PeaceNexus
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FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The following are key findings and lessons learned emerging from the implementation of cross-border projects based on feedback received from PBF secretariats and colleagues engaged in the implementation of PBF funded cross-border projects.

Key ndings:

The General Focus of PBF cross-border projects is usually community security, cross-border dialogue involving communities and local officials, social cohesion, return and reintegration of migrants, refugees, IDPs, transhumance, inclusive conflict prevention mechanisms, disaster preparedness.

There is usually a stronger demand for support in the area of reintegration of returnees' migrants/refugees/IDPs or durable solution rather than to protect migrants, refugees and other displaced people.

In 2019 there has been an increasing demand for projects addressing the impact of climate

Use of UNVs (national and International): the widespread recruitment of UNVs, especially

- Community leaders either or not part of the conflicts should also be associated to the understanding of the context that will help to analyze the conflict

- Map existing stakeholders and interventions

  Desk review and mapping of expertise on the conflict (including through deep semi structured interventions of regional Security think tanks experts, Foundations local experts such as ICG analysts, specialized journalists), including capacities for peace

- Include a thorough assessment of implementation capacities in peripheral border areas (UN, state authorities, civil society, local peacebuilding organisations etc.)

- Anticipate risks, including but not limited to security risks (reputational, operational, political)

- Pay special attention to gender and youth considerations as well as the role of marginalized groups

To consolidate national ownership, ensure to involve national stakeholders through information sharing, decision making during the design process, official launch (and closing) ceremonies, inclusion in project governance mechanisms, as implementing partners etc. The Prodoc should clearly spell out how national ownership is ensured.

- Sustainability and exit strategy: It is important to build partnerships and foster ownership of local authorities in particular with a strong advocacy towards Governments to increase investments in border areas. In addition, it is very important that cross-border projects include right from the get-go a partnership strategy with key partners to ensure coordination and complementarity with other donors and IFIS to develop scaling-up and catalytic effects and resource mobilization opportunities in line with PBF's catalytic nature. (For example, the PBF funded pilot Chad-Cameroun cross-border project has now been replicated and scaled-up by UNDP as part of its Lake Chad Stabilization facility).

- Risk Matrix: Many cross-border projects are high-risk projects, implemented in rapidly changing environments requiring an adaptive peacebuilding approach which should be in-built in the project document and specific implementation modalities, like third party implementation, etc.. ensuring timely access to projects areas where security might be an issue. Contingency planning should also be annexed to project documents especially for those targeting highly insecure areas. A BCP - business continuity plan (in order to "stay and deliver") could also be integrated, according to the different security phases derived from contingency plans scenarios envisaged.

Process: proposed PBF methodology for the development of cross-border projects

Because of the regional / cross-border nature of these type of projects, PBSO may play a more prominent role in initiating discussions amongst the RCs and country teams on cross-border project ideas to jump start the discussions amongst the different countries.

Once the discussions are initiated, the RCs are in the driver's seat and play a crucial role in conceiving, developing and boosting the implementation of cross-border projects as well as assuring their visibility. These projects should be treated/considered as flagship projects for the UN to catalyze additional funding and scale up international attention to often neglected areas of ongoing or potential conflicts.

The RCs will decide in consultation with PBSO which country should have the lead and which UN (RUNOs) or non-UN partner (NUNO) is best suited to develop and implement the project based on operational, thematic and technical capacities. Because of the complex nature of cross-border projects, as a general rule, the RCs should limit the number of recipient agencies to 2 or 3 maximum, to ensure the effective coordination of activities. The selection of RUNOs and NUNOs should be based on the following criteria:

1) the implementing entity should have either a presence in the targeted regions or the capacity to rapidly establish a presence in these areas (use UNDSS Map to assess presence)
2) the Implementing entity should have sound procurement capacity and a high delivery rate and the capacity to fast-track the implementation activities in the framework of the cross-border project;
3) the Implementing entity should have the thematic expertise, not only the mandate, in the specific priority area of the cross-border projects on all sides of the borders.
Once the Implementing entity/ies is decided the RC will decide which Implementing entity will have the lead, based on which of the entities has the strongest capacity (both thematic and procurement) to develop and coordinate the implementation of the project across the targeted borders.

