Northern Province Development Plan – This activity has not taken place. Instead, funds have been diverted to carry out the District Plans of Jaffna, Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi (to be carried out in concurrence to the District Plans of Vavuniya and Mannar that have been formulated earlier with the assistance of the UNDP and other donors). Hence, the three afore mentioned District Secretariats have been approached to develop their respective District Plans instead of the development of the Northern Provincial Plan, as planned and envisaged in the project document. Plans/decision to by-pass this area of work with the Northern Provincial Council and to directly develop the Northern Development Plan with three District Secretariats have not been documented by the UNDP. However, the minutes of a Progress Review Meeting of the Northern Provincial Secretariat of October 16, 2017 (almost a year after the launch of the project), that was shared by the UNDP project staff notes thus: "[sic]Unavoidable circumstances, the Provincial Development Plan could not be prepared. The Chief Secretary informed that this amount may be transferred to the other departments for fulfill the urgent

[5] Information based on interviews with some stake holders and literature on reconciliation related issues in the North.

needs."[6]

Project Implementation – The assumption is that the funds allocated for the development of the Northern Provincial Plan would be transferred for the District Plans. These plans are to be consolidated to carry out a Provincial Plan next year.[7] The Deputy Chief Secretary, Planning also validated that the activities for the improvement of service deliveries and strengthening of institutional capacities with the assistance of UNDP will help develop provincial development plan next year.[8]

The District Secretary of Jaffna, N. Vethanayahan in an interview with the CEPA team validated the development of the Jaffna District Plan which is already available in the public domain. He stated that different districts have different potentials and so are their patterns and priorities. With the help of the district plans the Provincial Council plans to develop the master plan for the Province. "It was discussed in the meeting with the Chief Secretary and the staff. It was agreed upon at the meeting, we will prepare a provincial plan, but will first work on the district plans before proceeding to do that."[9] The Development Plans of Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts are currently under preparation.

The Chief Minister of the Northern Provincial Council Justice C. V. Wigneswaran, commenting on the Peacebuilding Fund related work in the North expressed his displeasure of it being a non-inclusive process. His appeal to the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) requesting for the participation of a member of the elected body of the council, in the Peacebuilding Board meetings (instead or) in addition to the Chief Secretary of the NPC, a State official, (who, they believe cannot make a fair representation of the people's war-related grievances) has yet to be met.[10] In his letters to the UNRCO and during his meeting with the then UNRC, Una McCauley, Chief Minister Wigneswaran says he appealed for the inclusion of a member of the elected body of the "affected people for whom the Peacebuilding matrix was purportedly prepared."[11] In his letter, he states, "It is not too late to allow representatives of the political leadership of the Northern Province to hereafter participate...Not to allow the representatives of the victims, the affected and the identified beneficiaries would be a travesty of justice".[12] He states in a letter to be delivered at the Peacebuilding Board meeting, addressed to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mangala Samaraweera and the UN RC, Una McCauley, "on our participation...Hon. Ms. Una said it was not possible for the Northern Provincial Council to become a member and participate…"[13] In his opinion, it is not enough to invite the Chief Secretary who is a public servant under the Central Government to participate at these Peacebuilding Board meetings. Such misunderstandings seem to have caused the absence of the Northern Provincial Development Plan.

The funds that were meant to strengthen the Provincial Council with the formulation of a

[6] Minutes of the Progress Review Meeting on Strengthening Institutional Capacity of Selected Departments and Office of the Deputy Chief Secretary - Planning in the Northern Province by Improving Service Delivery and Facilitate District Development Plan, October 16, 2017.

[7] Interview with the Chief Secretary, Northern Provincial Council, Mr. A. Pathinathan on August 29, 2018. Although, the decision to carry out the Northern Provincial Plan as a sequel to the five District Plans is not documented anywhere, he said he was determined to work on it next year, by consolidating the five District Plans.

[8] Interview with the Director, Planning, Provincial Council, Mr. Umakanthan on August 29, 2018.

[9] Interview with the District Secretary of Jaffna, N. Vethanayahan on 29 August, 2018 at the District Secretariat, Jaffna.

[10] Interview with Hon. Justice C.V. Wigneswaran, Chief Minister, Northern Provincial Council on 30 August, 2018, Jaffna.

[11] Letter written on April 6, 2017, addressed to Hon. Mangala Saamaraweera, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Hon. Ms. Una McCauley, UN Resident Coordinator et al.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid

development plan of the Northern Province being diverted to the District Secretaries (who are perceived as the agents of the Central Government; that are non-autonomous bodies, with a constricted mandate to serve the region, compared to the people's elected body of the Provincial Council), belies the project's well-defined purpose, described in its justification for assistance sought through a PBF source. It also makes the rationale for the UN PBF's intervention challenging to fathom from an evaluator's point of view. The repeated contentions from the Northern Province that the UN's interventions are also circumspect if not are unremittingly turning a blind eye to meaningfully strengthening provincial administration in the post-war phase, which were hitherto undermined, may not be entirely valid. Nevertheless, it is an imputation worth reflecting upon, in strategic implementation of reconciliation projects, with the 'conflict sensitivity' it deserves.

Project Documentation and Record Keeping – There is no documented record to explain why this Activity had not been carried out. Meetings with the UNDP team to elicit information on this proved to be futile, as there was no formal project document (i.e. project meeting minutes) available on the UNDP's decision/reasons to shift from this key Activity envisaged in the logframe of the project. Project staff, however, did allude to the non-cooperation of the Chief Minister of the Northern Province as the reason for not developing the Northern Provincial Plan. Interviews with officials of the UNRC office also verbally validated the same. In the absence of any written document on this matter on the UNDP's part, the CEPA team is unable to make any conclusive observation on this, except for using this space to convey sentiments of the direct stakeholders/beneficiaries (as conveyed above) on this activity.

The project document underscores the need for a "broad-based consultative process and drawing on a comprehensive development needs assessment by the Government, UN and other humanitarian partners…In the North, the multi-sector development plan will be developed in close consultation with the Board of Ministers ...while working with the Provincial Ministers…" (UN PBSCO Project Document 2016). However, the team finds this main objective of the Project being circumvented. A formal explanation by way of project level documentation or Peacebuilding Board (PBB) minutes would have helped the evaluation team to understand the reason/s behind the divergence of this activity, from the project document, which is seemingly a quintessential part of the PBF's support[14] for the region.

Strengthening Revenue Raising Capacities – In the Northern Province, the activities to strengthen institutional capacity of selected departments and the Office of the Deputy Chief Secretary Planning by improving service deliveries have been carried out well. The main objective of this activity is to enhance skills and knowledge to improve the HR capacity of Offices of the Commissioner of Local Government (CLG) and the Assistant Commissioners for Local Government (ACLG) and local authorities to ensure better service deliveries and resource utilisation. Activities have also been carried out to improve institutional capacities and capability of the planning secretariat of the Provincial Council to ensure better planning and implementation; systematise legal constitutional provisions to maximise resource usage.

Some interventions have been made in key Northern Provincial Departments, and include: support to the Department of Commissioner of Local Government and all ACLG offices; support to develop the

[14] Rationale for PBF Support: "the project will work with the Northern Provincial administration and Eastern Provincial administration to enable them to produce strategic plans and strengthen revenue generation to support development activities that address the priorities of conflict affected people" Project title: Support to Sri Lanka to promote national unity and reconciliation efforts through targeted technical assistance to the ONUR and the Northern Provincial Administration and Eastern Provincial Administration. United National Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSCO)/Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), IRF Project Document. Project Start Date February 1,2016. p.10.

institutional capabilities of the Provincial Management Development and Training Unit (MDTU); systematise revenue generation services of the Department of Motor Traffic and the Department of Provincial Revenue; support to establish a "one-stop service bureau" to improve industrial development and also to promote investment within the Province.

