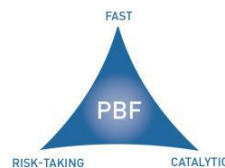# Evaluation of the Peacebuilding Fund portfolio in Côte d'Ivoire (2015-2019)

Final report

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**Acknowledgements**

Disclaimer:

Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
AFJCI	Federation of Women Lawyers in Côte d'Ivoire (Association des Femmes Juristes de la Côte d'Ivoire)
AQ	Assessment question
CDVR	Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Commission Dialogue, Vérité et Réconciliation)
CNDHCI	National Human Rights Commission of Côte d'Ivoire (Commission nationale des droits de l'homme de la Côte d'Ivoire)
CONARIV	National Commission for Reconciliation and Compensation of Victims (Commission Nationale pour la réconciliation et de l'indemnisation des victimes)
CSC	Civil Society Convention
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DGAT	Directorate-General for Territorial Administration (Direction générale de l'administration du territoire)
DPPA	Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (United Nations)
ENA	National Civil Service School (École Nationale d'Administration)
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDS	Defense and Security Forces (Côte d'Ivoire)
GBV/GBSV	Gender-based violence / Violence against women
GDP	Gross domestic product
GoCI	Government of Côte d'Ivoire
GYPI	Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative
IGA	Income-generating activity
I/NGO	International / Non-Governmental Organization
IOM	International Organization of Migration
IRF	Immediate Recovery Facility
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
MATD	Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (Ministère de l'administration du territoire et de la décentralisation)
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MEMIS	Ministry of State, Ministry of Interior and Security (Ministère d'État, Ministère de l'intérieur et de la sécurité)
MJDH	Ministry of Justice and Human Rights (Ministère de la justice, Droits de l'homme et libertés publiques)
MSCSP	Ministry of Solidarity, Social Cohesion and Fight against Poverty (Ministère de la solidarité, de la cohésion sociale et de la lutte contre la pauvreté)
NDP	National Development Programme
NUNO	Non-UN Recipient Organization
ONUCI	United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
OSCS	Observatory of Solidarity and Social Cohesion (Observatoire de la solidarité et de la cohésion sociale)
PACoP	Peacebuilding Support Plan (Programme d'appui à la consolidation de la paix)
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
PNCS	National Programme of Social Cohesion (Programme national de cohésion sociale)
PP1/PP2	Peacebuilding priority plan (phase 1 / phase 2)
PRF	Peacebuilding Recovery Facility
RCO	Office of the Resident Coordinator
RUNO	Recipient United Nations Organization
Nat.Com. SALW	National Commission to Combat the Proliferation and Illegal Movement of Small Arms and Light Weapons