If the RCO has a Peace and Development Advisor (PDA), it is highly recommended that the PDAs from all the countries be involved from the inception phase of the project to ensure coherence and quality control at all stages of the project starting from the conflict analysis, which is a crucial stage that will determine the focus of the project. PBF Secretariat, if established in the countries should also play an important role throughout the design, implementation and M&E of these projects.

Role of Regional Offices: RUNOs and NUNOs regional offices, as well as DCO Regional Directors and DPPA regional offices can be involved in the preparation of cross-border projects, especially if there is a need for enhanced cooperation of partners. However, since it is the country offices and national Government counterparts that eventually sign the prodoc, there needs to be a full ownership of national counterparts of the cross-border projects.

While the PBF cannot allocate funding to regional offices, cross-border and regional projects can foresee funding to cover technical support missions from regional offices, if need be.
Because of the remoteness of the border regions, which are often less developed than other regions in fragile settings, and receive less international attention and support, it is very important to develop a thorough local conflict analysis, as much as possible locally owned, to ensure that proposed interventions address the very grievances of the population and current conflict drivers. As a good practice this conflict analysis should be the fruit of a joint mission (combined with joint analysis of data, results from monitoring exercises) led by the recipient entities of the project in the targeted border regions.

Regarding the financing for the development of PBF Cross-border projects, if the targeted countries have a PBF Secretariat the costs of development of preparatory assistance can be charged to the different Secretariats. In the absence of the Secretariat there are a number of options: 1) the RUNOs advance funds on a cost-recovery basis, once the project is approved; 2) Country teams can request to the PBF to deploy Surge support payed by the PBF (this request should be made well in advance); 3) country teams can use funds for conflict prevention/peacebuilding from the UNDP/DPPA Joint Programme, if there is already a PDA in place.

Joint workshop (in either capitals or border regions if possible) with national and local authorities, CSOs, partners present in the areas, thematic and geographic experts etc.. to further refine the conflict analysis, the priority areas, the implementation strategy, partnerships, etc.

Validation from the RCs from the relevant countries and development of a draft Concept Note based on the mission report, to be informally shared with PBSO by the RC in the lead country

PBSO endorses and provides initial comments to be integrated to the Prodoc

RUNOs and NUNOs from different countries should, if possible, organise a retreat, including other implementing partners, in one of the countries (ideally border region) and develop together the project document, integrating initial PBSO comments

Informal sharing by the RC of the revised Prodoc to PBSO for a final green light

PBSO shares with PRG and holds a PAC meeting

If the project is approved, PBF gives green light to the RCs to collect the signatures from all involved countries, which can take longer than the average time to obtain a signature from only 1 country, so the Country Teams have to put a strategy in place to ensure timely signatures. PBF secretariats when in place can also support facilitate such process.

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MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS

Because of the complexity of these projects, the design of the startup phase, including the rapid set-up of the coordination mechanisms is very important. It I key to establish a project implementation unit with at a minimum a Programme Coordinator and an M&E expert.

Effective coordination is key to success in the design and implementation of cross-border and regional projects. Reoccurring challenges already present with multi-agency programming in a given country become highlighted in this context as the number of recipient organizations and

Membership in the governance mechanisms can include RCs, heads of agencies, and government representatives including local government authorities where appropriate. Project governance meetings should take place every six months and should alternate

MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION FOR CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMMING

The M&E approach for the cross-border or regional project should be outlined in section III b) of the PBF Project Document. The Project Results Framework can be found as Annex B to the same document. Please note that only one joint results framework is expected for the cross-border or regional project
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PBF expects one consolidated report for the project that should be coordinated by the lead agency with inputs from all recipient agencies, the same applies for the financial report. The report should focus on joint achievements and should NOT read as a compilation of inputs from 4 different organizations. For reporting, please use the PBF project progress report template available here: https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/fund/documents/guidelines

Meaningful M&E for peacebuilding is difficult and in addition, coordinating between UN agencies and between countries is a recognized challenge. However, in order to monitor dynamics and measure the impact of a cross-border or regional project, meaningful M&E is crucial and a priority. Aware of the challenge, PBF invests significant time and energy to get M&E considerations in place during project development and is available to support the development of M&E Systems where necessary. Feedback from RUNOs stressed that projects were greatly helped by designating clear reporting /coordination and M&E roles to ensure coherence.