Monitoring and Implementation – Interviews with the Heads of some of these Departments revealed the successful completion of the activities that have enabled individuals and institutions to engage in sustainable local economic development/revenue generation activities. Officials vouch for increased levels of effectiveness in governance institutions for efficient service delivery. There is also increased levels of knowledge among policy makers and development partners on good practices of transparency, local economy and local governance. Community members too feel empowered with skills and ability to participate in local governance activities.

At the Motor Traffic Department for instance, they now possess the software component that links all the DS offices to one place, in comparison with the past, when they had difficulties getting access to computer accessories, in their department. The Commissioner for Motor Traffic claims that they have purchased 41 computers under the Project and provided them to every DS division in the Province. "The technical packages are already prepared by the ICTA and are linked with all computers. The software is easy to access by the public in no time. There was a time they had to wait long hours to get a motor license. This has changed things radically for the better."[15]

The Department of Local Government also commended the observable changes that have taken place as a result of the UNDP's Project intervention. Speaking of a case in point, it was pointed out that the valuation exercise in Karachi and Kararaipatru divisions in Kilinochchi were quite successful because these two local authorities in the past, lacked systems to valuate their sources for revenues. They will now be able to earn around Rs. 15 million per annum from taxations. The introduction of these revenue generation services has enabled the Department of Provincial Revenue to valuate properties and earn the due taxes – a phenomenon that was not available in pre-2016. There is information that taxes were collected in the 1960s. This UNDP intervention is being showcased as a successful pioneer project, once gazetted. The tax collection process will start in 2018 or 2019. Around Rs. 2 million has been spent on the valuation exercise of just about seven areas. There is a great lack of resources to evaluate all conflict-affected areas in the Province. Only few local authorities can carry this work out with their own funds, the rest need financial support.[16]

The Department of Management Development and Training Unit (MDTU), has conducted TOTs in about five major activities of MDTU. About 195 frontline officers were trained including, 89 who were female officers. Gender participation is at least 50%, but there were more women participants in general, in these trainings. The capacity building training included information on SDG goals, how to work with the grass root levels, how to incorporate SDG planning in the sessions, capacity management etc.[17]

The Citizens' Charter introduced in some departments in the Province too, has been a resounding achievement in terms of empowering the general masses. There is a sharp decline in complaints after the public display of the charter. Such public awareness raising mechanisms helps mainstream transparency, accountability and good governance. This sentiment is intense in areas recovering from being formerly under the LTTE's control. The value for money in terms of the capacity development

[15] Based on interview with Commissioner, Department of Motor Traffic, Ms. S. Sujeeva on August 29, 2018.
[16] Information based on interview with Commissioner for Local Government, Mr. Patrick Diranjan.
[17] Information based on interview with Deputy Chief Secretary, Personnel and Training (MDTU), Mr. A Sivabanasundaran.

and skills enhancement work in the North, has been fully achieved. However, assistance for further work remains a dire need in many parts of the region.

The Eastern Province Development Plan – The second medium term development plan was developed based on the needs of the devolved subjects of the East from 2017 to 2020, (based on the first plan that was developed in 2012 to 2016). The medium term development plan includes all subjects devolved to the province i.e. irrigation, agriculture, education etc. UNDP funds were also allocated to develop the Trincomalee District Plan which was not covered by former interventions. The District Development Plan 2017 has been prepared and will be published shortly. All sectoral needs have been identified.

In the Provincial Councils in the North and East, the overall objective of the Governance for Local Economic Development projects under the UNDP, PBF assistance were carried out to develop the institutional capacity for better service delivery and improvement of systems to establish good governance practices in selected institutions of the NPC and the EPC.

The staff members of the EPC felt that they have experienced a larger capacity development course (just as much as the staff of the Northern Province), owing to their work engagement on developing the Eastern Provincial Plan with the UNDP's support. This document is available in the public domain.

Mechanisms to Strengthen Revenue Raising Capacities – These activities have been commendably implemented. In the East, the experience has also helped them to prepare sectoral plans, financial plans for the Ministry of Finance etc. based on this knowledge-enhancing experience. They no longer require consultants for planning. This was a sentiment endorsed collectively by all senior staff whom the CEPA team met with, i.e. the Deputy Chief Secretary, Personnel and Training; Additional Director, Planning; Provincial Director, Dept. of Rural Development, Commissioners for Motor Traffic and Local Government. Similar gains and claims of the capacity development and knowledge gains were endorsed by their counterparts in the Northern Provincial Council i.e. by Department of Motor Traffic, Commissioner for Local Government and the Deputy Chief Secretary, Personnel and Training (MDTU). They too felt that they can in future, run the systems and carry out their own capacity development work, with the knowledge gained.

This was also a learning experience in many ways. Officials conducted a series of discussions paving the space for open interactions and systematised documenting. This process includes contributions from the civil society and political representatives.

A valuable outcome in the exposure to systems development/improvement in the Eastern Provincial Council is their realisation and their insistence on the need to streamline a provincial development process for provincial planning and coordination, engineering services management and financial and procurement management. The timing and balancing of activities in the work on these sectors are crucial for coordinated development work.[18]

The Eastern Provincial Council's Consolidated Annual Implementation Programme, (CAIP) and its web-based database system, as a single official information system is a positive outcome of this venture.

Some of the noteworthy activities undertaken by the Provincial Planning Secretariats (PPS) are as follows:

[18] Information based on interview with former Deputy Chief Secretary Planning of the EPC N. Mahendraraja and from the slide presentation of Balanced Regional Development and SDG, Provincial Planning Secretariat, Eastern Provincial Council, Trincomalee.

Funds allocated for the development forum had been diverted for developing capacity of senior staff of the EPC institutions and strengthening the institutional capacities for better service delivery of the Office of the Chief Secretary and Provincial Planning Secretariat.

Improvement of the existing Divisional Resource Profile has also taken place with the installation of the software at the District and Divisional Secretariats with the improvement of Digitized Divisional Resource Profile. Capacity development trainings to senior staff have ranged from Workshops on Leadership and Change Management; preparation of Reports on Streamlining Provincial Development Process and Practices and Procurement Management and also on Strengthening Planning Capacity of EPC Officials. Some programmes have been carried out on Architectural and Drawings for Civil Structures and Regulations and Practices for Construction of Buildings.

One of the highly commended activities was the improvement of the CAIP web-based Database with additional features and facilities with modifications introduced by Finance Commission.

Staff Training and Software Development – A web based Revenue Management System (RMS) has been developed and installed at Provincial Departments of Revenue in the Northern and Eastern provincial councils. Staff have been trained to operate the software with the procurement of IT equipment for the efficient running of the RMS. As for the training activities of the MDTU, staff expressed high satisfaction for the Training of Trainers (TOT) Programmes conducted in Tamil and Sinhala. As for the Provincial Treasury *s*oftware for managing assets belonging to institutions under the Eastern Provincial Council (Asset Management Software), it has been developed and relevant Chief Accountants, Accountants and Development Officers have been trained on its usage. The Department of Rural Development has benefitted with an IT based system known as "Rural Development Societies' Information Management System" (RDSIMS). This helps them monitor and manage information on Community Based Organisation (CBOs) at provincial level, systemise their registration and update the system on a regular basis. A plethora of activities in capacity development of skill and knowledge and also on Peacebuilding and Reconciliation related Training to Rural Development Societies (RDS)s and Women's Rural Development Societies (WRDS)s have been carried out. Women have been active participants at these workshops and bore witness at our meeting on to how they have directly benefitted through these trainings for better performances in terms of systems and finance management in their villages. Another institution that benefitted through this project is the Department of Rural Industries. A range of activities have taken place under this Department including the Vocational training for youth; Support to establish a sales unit for selected women groups i.e. modification of the Sales Centre in Batticaloa town with necessary computers, furniture, fittings and other facilities.