SSR	Security Sector Reform
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNS	United Nations System
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
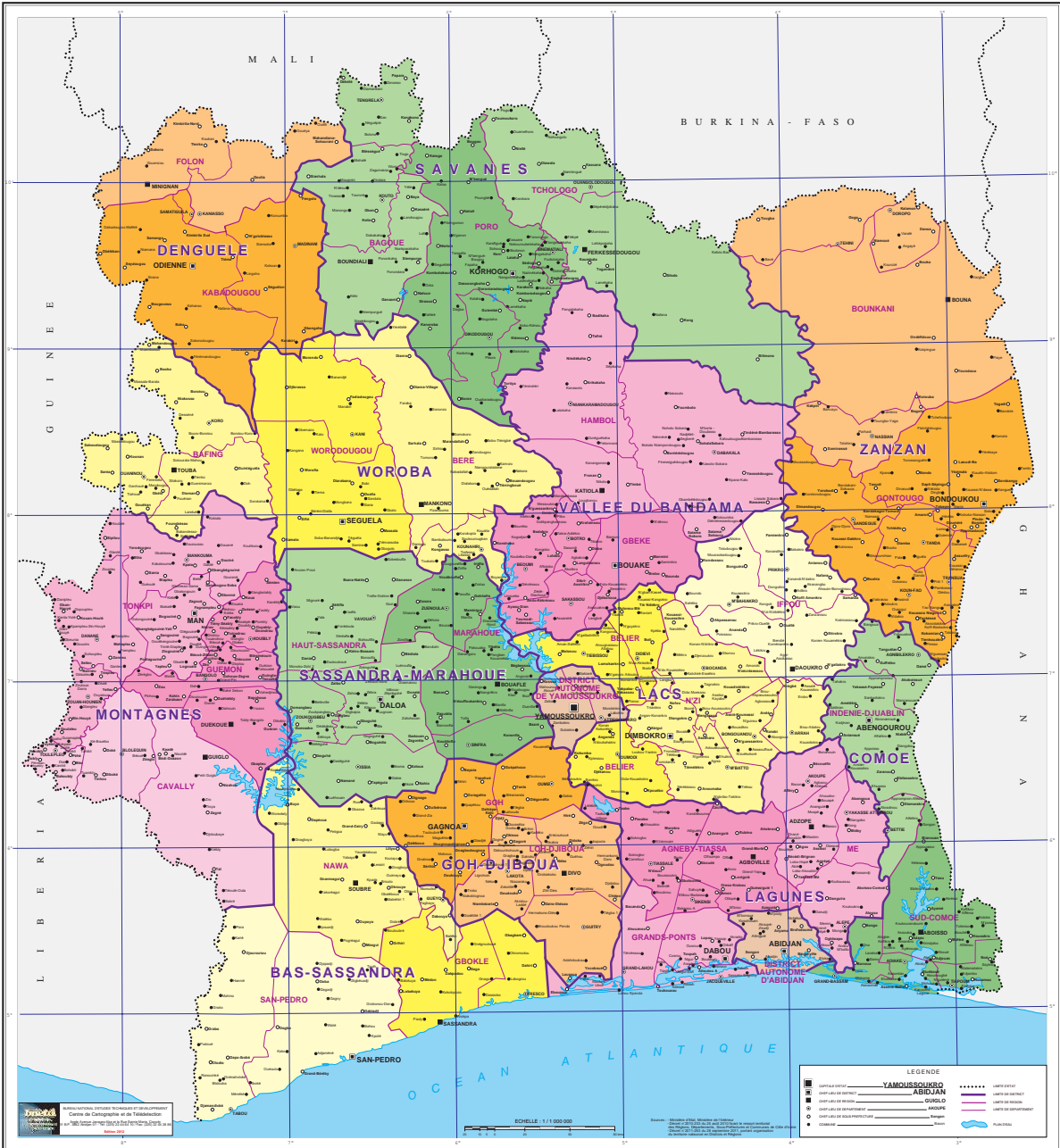
CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Source: Official website of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire – Maps of Côte d'Ivoire:
http://www.gouv.ci/img/CARTE-DE-COTE-IVOIRE-ADMINISTRATIVE.pdf

Executive summary

1 Context in Côte d'Ivoire and PBF interventions

SE01. Since the end of the 1990s, Côte d'Ivoire has faced a series of political and security crises, including the division of its territory into two separate zones for almost a decade, spells of social protest and violence with a detrimental effect on the performance of the national economy and the sovereign functions of State and administrative capacities, leading to large-scale violations of human rights, notably sexual violence, and in particular against girls and women. Political competition and manipulation remain major concerns among the key drivers of violence, particularly in light of upcoming elections in 2020 and the fact that underlying factors of tensions and conflicts remain, or, in some cases, have worsened.