Does the intended monitoring allow to measure outcome?

Monitoring

As part of the project design, a joint results framework for all countries needs to be developed outlining the outcomes, outputs and activities. Ideally, the joint results framework is developed by the technical Project Coordination body. Based on the joint results framework, a joint monitoring plan can be developed, identifying appropriate indicators, means of verifications and timing of data collection. Consider the necessity for aligned monitoring practices across the project to ensure comparable and meaningful data. The main purpose for the monitoring is to ensure evidence-based decision on project implementation and organizational learning. For further

to measure the intended changes.

Use a mix of M&E tools within the projects such as perception surveys and community-based monitoring.

Ensure that the collected data (e.g baseline survey) is deemed legitimate by all parties involved. Consider hiring experts acceptable to all sides, hiring experts from each country and/or engaging national actors in the process. The same is true for the endline data

Discuss early on how to track information across borders (e.g. in Type II projects that might involve refugees/returnees physically crossing borders).

DETAILED LIST OF CROSS-BORDER AND REGIONAL PROJECTS FINANCED BY PBF:

All project documents, reports and evaluations can be found on the MPTF Gateway links:

Somalia and Kenya (S-K): Refugees and Peacebuilding Cross border Pilot Project for voluntary return, co-existence and sustainable Reintegration in the areas of return (UNHCR, UNICEF, FAO, WFP, IOM, ILO). http://mptf.und p.org/factsheet/project/00104072

Liberia and Ivory Coast (L-IC):

CONCRETE EXAMPLES AND RESULTS OF CROSS-BORDER PROJECTS (BASED ON END OF PROJECT EVALUATIONS / ANNUAL REPORTS):

1) Latin America:

TYPE III: Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador (G-H-ES): Tri-national Project for Resilience and Social Cohesion in North Central America (UNDP, IOM, UNHCR).

- Focus: assistance to Central American migrants in transit (forced returnees): socio -economic reintegration; social cohesion; exchange of experience on reintegration; dialogue on Citizen security, trust-building

- Key results:

  1. 60,000 Migrants assisted with support of the National Network of Safe Spaces and UNHCR Guatemala between January 2018 and June 2019 .

  2. The project has triggered political dialogue amongst the 3 countries on these issues, with concrete outcomes including:

     - Guatemala: adoption of Regulations for the Refugee Chapter of the Migration Code
     - El Salvador: support to drafting of Special law for the prevention, rehabilitation and social reinsertion of members of gangs or maras
     - Honduras: support to drafting of Law on Prevention, Attention and Protection and Forcibly Displaced people

2) West Africa

TYPE I: Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger (BF-M-N): Promotion of community safety and social cohesion in the Liptako-Gourma region (UNDP).

- Focus: community security through inter and intra-community dialogue; trust building between the communities and the Security forces; access to basic services

- Key results:

     - 7,000 people involved in "peace caravans" across the three regions
     - 325 people (boys and girls) : training and income generation activities
     - 9 transhumance corridors identified (5 cross-border) and some realized in Niger
     - 2,400 people (Security Forces; Local Admin; Youth Org; different communities) involved in environment activities at local level
     - Enhanced coordination and experience sharing amongst the local authorities of the 3 countries thanks to rotating Joint Steering Committee of the project

3) East Africa

TYPE II: Burundi Tanzania (B-T): Preventing conflict and building peace through addressing the drivers of conflict and instability associated with forced displacement between Burundi and Tanzania (UNPD, UNHCR, IOM).

Focus: strengthening cross-border management and protection monitoring; supporting economic reintegration of returnees and host communities; supporting formal and informal dispute resolution mechanisms at local level.

Key results:

- 625 returnees and IDPs benefited from economic integration and co-existence between returnees, refugees and host communities fostered
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45%; and peace building competencies by 35%. There are 5 women-led households in TJ sustainably operating women livelihoods projects in TJ, which reduce the need for shuttle migration to KG (and thereby reducing grievances and risks from possible unfriendly conduct of border guards).