CAIP database related work continues to be updated by the voluntary contributions of the EPC staff. A centralised database management system has been beneficial in many ways. i.e. to maintain a cadre management system; identify the areas of strengths; the gaps etc. It has also increased their partnership and enabled the staff to resolve public complaints by way of a collective effort. The CAIP web based data base is attracting the attention of other Provincial Councils for its best systems management practices. They feel, they need no external consultant to be hired for training purposes. Around the time of the evaluation, a training in developing a CAIP database was being offered to the staff of the Sabaragamuwa Provincial Council office to strengthen their technical capacities.

As for the Revenue Management system, it has helped systematise the availability of data/information on properties and ownership; identified gaps and increase revenues and reduced delays in payment.

3.2.2.2 Mechanism Related Findings

Dedicated officers of both Provincial Councils in the North and the East were an evident reason for the success of most of the capacity development work in service delivery work. Conscientious senior and mid-range officials including the Commissioners, Directors and their Deputies in the Departments of Planning, Local Government, MDTU, Motor Traffic, Rural Development etc. in these two provinces were the 'live-wires' of resources that these projects have empowered. The evaluators identified these motivated individuals to be the contributory factors for success among all project stakeholders. Without the inner will and dedication of these Heads of Departments, there would be very little motivation for the respective departments to produce remarkable work.

Beside other benefits that have accrued to the general public through the introduction of the Governance for Local Economic Development (GLED) activities, the staff of these departments believe, that the projects have helped develop their own pool of resource people who could carry out further work on their own. Owing to the systems update that has been initiated, there is no need in future for a costing for resource persons and the development of basic information for the regions, as it is now only a matter of updating existing records when publicising new information on request.

There is an overall sense of satisfaction in the advancement of systems and processes set in place through the GLED project in the Eastern Provincial Council. The benefits range from a balance in distribution of funds; availability of trained staff to active participation of Rural Development Society (RDS) and Women's Rural Development Society (WRDS) and a reduction in paper work.

The officials acknowledge the direct positive impact on the enhancement of skills and knowledge of the staff in more than one way, i.e. when obtaining IT knowledge, staff by default also enhance their knowledge in English, good governance, accountability and transparency.

The leadership provided by the Chief Secretary and Deputy Chief Secretary Planning; communication and coordination between agencies; cooperation of the implementing agencies in fun allocations etc. and most importantly commitment of staff with a positive approach have contributed to the success story of the GLED 2 activities.

Challenges in implementation – Officials felt that the coordination with District and Divisional Secretaries would be needed in future implementation. The lack of support and cooperation from the District and Divisional Secretariats for data entry was noted by the Provincial Council staff as an obstacle. They also saw political interference as a challenge to their work as per their plans. They tend to disrupt the process by introducing resources to already benefitted areas of their constituency causing imbalance in development and duplication in fund allocations, viz. Tamil areas remain underdeveloped owing to lack of attention of both Tamil and Muslim politicians. The EPC is able to rectify this to a great extent owing to the availability of the database and the information obtained through it.

The only area of slow progress according to them (in both provinces) was the development of the Statute in turning them into a legally binding provisions. Multiple levels of obstacles seem to have slowed down this process. Although this was a major requirement, they were unable to complete it owing to the departure of a consultant who was hired for this activity. Hence, the funds were diverted for other areas of needs. This too was possible as staff were able to forecast non-productive areas and possessed the agency and knowledge to divert funds.

Activity 2: Public Consultation with CSOs and Community Groups to establish a Citizen's Charter to monitor service delivery

Implementation of the Citizen's Charter – This is most welcome in both the Northern and the Eastern Provinces. The public who otherwise did not know what documents they have to submit, bring the application and complain or get swindled by the touts who mislead them in public places. This has been a perennial problem in almost all parts of the province especially in the North, i.e. in Jaffna and Kilinochchi Pradeshiya Sabhas and the Municipal Council. The public is inconvenienced and were often turned back to bring the required documents. But, with the introduction of the Citizen's Charter in which information regarding required documentation for the registration of businesses and land etc. is publicly available, people are no longer harassed. This is evident in the remarkable reduction of the comparative number of complaints that were received before and after the introduction of the Citizens Charter. Public awareness on documentation has also arisen following the introduction of the Citizens' Charter and there is a remarkable reduction of corruption issues and the upholding of professional ethics of transparency and accountability in achieving good governance related goals through this activity as well. A high level of contentment was witnessed in the Northern and Eastern Provinces during the interviews and the workshop in the province on the Citizens' Charter.

Considering the gender aspect of the training, the officials of the two provinces are well aware of the minimum 25% women's participation that is required. Hence, priority is given to women, in training programmes. At a project implementation level and at the level of the beneficiaries of the WRDS, women expressed how their levels of confidence have arisen after the trainings they have received. They are also able to extend their knowledge to efficiently manage the WRDS data base and fund transactions with a high level of transparency to benefit all women in their communities.

In the Eastern Province, the Citizen's Charter Development Project through the MDTU staff has first and foremost enhanced the skills of the staff before serving the public**.** Citizen's Charters have also been prepared by the Dept. of Local Government for 02 local authorities, Provincial Director Health Sector Office, Dept. of Animal Production and Health and Dept. of Agriculture. They are also on display in a) Agriculture Office, Ampara b) MC Akkaraipattu c) MOH Office Ampara, d) UC Ampara, e) District Office of Animal Production and Health, Ampara. A veterinary surgeon at the workshop validated the assistance of the equipment for displaying Citizen Charters that have been installed in these places. Assistance to procure more such equipment was expressed.

3.2.2.3 Outcome Related Findings

Contextual factors in the Northern and Eastern Provinces have been well informed and well considered in the conceptualising of the projects and the delivery of some aspects of Output 2 of Project 2. The social, cultural, economic and political contextual imperatives are recognised under Activities 1 and 2, i.e. the need for strengthening institutional capacity of selected departments by improving service delivery and harnessing successful interventions that would produce sustainable and long term impact. The project goals for this purpose are aligned with the community's needs and aspirations that have a bearing on the success of the interventions. The improving of service components have occurred in a linear fashion and have been carried out systematically. The implementation of certain aspects of the Output were extremely successful compared to others owing to some champions who believed in the need of their importance and armed with a sense of commitment versus individuals who did not believe in the importance of development. They blamed it on the development of a non-inclusive peacebuilding matrix that earmarked the region for PBF's special interventions.

The UNDP's assistance to strengthening institutional capacity of selected departments by improving service deliveries with the NPC and the EPC have in most cases helped them intrinsically streamline activities in most of the Departments in the Northern and the Eastern Provincial Councils whilst others follow closely.

Challenges in implementation – Staff expressed the need for the direct involvement of sector Heads during the preparation stage of the Citizen's Charter. They also need assistance in selecting suitable consultants especially, for translating into the Sinhala and Tamil languages. There is generally a dearth of translators in all sectors especially for the creation of a trilingual website for the EPC complete with all the information. Lack of interest/encouragement of the top officials in implementing the findings of the consultants reports in some sectors was noted.

More funding was required for developing more user-friendly digital display in all areas. Officials noticed a procedural delay in the release of funds for the Eastern Provincial Council from the UNDP side to keep up the flow of activities.