SE02. The land ownership system has been generating tensions and conflicts within and across communities, destroying the social fabric and eroding social cohesion, as well as causing conflicts across borders and against the State. In addition, issues including illegal exploitation of mining resources, conflicts between farmers and herders, poverty affecting nearly half of the population despite positive macroeconomic indicators, and the question of identity (the concept of "ivoirity") in a context of strong demographic and migratory pressure (internal and regional) constitute additional sources of conflict. The crisis of chiefdoms weakens local conflict management systems. It should also be noted that most of the population is under 25 and that youth and women are most often marginalized from the benefits of economic growth and decision-making processes. Despite an improved security situation and the political will demonstrated by the Government to address conflict drivers and the divide among the population and toward the State, the sense of impunity and lack of trust in the Ivoirian justice system remains present, as are contestations of the State authority in some regions, particularly in the west.

SE03. Côte d'Ivoire is a priority country for the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). At the end of November 2019, the PBF had invested over USD 55 million since 2008 to support the stabilization and peacebuilding processes in the country. Côte d'Ivoire is also a pilot case for the UN Agenda on peacebuilding and sustaining peace and is often mentioned as an example of a successful transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding.

Table SE1 : **Evaluated projects and implementing partners**

Project title	Organizations
Priority plan for peacebuilding in Côte d'Ivoire – Phase II (2013-2015, extended until 2018)	
PBF/PRF/B-3 (Programme 1): "Support to strengthen trust, coexistence and security stabilization for peaceful elections in Côte d'Ivoire"	UNDP, UN-Women, UNESCO
PBF/PRF/A-3 (Programme 2): "Support to prevention and peaceful management of conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire"	UNFPA, UNDP, FAO, UN-Women
PBF/PRF/E-2 (Civil Code project): :"Support to timely registration of the births and deaths and reforming the Civil Code"	UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA
PBF/CIV/H-2 (PBF Secretariat Project): "Support to planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Peacebuilding Priority Plan in Côte d'Ivoire"	UNDP, Coordination Unit
Priority plan for peacebuilding in Côte d'Ivoire – Phase II (2013-2015, extended until 2018)	
PBF/IRF/168 (Women mediators project): Support to women and girls contributing to conflict prevention through early warning and information networks	UN-Women, UNICEF
PBF/IRF/156 (Project SWEEP): Support to women's sustained engagement in peacebuilding and security in the West	CARE International
PBF/IRF/162 (Cross-border project): Cross-border cooperation between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia for sustainable peace and social cohesion	UNDP, IOM
PBF/IRF/199:Support to sustainability of conflict prevention and management tools	UNFPA, UNDP

PBF/IRF/200 (Community Security Project): Support to DDR ex-combatants and SSR in Côte d'Ivoire	UNDP
PBF/IRF/196 (Youth project): Strengthen youth participation to peacebuilding in the South, Center and Center-West of Côte d'Ivoire	UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA

SE04. The evaluation of the PBF portfolio in Côte d'Ivoire took place from September to December 2019. The scope of the evaluation includes 10 projects listed in Table SE1 out of a total of the 16 projects funded by the PBF up until now as part of the Peacebuilding Priority Plan in Côte d'Ivoire (PP2 2013-2015, extended until 2018) and of the Peacebuilding Support Plan 2017-2019 (PACoP), which aimed at supporting the country through the transition phase from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. These projects are aligned with previous PBF interventions and with the transition of the UN peacekeeping mission in Côte d'Ivoire (ONUCI), which closed in June 2017, with a view to building on peace dividends in the country. The PACoP projects in particular address the outstanding challenges jointly identified by ONUCI, the Government, UNCT and donors.

2 Evaluation objectives

SE05. The main objective of this evaluation is to provide a global and independent assessment of the **added value, results and impacts** of the PBF portfolio in Côte d'Ivoire from 2015 to 2019, including catalytic effects and contribution of the PBF to the transition. These interventions are also analyzed in the light of the evaluation criteria: **relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability**, as well as the governance, coordination and monitoring structures in the country, and including an analysis of the integration of gender considerations. This evaluation also intends to identify outstanding peacebuilding gaps and challenges in the country, as well as good practices and lessons learned. The goal is to formulate recommendations and contribute to informed decision making in relation to potential support and future PBF interventions in Côte d'Ivoire and possibly elsewhere.