6) Chad-Central African Republic

PBF/IRF-269: Projet de restauration de la paix et du dialogue entre les communautés affectées par la transhumance transfrontalière (FAO-IOM)

- Better management of migratory flows and understanding of the dynamics of transhumance: through the strengthening of the border post in Chad, the DTM in the two countries which has made it possible to develop a regularly updated map;

- Strengthening community dialogue: through the establishment of dialogue committees on transhumance (sub-prefectures). Example: sub-prefect of Kabo was the mediator between the stockbreeders and the transhumants allowing to delimit the zones of pastures and agriculture without violence.

- Relaunch and Strengthening of the institutional dialogue: the first meeting on transhumance between the two countries will be held in December in Ndjamena (the last such meeting dates from 2012). In addition, a joint advocacy strategy has been developed in order to consolidate the achievements of this initiative. During the preparation of this meeting, direct contacts between the Ministries of Livestock and Foreign Affairs of the two countries resumed and this was notably materialized by the official communication from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chad to that of the CAR of the relaunch of the Chad-Central African Joint Commission (October 2019).

7) Colombia – Ecuador:

PBF/IRF-294: Fortalecimiento de capacidades institucionales para la protección de niñas, niños, adolescentes y jóvenes de la zona transfronteriza Colombia-Ecuador, afectadas por la violencia y el conflicto armado

- In Colombia, 41 public officials, 385 family members, 34 actors and Community leaders and 434 teachers participated in the design of local processes to prevent violence against children and recruitment, gender-based violence and sexual exploitationl. 356 women in Ecuador have started a training process to improve their link with local services and economic sustainability opportunities, surpassing broadly the goal of participants initially established. 181 schools linked between the two countries to strengthen them as protective environments for families, children and community. In Ecuador, 1207 children, adolescents and young people participate in non-formal initiatives for the promotion of a culture of peace in schools and participate in flexible education modalities. In Colombia, 6563 children and adolescents have participated in training sessions to strengthen their capacities around the protection and prevention of violence they face, recognizing the risks and threats of the border. 250 people victims of the armed conflict have been taken care of and advised by the Municipal Offices. Regarding the Registration System, an agreement has been signed with the Civil Registry in Ecuador to start identification, registration and documentation brigades, with the support of UNHCR, UN Women and UNICEF.

Toolkit for Evaluation of Cross-Border Projects – The centre for cross-border studies
http://www.crossborder.ie/site2015/wp-content/uploads/Toolkit-for-Evaluation-of-Cross-Border-Projects.pdf

ACCORD – Cross-border peacebuilding (2014)
https://www.c-r.org/accord/cross-border-peacebuilding

Regional Reconciliation in Africa: Strategies for Cross-border Transitional Justice, 2014
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318318102_Regional_Reconciliation_in_Africa_strategies_for_Cross-border_Transitional_Justice

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CROSSBORDER DIMENSION FOR PROMOTING PEACE AND RECONCILIATION, Liam O'Dowd and Cathal McCall, 2006
http://projects.mcrit.com/foresightlibrary/attachments/article/1154/McCall%20(2006)%20The%20Significance%20of%20the%20Cross-Border%20Dimension%20.pdf

Cross-Border Cooperation as Conflict Transformation: Promises and Limitations in EU Peacebuilding, 2019
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14650045.2019.1599518

Existing Approaches and Best Practices in Cross Border Peace Building and Conflict Mitigation and Strengthened CSOs Across the Ethio-Kenya Border
https://www.alnap.org/help-library/existing-approaches-and-best-practices-in-cross-border-peace-building-and-conflict

Peacebuilding in Libya: Cross-Border Transactions and The Civil Society Landscape, 2016 USIP
https://www.usip.org/publications/2016/06/peacebuilding-libya-cross-border-transactions-and-civil-society-landscape

Border Peacebuilding, CONCORDIS
http://concordis.international/border-peacebuilding/

'Sustaining Relative Peace', PAX, 2017
https://www.paxforpeace.nl/stay-informed/news/report-on-cross-border-peacebuilding-in-s