UNDP support is appealed for assistance in promoting the Citizens' Charter in all parts of the regions as it serves a vital purpose in transforming war-affected peoples' lives to normalcy especially in areas that were previously under the LTTE which severed their connections with the State mechanisms and institutions.

With the rapidly changing context, extensive consultations at planning, designing and implementation stages have taken place intermittently between the UNDP and the Provincial Offices in terms of strategising and reformulating activities related to strengthening capacity. This was a commendable feature which was not so evident in other activities, i.e. work with the NPC for Provincial Plan and aspects of the ONUR's work

3.2.2.4 Lessons Learned

Reconciliation-related good governance – There is public demand for reconciliation by way of meaningful devolution through a democratic process of decentralisation of powers to the provincial and local authorities. There are many areas of governance related contention in the Province vis-a-vis the Centre, i.e. a case in point is the Business Turnover Tax that was collected by the Provincial Council which is now taken over by the Centre/line ministry. This deprives the province from a source of income for development and causes much displeasure, aggravating the centre-periphery differences in these regions. This also aggravates the negative perceptions of the Centre's repressive tactics among the people of the region. Efforts could have been made to address lacunae in peacebuilding and Transitional Justice aspects of good governance by the strategic usage of PBF resources for reconciliation in governance related dimensions of the Provincial bodies rather than on the general governance-related activities already carried out. Such activities would allow these institutions to function with a certain amount of autonomy, strengthening the reconciliation process, instead of placing total dependency on the Centre. The Centre-periphery chasm remains. Given an ethnic hue, they could only deepen further.

Context sensitive work – The Eastern Provincial Council (just as much as the NPC) has been clamouring in the past for Inclusive development and democratic decentralisation within the National Policy Framework and the need for an integrated development plan for the Eastern Province. By this, they mean a meaningful coordination of national policies and priorities together with the SDG targets, to work towards development of the socio-economic potential of the region.[19] The Northern Provincial Council has also voiced their need for inclusive development. Therefore, it is incumbent upon project

[19] From the EPC slide presentation of Balanced Regional Development and SDG.

implementers to be informed by local socio-economic and political contextual conditions of each region, when considering how the future PBF fund related activities can be adapted to discern mere governance related work versus PBF-supported good governance through the lens of reconciliation. It has missed an "…opportunity to build on this positive momentum and support the Northern Province and the Eastern Province to set out its development vision and strategy to address its severe capacity constraints…to advance development priorities," as spelt out in the project document.

It was overall appreciated that the UNDP's GLED 1 and 2 projects that came in as a sequel to the Local Governance Project (LOGOPRO) work of the UNDP, since 2008, addressed most of the gaps and requests of the Eastern Provincial Council when identifying areas of interventions as desired by the Provincial Council. They are gratified at the agency they possessed and the knowledge they had gained through this project, in being able to direct the funds toward their actual need.

Evaluation Matrix:
Project Two: "Support to Sri Lanka to promote national unity and reconciliation efforts through targeted technical assistance to the ONUR and the Northern Provincial Administration and Eastern Provincial Administration."

Output 2: Northern Provincial administration and Eastern Provincial administration enabled to produce strategic plans and strengthen revenue generation to support development activities that address the priorities of conflict affected people.

CMO Configuration	***Category***	***Remarks***
Context	*Relevance of the theory at work*	*An enabling backdrop and space for reconciliation through technical assistance remains valid.*
Mechanism	*Relevance*	*Priorities of conflict affected people need focus. Project remains relevant and important.*
	Effectiveness	*Overall planning/implementation of achieving overall purpose of project's objectives of developing multi-sector development plans to address the priorities of conflict-affected people is incomplete. However, the aspect with regards to strengthening institutions was successful.*
	Efficiency	*Services and support to the region have been cost-effective and efficiently managed by respective sectors in the two Provinces.*
	Gender Dimension	*Gender-parity and gender-sensitive project interventions are mainstreamed in institutional practices in the two Provincial Councils/UNDP's overall activities.*

Outcome ***Impact and Sustainability***	*Positive? Negative? Neutral?*	*- Positive impact and sustainability evident in the region on the output on strengthening institutional capacity and service delivery work related to both Provincial Councils. -Negative impact in terms of 'enabling the Northern Provincial Council to produce strategic plans to address the priority of conflict affected people'.*

4. Recommendations

This Lessons Learned exercise has brought to light the substantive undertaking of activities by the UNDP under the PBF assisted projects and their positive and negative impacts. While commending the overall interventions made by the UNDP in its sincere attempts to initiate reconciliation and Transitional Justice mechanisms, the following set of recommendations are offered for consideration, hoping they would provide contextual information for any future interventions, as overall lessons learned.

1. **Theory of Change Approach** – If this approach is being used, then it is recommended that it is used throughout the whole project management cycle, and not only at the design stage. The theories behind strategic actions should be understood, monitored and the context changes, be adapted accordingly. It should not be used as a static approach, similar to the logical or results framework approach. This would curb the usefulness of the approach for fluid contexts.

2. **Problem Driven Iterative Adaption (PDIA) Approach** – For projects working on peacebuilding or working in fluid dynamic contexts, the use of static programming tools such as the Results Based Framework is not recommended. Its limitations have been discussed earlier. Instead, the usage of a PDIA approach is proposed. This thinking has gained a lot of traction among the development community and comes recommended for state crafting work dealing with sensitive fluid contexts. "Many reform initiatives fail to achieve sustained improvements in performance because organisations use mimicry to camouflage the absence of real change. That is, they pretend to reform by changing what policies and organisational structures look like rather than what they actually do" (Andrews, Pritchett et al: 2012). *PDIA is anchored on transformation of institutions with a focus on "what is actually done" to ensure sustained performance improvement*, rather than focusing on policy change or how organisations look like (structure).

3. **Relationship Management** – People trust people, and people are more likely to be supportive or collaborate with people they can relate to. This human factor needs to be considered in projects looking to influence people and institutional change. Therefore, it is recommended that relationship building approaches and techniques be utilised to ensure project results. Specifically, in peacebuilding contexts its recommended that the UN prioritize the development of strong working relationships built on trust, understanding and partnership, moving away from donor-beneficiary approaches.

4. **Programming Approach** – While keeping in mind the invisible border that the UN or projects such as these must operate within, it is recommended that programming in a more committed

fashion, takes responsibility to create lasting change especially where gaps are evident. It is an inherent imperative that needs to be addressed as described earlier.