3 Methodology

SE06. The data collection process mainly focused on gathering testimonials and qualitative evidence of change, in addition to the (quantitative and qualitative) data provided by the document review (project and strategic documents, situation analyses, evaluations, perception studies) and the semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Two field missions (2-16 October; 18-22 November 2019) were conducted in Abidjan, the west, center and north of the country. Sites were selected based on: i) the number and duration of PBF interventions in the region; ii) the relevance of the context in terms of peacebuilding interventions; and iii) partners' availability to accommodate and support the mission.

SE07. The team collected and triangulated the perspectives and experiences of a large selection of national and international stakeholders, implementing partners (at the central, regional and local/community levels), institutional and civil society stakeholders, as well as beneficiaries and external actors. The "most significant change" dimension was integrated into the interviews and focus group discussions. The principles of "do no harm" and "conflict sensitivity" fed into the evaluation team's approach and conduct.

SE08. The main tools driving the data collection process included an evaluation matrix and some analytic modules focusing on the three main areas of PBF engagement in Côte d'Ivoire: restoring confidence between the State and the population, strengthen social cohesion, and develop a transition framework. In addition, a coherence analysis between theories of change (ToC) of the portfolio and those of the corresponding projects and case studies, focusing on the synergies between PBF interventions and project profiles, were completing these tools.

4 Main observations by criteria and evaluation components

4.1 Relevance

QE1. *How relevant was the PBF portfolio (2015-2019) to key conflict drivers and peacebuilding needs in Côte d'Ivoire, considering the evolution of the context since 2015?*

SE09. PBF projects are deeply ingrained in knowledge of the context, and target the geographic areas that are the most affected by the conflict, without necessarily directly addressing key conflict drivers in Côte d'Ivoire – which would require in-depth and longer-term action. The projects address needs and challenges that have been jointly identified by the Government and the UN toward peacebuilding, and are also shared with other donors. They are therefore aligned with UN objectives in the country and with national policies and priorities. The subjects and approaches are clearly relevant to the context and in their underlying intervention logic since they essentially aim to enhance the populations' resiliency to conflict drivers. The interventions focus mainly on capacity building for the different national stakeholders (at institutional and community levels) and dialogue and early warning mechanisms to prevent and manage tensions (between and within communities and/or with the State), and reinforce social cohesion and the populations' trust in State institutions and administration. The beneficiaries and stakeholders who were interviewed continue to consider these interventions relevant.

SE10. PBF funding ensured (and reassured) continuity of some peacebuilding-related UN interventions after closing down ONUCI, while remaining within the UNCT mandate. PBF support proved to be realistic considering the resources and capacities of the UN system in the country.

4.2 Efficiency

QE2. *To what extent was the implementation of PBF funding from 2015 to 2019 flexible, timely and cost effective?*

SE11. The PBF is well valued as a complementary funding source, especially as it brings UN agencies to work together. The flexibility of the PBF is also an asset, particularly to adapt project development to an evolving context and emerging needs, even if its procedures are considered heavy for an instrument that wishes to be flexible.

SE12. The interventions have often faced some delays (80% overall). In 20% of cases, projects had to be reformulated to address emerging needs; 20% of projects received no-cost extensions, and in 40% of cases project start up was delayed by three months. Some activities were not completed due to insufficient funding (or unrealistic plans) or because the prerequisites of such activities were not fulfilled (such as delayed publications or the institutional structures to be supported by the projects were established too late).

SE13. As indicated in the PBF Guidelines, partnerships with national stakeholders (institutional, local administrations and civil society) play a key role in PBF interventions and constitute an added value of the PBF. However, frequent changes in political leadership in sectorial ministries can sometimes generate delays, therefore compelling agencies to reinitiate institutional commitment.