a. **Reporting and Knowledge Management** – Projects, especially those operating in fluid and unstable contexts must undertake substantive documentation, reporting and knowledge management. The presence of which will empower stakeholders to take holistic responsibility and ownership.
b. **Proactive Monitoring and Risk Management** – As stated above, active monitoring, usage of findings, risk management and strategic adaptive management needs to form the engine that drives these types of projects. It enables projects to respond to changing situations, people, issues, while still aiming at achieving the expected results.
c. **Proactive Gender related Programming** – Opportunities abound in dynamic contexts to change the status quo of especially women, and these need to be capitalised upon. Clearer understanding about gender issues needs to be actively built into programmes, and dedicated activities implemented.
d. **Inclusive Consultation and Communication** – While the UN RCO undertakes strategic guidance to the peacebuilding and reconciliation process, where the implementation is being handed over to a specific agency, its imperative that that agency is included in the design phase. It is understood though, that it may not be possible for the implementing agency to take part in all high level consultations and meetings, or when necessary. When persistent demands for inclusive dialogues and requests for a participatory exercise are made by direct stake-holders (who could also be potential spoilers) and representatives from the war-affected zones, through formal lines of communication given the peculiarity of the circumstances, the context and the purpose of the Peacebuilding Fund's rationale for intervention, an accommodative approach would be desirable. This would save acute criticism undermining the PBF's good intentions. Inclusivity in the Peacebuilding Board set up with a particular purpose, (unlike for the purpose of any other development project), is recommended, instead of rigid exclusivity. This could have ensured success of programmatic interventions as planned. The preponderant accusation of 'absence of consultation' when conceiving especially a peacebuilding matrix for the affected people (which is as important as any other mere development project) could have been avoided. On the other hand, it is also necessary that means of internal communication and information sharing is rigorously practiced so that projects may be consistently and effectively implemented.
e. **Documentation and record keeping** – Programme staff must be consistent in keeping up the good practices of keeping/maintaining documentation evidence on programmatic activities, especially in challenging programmatic areas of non-performance - diversion of plans and points of departure from the activities originally envisaged in the log frames, to justify the new course of actions. i.e. minutes of oversight committee meeting, project team meetings, letters of agreements.
f. **Improving service delivery** – The Northern and Eastern Provincial Councils', Planning Officers and Heads of Departments were in total command of the concept. All activities have been carried out with personal commitment by all of them, with no poignant condition that deserves attention, except for the appeal for the UNDP's sustained engagement in strengthening the planning units in the local government ministries and departments – a current regional requirement. Providing assistance for improvement of service delivery in other parts of these two regions too would be very beneficial. The success is attributed to the local adoption of the broader activity of "multi sector

development" spelt out by the UNDP office (under Project 2, Out put 2), to suit the regional imperatives on the ground. The flexibility accorded to the Provincial Councils to do so, was highly commended. This led to the community's ownership of the work and bottom-up-approaches of people's participation. Areas with multicultural communities such as in Trincomalee, also had high participation in such peace-dividends-related development activities.

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Annexures

Annex 01 Work Plan

Activity	08/1	08/2	08/3	08/4	09/1	09/2	09/3	09/4	10/1	10/2
Submission of Inception eport		6th								
UN internal review of Inception Report										
Secondary documentation and policy review*										
Fieldwork in Colombo (KPIs only)										
Fieldwork in North and East (KPIs only Workshops)										
Writing and Analysis of Draft Lessons Learnt Report										
Submission of Draft Final Report						14th				
UN Internal Review of draft Final Report										
UN Submission of Feedback on draft Final Report							26th			
Validation meeting and presentation of results								28th		
Submission Final report										15th

Annex 02 Documents Requested and Received for Evaluation

Documents Requested	Received	Missing
Project Documents of 1 &2	30th July	
All mid-term evaluation reports of Project 1 and 2	Not conducted	
Log frame Analysis in the proposal	30th July	
P1&2 Annual work plan and financial budgets	1st Aug (partial AWP provided)	SCRM – AWP/Budgets for Dec2016-Apr2017 ONUR – all AWP/Budgets after Aug 2016
P1&2 Annual reports and donor reports	1st Aug	
P1&2 Steering Committee meeting minutes and associated reports	1st Aug - PBF Board 1st & 3rd meeting minutes	All Technical Working Group or Project Steering Committee minutes for P1 & P2
UNDP's Country Programme Document	1st Aug	
MOUs with Implementing Partner Institutions	1 Aug Reports on LOAs	LOA/MOU
Peacebuilding Priority Plan	1st Aug	
Strategic Plans Developed by the Northern Provincial administration and Eastern Provincial administration (Project 2 Output 1) & District Plans of Jaffna, Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi (North)and Trincomalee (East)		Northern Province Strategic Plan: Not submitted Easter Province Strategic Plan: Submitted. District Plans: Only Jaffna - Submitted
Any documentation Proof for Producing and strengthening revenue generation to support development activities (Project 2 Out put 2)		Not submitted
Comprehensive District Development Plan (ONUR)	N/A	
PowerPoint presented to the UN on the PPF front.(SCRM)		Not submitted
Communication Material		Not submitted
National PB Perception Survey	1st Aug	

Annex 03 Activity Plan

The Activity Plan included secondary document review; qualitative and quantitative data collection and the analysis based on the proposed frameworks of Realist Impact Evaluation and DAC method. The findings from the various tools and the literature review were used to triangulate the overall conclusions, lessons learned, recommendations for moving forward and possibly guidelines for replication.

i. **Secondary Document Review** – This included an analysis of the project documents, project reports, steering committee minutes, monitoring and evaluation reports, consultation reports etc. Due consideration to the time limitations was given. The Team also drew upon CEPA's institutional knowledge, information and understanding of the resettlement and reconciliation work in the North and the East undertaken on behalf of the UN, UNDP and UNICEF to further contextualize and build upon the analysis.

ii. **Data Collection** – The basic project document review and the data collection actions were conducted simultaneously. Interviews with partners, stakeholder organisations and other counterparts using the agreed methodology, tools and questions in the inception phase were conducted. These involved: Key partner interviews with stakeholders and key project staff from UNDP, SCRM and ONUR. One workshop was conducted in the Eastern Province (instead of two, initially envisaged to be carried out in both the North and the East) with the relevant Provincial Secretariat staff, Chief/Deputy Chief Secretary Planning, Secretary, Finance Planning, relevant provincial councilors, District Secretariat staff i.e. Divisional Secretaries, Director Planning and if required with the relevant District Secretariat as well as community members and beneficiaries. Care was taken to solicit the experiences of female community members and councilors. It was decided not to hold a workshop in the North as the Provincial Plan and two District Plans were not prepared contrary to the information in the project documents. Hence, only KPIs were carried out in the North with the stake holders.

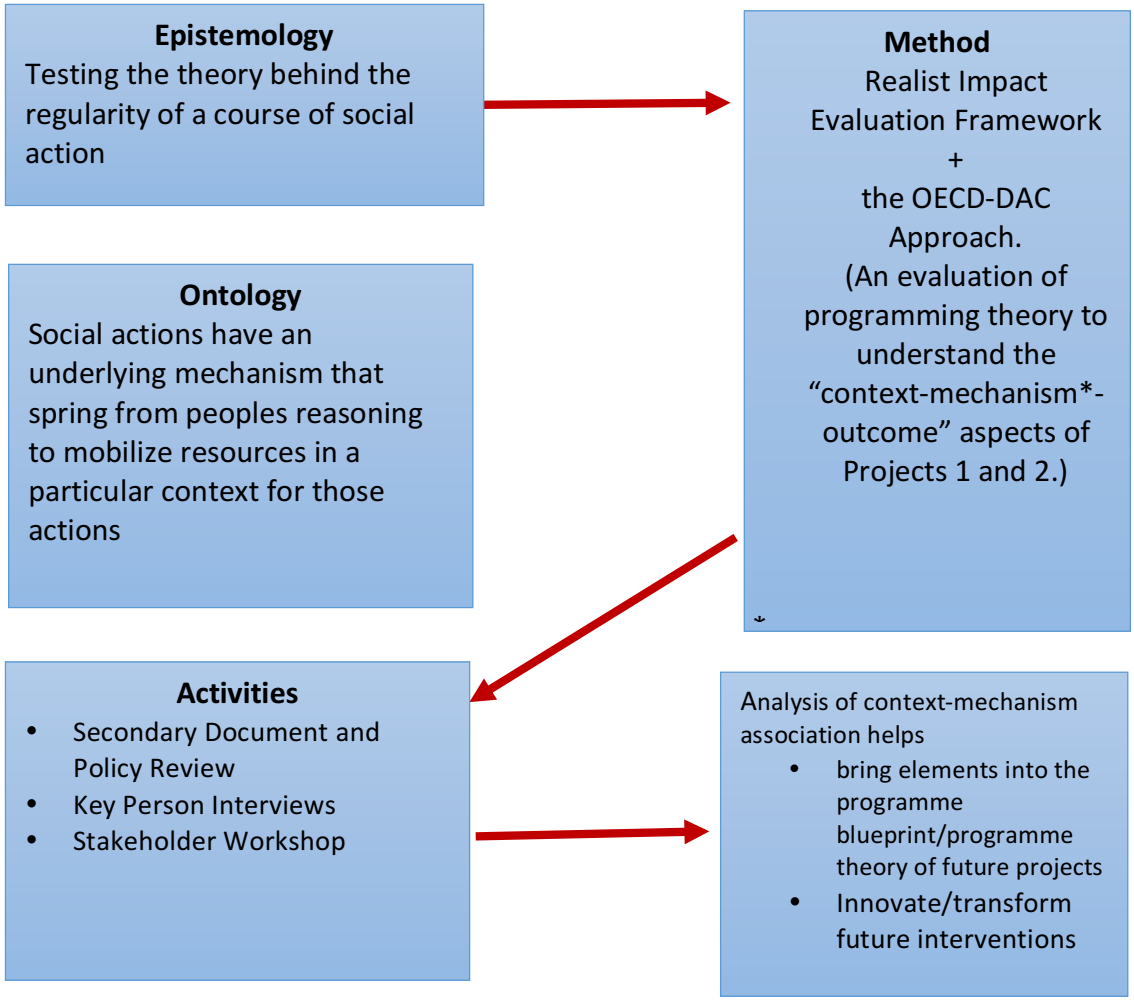
iii. **Analysis and Evaluation** – The study team collated the information, secondary quantitative data, case stories and other material collected, to analyze the findings of the study using the agreed methodological frameworks.