4.3 Effectiveness and Impact

QE3. *Have PBF projects since 2015 delivered the expected results and what was their impact on peacebuilding in Côte d'Ivoire?*

SE14. In general, the findings regarding the results and effects of PBF interventions are positive. The achievements are for the most part consistent with the targeted result indicators and their impact can be measured at different levels in the projects' intervention areas. PBF interventions notably contributed to a decrease in the intensity of conflict in areas where there are active dialogue framework between populations, local administration and security forces, with effects as well on the level of trust of the populations toward law enforcement authorities, as per the 2019 PBF perception study conducted in the projects areas of intervention (from 52% in 2016 to 72% in 2019).

SE15. The findings are similar regarding PBF contributions to enhancing social cohesion and the increase in conflict resolution through administrative channels. Despite persisting tensions, the collected data indicates improvements in the coexistence of different ethnic groups in areas where social and community dialogues and institutional and civil society capacity were strengthened, where monitoring and early warning systems were set up and where awareness-raising (civics, dialogue, solidarity) measures were taken. The complementarity of the different PBF interventions also contributed to peaceful elections (in 2015, 2016 and 2018) and to the development of policies and action plans to build upon these gains (National strategy of early warning and rapid response; National strategy of reconciliation and social cohesion 2016-2020; review of the National plan for social cohesion 2016-2020; law on defense and internal security programming).

SE16. The evaluation team collected several testimonials indicating behavioral changes among the beneficiaries, especially ex-combatants, and the way youth and women are perceived in their communities, as well as institutional actors. Several PBF projects invested in inclusive dialogue, peacebuilding and women and youth empowerment initiatives, which have contributed to these changes.

SE17. The mission also noted significant improvements in conflict prevention capacities and social cohesion among local actors who received ongoing support (at least since the PP2) as well as for those in more recent PBF (and others) interventions (Guiglo vs. Korhogo). The cumulative effects of PBF (and others) interventions are evident. Internal coherence and geographical convergence of the PBF projects have allowed to build on already existing structures and mechanisms to lead complementary activities, connect various local actors, and develop and build on local capacities, therefore multiplying or at least reinforcing the impact of each individual project intervention.

SE18. However, the results of the PBF are rather mixed, not very visible, or the assessments are divergent regarding disarmament, which is still a source of insecurity (in particular Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration/DDR, and Security Sector Reform/SSR), transitional justice and reparations. The overall sense of impunity remains dominant.

4.4 Sustainability

QE4. *To what extent is there effective national ownership of peacebuilding policies and approaches in Côte d'Ivoire, including conditions, capacities and structures or mechanisms, in order to ensure PBF benefits are sustainable?*

SE19. The anchoring of PBF interventions in State institutions (at both central and decentralized levels) and capacity building activities, contributed to State ownership of some of the policies and initiatives it supported (Civil-Military Committees/CCM, socio-community dialogues, Gender desks integrated into security forces). By financially contributing USD1.5 Million to the PP2 and taking charge of some transition components (including DDR/SSR), the State of Côte d'Ivoire has demonstrated ownership and expressed its commitment toward the Peacebuilding Support Plan (PACoP). This last commitment had not yet concretized at the time of the evaluation missions. The empowerment and sustainability of some initiatives rely however on the mobilization of national and external financial resources (not yet guaranteed as of today), on the State technical and support capacities, as well as on political commitment and on the beneficiaries of the projects.

SE20. Capacity building of State and civil society stakeholders, income-generating activities (IGAs) and awareness campaigns all contributed to promoting engagement, ownership, and, in some cases, the empowerment of the beneficiaries or initiatives. Some examples include integrating training modules on conflict prevention and management and social cohesion into the National Civil Service School curricula; or women groups and demobilized IGA beneficiaries who became financially independent and are considered as models and peace relays within their group or community. According to the perception study conducted in 2019 in PBF project zones, the local administration, chiefdoms, Defense and Security Forces (FDS) and women have solid capacities and play a role in conflict prevention and resolution. It is fair to consider that the PBF contributed to these benefits.