iv. **Draft Report** – The study team drafted the report for this purpose, keeping in mind stated expectations and methodological frameworks. The Draft Report was submitted for informal peer review at CEPA before the draft was finalized for submission to UNDP.

v. **Validation** – Following feedback, the study team presented the document and its findings at a validation meeting, hosted by the UNDP's Joint team. The main findings and recommendations were presented in an elaborative interactive manner conducive for constructive lessons learning.

vi. **Final Lessons Learnt Report** – The document was finalized using the final round of comments received from the validation and submitted back to UNDP/Resident Coordinator's Office as per agreed stipulations.

Annex 04 Flow of Activities and Data Collection Instrument



Data Collection Instrument: Draft Semi-Structured Questions for Interview with Project Partners/ Stakeholders

For SCRM

Context Related Questions

- As you understand it, how did SCRM come into being? (Probe: What was the context behind the intervention? What were the contextual assumptions made?)
- Why did such a project architecture make sense? What other ideas were discarded? (Probe: Other conflict transformation theories and thinking? What really went on?)
- Had the context for peacebuilding and reconciliation been different, (similar to 2009), would these assumptions have been valid? (Probe: How would the mechanism have looked different? What would it look like in 2020?)
- Was the PPP aligned with the Sri Lankan government's peacebuilding and reconciliation priorities?

- In the design of the Secretariat, was the socio-political situation of all provinces taken into account? (Probe: How so? Can you tell me any particularities? What was discarded?)
- What could have been the features (i.e. Individuals/Institutions) of the context that helped the project to achieve its outcome?
- According to you, what were three key things that worked in this given context?
- Similarly, what was one main thing that did not work, when considering the context? (Probe: Perhaps more than one thing?)
- In the design of the Secretariat, in what particular ways were the issues of women taken into account? Was it effective?

Outcome Related Questions

- Is there any generalizable knowledge that you wish to share based on this project implementation process?

For ONUR

Context Related Questions

- How did ONUR first initiate its partnership with the UNPBF? (Probe: What was the context behind the intervention? What were the contextual assumptions made?)
- What was the value addition that the UNPBF brought to ONUR? (Examples)
- Why did such a partnership make sense? How did it affect ONUR's approach to conflict transformation?
- What could have been the features (i.e. Individuals/Institutions) of the context that helped the project to achieve its outcome?
- In the design of the ONUR- PBF, was the socio-political situation of all provinces taken into account?
- In the design of ONUR what particular ways was the issues of women taken into account? Was it effective?
- According to you, what were three key things that worked in this given context?
- Similarly, what was one main thing that did not work, when considering the context? (Probe: Perhaps more than one thing?)

Outcome Related Questions

- Is there any generalizable knowledge that you wish to share based on this project implementation process?
- Would ONUR be able to carry out its work in a different context?

For Provincial Councils/ District Secretariats

Context Related Questions

- What was the context in 2015 that enabled PBF to work with the Provincial Councils, that was not conducive in 2009?
- What was the value addition that the UNPBF brought to Provincial Councils? (Examples)

- Why was a development plan necessary in this context? How is it different from *Uthuru Vasantheya* and *Nagenahira Udanaya*? Does the current development plan incorporate elements from older national plans (i.e. former government initiatives for the provinces)?
- What could have been the features (i.e. Individuals/Institutions) of the context that helped the project to achieve its outcomes in the North and East?
- In the design of the partnership between the Provincial Councils and the PBF, how was contextual information gathered?
    - How was the situation of women factored in?
- What are the unique challenges that women face in this district/province that the project attends to? Are you satisfied with the interventions? Do you feel it was effective?
- According to you, what were three key things that worked in this given context?
- Similarly, what was one main thing that did not work, when considering the context? (Probe: Perhaps more than one thing?)

Outcome Related Questions

- Is there any generalizable knowledge that you wish to share based on this project implementation process?
- Do you feel that the competencies of the staff employed was adequate to carry out this work?
- What resources would you need to carry out this work in other provinces? How?

For Programmatic Staff at ONUR/SCRM

Mechanism Related Questions

- Have the ONUR, SCRM and Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils and other partner institutions achieved their intended results of PROJCT 1 and 2?

- Probe based on results framework on impact and sustainability (positive, negative, neutral)
    - In your opinion, has the PPP been successful? Did you feel adequately consulted with regards to its development? Did you feel it incorporated national interests sufficiently?
    - You received technical and financial assistance for a variety of activities through the UNDP. (Probe: Illustrate ways in which it assisted your programming to be successful?)
- Was this assistance helpful? Relevant? Please explain how
- What was the gender focused activities that were undertaken? Are you satisfied with consultation/ participation in activities? What could have been done better?
- And how it impacted upon the communities you supported? (positive/ negative/ neutral)
- How would you do things differently next time around?
    - Did technical assistance adapt to the fluctuating conditions in the context? Please explain how?
    - Based on the context we discussed, do you feel that the technical and financial assistance received was adequate to counter the contextual barriers and deficiencies?
    - To what extent did UNDP's interventions targeted peace building in the war-affected regions and the rest of regions of the country in achieving Output 1, 2 and 3 of PROJECT 1?
    - Were you satisfied with the costs and benefits of the interventions?

- Was it in reasonable proportion to the expected outputs? (probe – use figures from results framework + financial reports, especially related to gender)
- Were you satisfied with the proportional financial breakdown between various activities; between input categories? (eg contractual services vs grants)
    - Were technical assistance and finances provided in a timely and cost effective manner?
- Did it allow/ facilitate sequential building of interventions? Did it allow for synergies? (probe – How it worked)

For UNDP Staff

Context Related Questions

- Have the ONUR, SCRM and Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils and other partner institutions achieved their intended results of Project 1 and 2?
- The UNDP provided technical assistance for research, analysis, and a wide variety of activities to SCRM/ONUR/PCs. How were these delivered? Did you feel they were successfully done? What could have been improved? (Probe: For example, how was the strategic analysis and tracking of PB initiatives mapping undertaken?)
- How well would you evaluate the flow of communication between the different parties (The PBF Secretariat, the PBF board, Executive Board and IRF/PBF Technical Committees)?
- Do you feel the activities designed were adequate to meet the expected outputs?
- Could you explain the coordination functions and the capacity development that IRF and PBF provided to implementing agencies?
- Could you explain the ways in which the RCO communication unit disseminated the best practices of the IRF and PPP to the PBF partners, especially SCRM?
- We understand that a national survey on peacebuilding was conducted. How well did this feed into national policy making and, in particular, the development and activities of SCRM?
- What was the mechanism that you used to deliver the programme strategies (inputs/ resources?)
- How did you leverage programme mechanism against barriers in the context?
- Were resources provided adequate to the expected deliverables of the project?
- To what extent did UNDP's interventions targeted peace building in the war-affected regions and the rest of regions of the country in achieving Output 1, 2 and 3 of Project 1?
- To what extent were the costs and benefits of the interventions in reasonable proportion to the expected outputs? (probe – use figures from results framework + financial reports, especially related to gender)
- Were you satisfied with the proportional breakdown between various activities; between input categories? (eg contractual services vs grants)
- Can you describe how the gender allocation was utilized? Was it effective?
- Were services provided in a timely and cost effective manner?
- Did it allow/ facilitate sequential building of interventions?
- Is there any generalizable knowledge that you wish to share based on this project implementation process?

General

Mechanism Related Questions

- What was the mechanism in your opinion, that influenced the confidence of the communities that you worked with?
- How did this happen? (Probe – on things - people/places- outside the resources & strategies)
- What mechanism has been used to measure the impact of the activities on people? what were the findings?
- Do you feel the technical and financial assistance provided for the tasks were adequate?
- Were they qualified personnel to carry out the interventions?
- How would you evaluate the impact made on gender specific issues?
- What were the particular programming elements that focused on the situation on women and girls? (probe – how it worked)

Outcome Related Questions

- Do you feel the project(s) adapted to the fluctuating conditions in the context? Please explain how?

Provincial Workshop Format

Agenda : September 6, 2018 (9am – 1pm to be conducted in Tamil or English)

- **Welcome and Introduction to the Lessons Learned Exercise (30 minutes)**
- **Focus Group Discussion and Group Work (3 and a half hours)**

  - Focus Group Discussion: (9:30:10:30 a.m.)

  -Group Exercise: (10:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.)
- **Vote of thanks and End of Session with Lunch**

Details of the Agenda of the Workshop

1. **Welcome and Introduction to the Lessons Learned Exercise (30 minutes)**
2. **Focus Group Discussion**

(Context Related Questions)

- Tell us about the context in which you started to work with the UNDP.
- Briefly explain work carried out for UNDP from your respective Depts? (How did your respective Depts. benefit from these activities?) Give us examples
- How did it fulfill your community's needs? Tell us what change you witness now compared to before the interventions, with the introduction of Technical Assistance, Training? Enhanced IT facilities. Cross-regional visits and learnings?

(Mechanism Related Questions)

- How has the assistance received from the UNDP helped the Provincial Administration to improve capacity for service delivery?
- How do you think this benefited the people? Give us examples.
- Were these activities cost effective? (Probe: Perhaps more than one thing?)
- Were the strategies helpful? Were theresources for the activities adequate? Were there qualified staff to carry on the interventions?
- Were there adequate women's participation? How did you assess their involvement?

(Beneficiaries can be encouraged to speak more on this)

Tea/Coffee Break

3. **Group Work**

(Outcome Related Questions)

FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE BASED ON THE FACILITIES EXTENDED BY THE UNDP TO THE PROVINCIAL COUNCILS AND DISTRICT SECRETARIATS)

(Post it activity – where each group member writes out the 3 things that worked (1 color) and 1 thing that didn't work (color2). Then as a group they prioritize the lesson; and discuss why these are the priorities.)

1. According to you, what were three key things that you are aware of that worked well (when considering the regional context: funds; qualified staff or gender parity) with the UNDP's interventions with regards to Development Plans, Strengthening Institutional Capacity enhancements for good governance?

2. What are the 3 things that did not work, (when considering the regional context: funds; qualified staff or gender parity) with the UNDP's interventions with regards to Development Plans, Strengthening Institutional Capacity enhancements etc.?
3. Are there any other lesson that you wish to share with us for future work?

End of Session with Lunch

Annex 05 List of Interviewees and Participants at the Workshop

UN/UNDP

1. Programme Coordination Specialist, Ms. Dushanthi Fernando
2. Project Manager, Mr. Mohamed Muzain
3. Technical Specialist, Ms. Krisha Velupillai
4. Advisor Peacebuilding and Development, Ms. Geeta Sabarwal
5. Programme Analyst- Governance (former), Ms. Amanthi Wickremasinghe
6. UN PBSO Desk Officer, Mr Patrice Chiwota
7. Peacebuilding Specialist (former), Ms Zoe Keeler
8. Psychosocial Analyst (WHO), Ms. Sandhani Rajapakse

SCRM

1. Director General – Mr. Mano Tittawela
2. Director PBB- Mr. Tharaka Hettiarachchi

ONUR

1. Director General- Mr. Jayasinghe
2. Former DG – Mr. Maliyadda
3. Director – Mr. Amb. Danesh Casie Chetty
4. Deputy Director Peacebuilding- Ms. Sanduni Ariyawansa

Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Council

1. Additional Secretary – Mr. Boralessa

Northern Provincial Council and Jaffna District Secretariat

1. Chief Minister, Northern Provincial Council Hon. Justice C.V. Wigneswaran,
2. Chief Secretary, Northern Provincial Council, Mr. A. Pathinathan.
3. Director, Planning, Provincial Council, Mr. Umakanthan.
4. Commissioner, Department of Motor Traffic, Ms. S. Sujeeva.
5. Deputy Chief Secretary, Personnel and Training (MDTU), Mr. A. Sivabanasundaran.
6. Commissioner for Local Government, Mr. Patrick Diranjan.
7. District Secretary, Jaffna District Secretariat, Mr. N. Vethanayahan.

Other Stakeholder KPIs (Civil Society members)

1. Independent Consultant, Member of the Board of Office on Missing Persons, Mr. Mirak Raheem.
2. Former Deputy Chief Secretary Planning, Eastern Provincial Council Mr. N. Mahendraraja.
3. Head of ZOA international, INGO Representative, UNPBF Board Mr. Raga Alphonsus.