4.5 Gender

QE5. *Have gender considerations been duly included in the PP2 and PACoP/PBF portfolios throughout the different phases from conception to monitoring and evaluation?*

SE21. Gender principles are overall well integrated across PBF projects in Côte d'Ivoire. The main challenge remains the participation of as many girls as boys in project activities, notably due to social barriers and the lack of women/girls' empowerment. In several cases, women are called by the authorities and chiefdoms to intervene to defuse tensions or conflicts within families or communities and to raise awareness in communities about holding peaceful elections, conflict prevention and social cohesion. Women are also represented in the framework of local dialogues, including the CCM. Through their engagement, especially in the reconciliation process within and across communities, women have become key actors in other processes or initiatives (in relation to maternal health, recording births and deaths in the civil registry, support to GBV victims, etc.). However, women and youth engagement in politics remains low and faces some challenges (including cultural and socioeconomic challenges as well as patronage).

SE22. Despite awareness campaigns on gender, human rights, children protection, GBV prevention and a clear improvement in the collaboration between civil society and authorities to that effect, there is not a significant reduction in the amount of GBV cases

which are rarely brought before a court for reasons such as customs and the lack of trust in the justice system, among others..

4.6   PBF coordination and monitoring

QE6. *How did PBF mechanisms efficiently allow PBSO and partners to deliver a relevant and timely response?*

SE23. The PBF Secretariat brought an added value in terms of communications on the PBF (including outside the UN system), supporting agencies with PBF processes and regulations, and of project monitoring. Despite a participative prioritization process of PBF interventions and criteria defined in the PBF Guidelines, the selection, allocation of funds and budget definition processes for PBF projects remain very competitive and is often criticized for their lack of transparency. For that reason, many agencies are in favor of the separation between the Resident Coordination function and UNDP.

SE24. The PBF computerized monitoring and evaluation system in Côte d'Ivoire (recently set up by the Secretariat in 2019) should allow better analyses of the impact of the interconnections and synergies between projects once they become operational. However, the data collection process in order to assess the individual or cumulative effects or changes generated by PBF projects will most likely remain a challenge. The visibility of the PBF funding seems also quite low compared to that of implementing agencies.

EQ7. *How efficient were the PBF governance structures in the country to reach expected results?*

SE25. The composition of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) is suitable and inclusive, bringing together State institutions and civil society representatives from Côte d'Ivoire, donors, the UN system and PBF implementing partners representatives. Its role is mainly to validate the discussions and proposals from the Technical Experts Committee (TEC), and to ensure the information reaches political stakeholders to encourage coordination and synergies among various funding initiatives (national, PBF and others). The TEC ensures information sharing and contributes to reinforcing institutional anchoring of the projects without however addressing entirely coordination needs, according to some of the interviewed implementing partners.

EQ8. *How did the interaction and coordination between UN agencies, external partners and UNCT contribute to the coherence, efficiency and sustainability of the UN peacebuilding engagements in Côte d'Ivoire?*

SE26. Despite shared analysis in a few areas, the international community does not have a common peacebuilding strategy in Côte d'Ivoire, nor a shared vision in terms of priorities. There are however some synergies between PBF interventions and those of other donors, therefore building on certain achievements and ensuring the sustainability of impacts generated by others. PACoP did not play the expected role of a unifying framework for mobilizing funding for the transition – it however initiated some coordination among UN and donor engagements.

5 Catalytic effects, good practices and lessons learned

SE27. PBF interventions in Côte d'Ivoire had catalytic effects, especially in terms of: i) **the mobilization of additional financing** from other donors, including through their demonstrative effect and positive results, hence ensuring continuity and development for some interventions (i.e. Civil Code, support to inter-community dialogue activities, legal clinics or police and cross-border positions); ii) **State ownership** to institutionalize and spread out similar approaches to new areas which were not targeted by the PBF (i.e. socio-community and socio-security dialogues, and watch platforms); iii) **piloting innovative approaches** (Civil Code, cross-border cooperation, dialogues, community grievances); and iv) **empowerment and sustainability** of PBF supported initiatives/civil society actors.