Participants at the Workshop in the Eastern Provincial Council on September 6, 2018

1. Additional Director, Planning, Mr. M.Munazir
2. Commissioner Local Government, Mr. M.Y Saleem
3. Provincial Director, Dept. of Rural Development, Ms. U.Kavitha
4. Deputy Chief Secretary, Provincial Treasury, Mr. I.M Huzain

5. Deputy Chief Secretary – Personnel and Training, Ms. J. J. Muralitharan
6. Commissioner, Motor Traffic, Mr. M.I.M. Mahir
7. Deputy District Planning Officer, District Secretariat, Trincomalee- Ms. Vijayathasan
8. Former Project Coordinator UNDP-GLED, Ms B. Sivapiragasam
9. Director (MDTU), Ms. M.M Halida
10. Govt. Veterinary Surgeon, Dept. of Animal Production and Health, Dr. Ms. N.S.M. Nawsath
11. Chief Accountant, Provincial Treasury, Mr. B. Konesh
12. Farm Manager, DDA(Ext) office, Trincomalee, Mr. J. Jeizel Jazaad
13. Director Planning, PPS, Mr. P. Gunaretnam
14. Assistant Director Planning, PPS, Ms. V.I.G. Johnpillai
15. Beneficiaries
16. Women's Rural Development Society (WRDS), Kaluwanchikudy, Ms. S. Srimathy
17. WRDS, Kaluwanchikudy, Ms. M. Sunitha
18. WRDS, Kaluwanchikudy, Ms. S. Nivaharan
19. WRDS, Thampalakamam, Ms. T.Vijayaluxmi

Annex 06 Terms of Reference

INDEPENDENT LESSONS LEARNED EXERCISE ON PEACEBUILDING EFFORTS IN SRI LANKA BY ASSESSING TWO PROJECTS;

Project 1: "Support to Sri Lanka to promote national unity and reconciliation efforts through targeted technical assistance to ONUR and the Northern Provincial administration and Eastern Provincial administration"

Project 2 :Support to the Sri Lanka PBF Secretariat and Government Secretariat for Coordination of Reconciliation Mechanisms.

Reports to: Technical Specialist – Transitional Justice – UNDP Programme Coordination Specialist – Peacebuilding – UN RCO

Duty Station: Colombo, Sri Lanka. Suggested travel to the project sites necessary to implement the lessons learned to be specified in the proposal

Type of Contract: Contract for Goods and Services

Language required: English

Duration of Assignment: 02 Months

Contract Start Date: July/September 2018

Application Deadline: 6 July / September 2018

1. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION:

In June 2015, Sri Lanka began accessing the Immediate Response Facility (IRF) of the Peacebuilding Fund through a joint project developed and submitted by UNHCR and UNICEF to support the resettlement of IDPs to land released by the new Government from former High Security Zones. Later, in line with an IRF concept note which is agreed between the Government and the UN in April 2015, work began on three more IRF projects. Out of these three projects, one to be led by OHCHR in support of the accountability and transitional justice process, and a second one led by UNDP and the RCO in "**support to the Sri Lanka PBF Secretariat and the Government Secretariat for Coordination of Reconciliation Mechanisms"** (herein referred to as the Project 1), to support the joint preparation of the Peacebuilding Priority Plan. The third project titled "**Support to Sri Lanka to promote national unity and reconciliation efforts through targeted technical assistance to ONUR and the Northern Provincial administration and Eastern Provincial administration"** (herein referred to as the Project 2) was implemented by UNDP and included specialized technical assistance to the Office of National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR), and each of the Northern and Eastern provincial administrations. In this assignment, the UNDP requires to conduct a complete independent lesson learnt for some parts

of Project 1 and the entire Project 2.

Following a series of events that took place in the country's political transition, the Projects were set up to support the State to progress its peacebuilding and reforms agenda in the country - a pledge that formed the basis of both the President's election manifesto as well as the campaigning that preceded the election of the National Unity Government. This pledge also transpired into the co-sponsoring of UNHRC Resolution 30/1, "Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka." Thus, through these projects, the UN aimed at supporting the State, across multiple institutions that were set up or strengthened to promote peacebuilding and reconciliation in Sri Lanka.

2. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

THE PROJECTS:

The scope and objectives of the afore mentioned projects have been described in the "Project Documents" as follows;

Project 1:

Although the Project 1 is comprised with 2 Outcomes, the scope to conduct the independent lessons learnt exercise in this project is limited only to Outcome 1.

Outcome 1 – **United Nations Peacebuilding Support in Sri Lanka is strategically positioned to support national priorities, arrived at through a fully consultative and inclusive process, and is effectively delivered in a coordinated and harmonized manner**

The relevant Outputs to be considered are as follows: *Output 1* – Peacebuilding Priority Plan developed and mechanism established to support coordinated project development and implementation *Output 2* – Effective implementation of the UN's Peacebuilding initiatives, with attention to coordination, evidenced based interventions and high-impact results *Output 3* – Secretariat for Coordinating the Reconciliation Mechanisms established within the Prime Minister's Office to ensure coordinated and coherent Government strategy to progress reconciliation and develop and implement transitional justice mechanisms

Project 2:

Project 2 has only one Outcome which should be considered completely. Outcome 1 - **"Sri Lanka society with a well-coordinated and coherent system to advance national unity and reconciliation among its people."**

The related Outputs are as follows: *Output 1:* Key mechanisms and processes (elements of a roadmap) for national unity and reconciliation commenced under the guidance of ONUR

Output 2: Northern Provincial administration and Eastern Provincial administration enabled to produce strategic plans and strengthen revenue generation to support development activities that address the priorities of conflict affected people.

THE ASSIGNMENT:

Against the background, the UN is looking to commission an independent third-party lesson learned exercise of the Projects' performance, that would provide evidence of the project's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability in achieving its objectives.

1. *Relevance:* The exercise will assess the degree to which the project takes into account the local context and development problems. The exercise will also review the extent to which the project design was logical and coherent, and it will assess the link between activities and expected results, and between results and objectives to be achieved.
2. *Effectiveness:* The exercise will assess the extent to which the Project's objectives have been achieved, compared to the overall project purpose. In evaluating effectiveness, it is useful to consider: I) if the planning activities were consistent with the overall objectives and project purpose; 2) the analysis of principal factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives.
3. *Efficiency:* Using a range of cost analysis approaches, from the elaborate cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis, to cost-efficiency analysis, to a quick cost comparison, the exercise will assess how well did the project produce the products and services it committed itself to deliver; how do costs affect the sustainability of the results;
4. *Impact:* The exercise will assess any credible evidence and the main impact effectively achieved by the Project in the context of reference.
5. *Sustainability:* The exercise will assess the project capacity to produce and to reproduce benefits over time. In evaluating the project sustainability, it is useful to consider to what extent intervention benefits will continue even after the project is concluded and the principal factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the project sustainability.

Additionally, and outside of the core projects results frameworks, the exercise will also aim at assessing the design logic of the projects. Particular emphasis should be set to include recommendations that would help inform both the design of future interventions as well as guide ongoing programming under the framework of the PPP. Specifically, in regard to interventions funded by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), which have been designed to take forward some of the initiatives and logic behind the project under review. (Please refer the scope of work, enclosed)

3. RESPONSIBILITIES – EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

EXPECTED OUTPUTS:

1. An inception report is produced outlining the workplan, methodology and agreed on.
The consulting company / firm should develop a very comprehensive inception report which should include the workplan, methodology, key questions planned to be asked to the stakeholders and the justification for the proposed approach. The report should not be more than a 10 pager with font size 11.
2. A complete final lesson learnt report is produced and presented to the UN joint team.
A draft report should be developed and presented to the UNDP / UNRCO for initial comments and feedbacks. Thereafter, a validation session on the findings and recommendations, using an interactive presentation should be conducted to the UN Joint team. The final report should have incorporated all the feedbacks and comments and submitted.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENT / DELIVERABLES:

Tasks	End Product/ deliverables	Approximate Time frame
Inception Report: Work plan and methodology/approach for the lessons learned exercise with sufficient justification to be included with methods of data collection, key questions and timelines.	Inception report	10 August 2018
Draft Lessons Learned Report shared for comments / feedback.	Draft report	14 September 2018
Validation session with UN Joint team: A presentation of main findings and recommendations, using interactive methodology.	Presentation	28 September 2018
Final lessons learnt report – incorporated feedbacks from Validation	Final Report	12 October 2018 (made on 15 October, 2018)