SE28. PBF **good practices** include: i) a focus on prevention and populations' resiliency to key conflict drivers, especially since the root causes of conflict in Côte d'Ivoire are far from being under control and continue to evolve; ii) the capitalization, continuity and cumulative effects of a series of interventions that are contributing to ownership and capacity building and potentially leading to the empowerment of beneficiaries; iii) the complementarities and synergies within the PBF and the UN system, supported by the same structures and/or mechanisms and working with stakeholders at all levels (national, local, community) on a larger part of the territory to convey similar messages; iv) being anchored within national partners and with a participative approach, therefore contributing to ownership and sustainable newly formed capacities; and v) providing local support (*mentoring*) to stakeholders.

SE29. Côte d'Ivoire generated good practices and **lessons on transition** at several levels. Even with the PBF, the gap between UNOCI and UNCT remained too important to prevent a certain "void" in terms of mandate, scope of intervention, human and financial resources, field presence and consequently political weight. The transition did not benefit from a significant enhancement of UNCT's human and financial capacities. In addition, a joint reflection on the ways to lessen the transition impact has compelled the UNCT (and GoCI) to come up with alternatives to fill the unavoidable gaps left by ONUCI's departure.

SE30. The focus of the projects on the role played by **women and youth** in peacebuilding and social cohesion has allowed them to play a role and have a voice. Despite challenges, this aspect remains one of the most significant for many beneficiaries.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions	Recommendations
a) PBF political and strategic added value	
C1. Despite its limited financial and political weight, the PBF stabilized the transition shock and above all contributed to keep the focus on peacebuilding.	**REC 1.** Spread the transition over 3 or 4 years and proceed with a more progressive drawdown of peacekeeping missions, with substantial capacity development for UNCT and gradual transfer to the GoCI and civil society, according to their respective roles and responsibilities.
C2. The PBF promoted a common peacebuilding vision in Côte d'Ivoire within the UNCT and synergies within the UN system, building on agencies' expertise by having them work together.	**REC 2.** Maintain the focus on preserving PBF's unique prerogative of bringing together UN agencies. Approximatively two thirds of the PBF projects should be implemented by agencies and

Conclusions	Recommendations
	the rest by international NGOs, depending on their added value.
b) Restoring trust between State and populations and reinforcing social cohesion	
C3. The PBF had a positive impact on the reconciliation between the State and populations and on promoting social cohesion, however its impact is mainly limited to the targeted zones and stakeholders who received ongoing support.	**REC 3.** Support,for at least another 2 to 3 years the deployment and extension of dialogue frameworks to villages and other non-targeted zones, building on more experienced structures/groups to form and support new structures.
C4. The situation remains fragile. The pressure from the key conflict drivers did not decrease (on the contrary), including the risks of political instrumentalization. Most outstanding challenges identified during the ONUCI transition still remain.	**REC 4.** The widespread fear of relapsing into violence during the 2020 election is a unique opportunity to refocus on peacebuilding priorities with donors and authorities. A Resident Coordinator with a more political role is also an opportunity to strengthen the political dialogue at both local and national levels.
c) Implementation, coordination and monitoring of PBF projects in Côte d'Ivoire	
C5. For the most part, the PBF produced the expected results relying on available resources, political will and national capacities to take ownership of the approaches, mechanisms and delivered products. The sustainability of the results generated by the interventions remains however an important challenge.	**REC 5.** Given the peacebuilding needs, PBSO should foster the continuity of its support before and beyond the 2020 election for another 2 to 3 years, with a special focus on capacity development for national ownership, on phasing out and transferring roles and capacities for institutional actors and civil society, and on consolidating the existing institutions, structures and mechanisms which have proven relevant and effective.
C6. The computerized PBF monitoring and evaluation system is too new to appreciate its added value. If its potential is reached (for example, cross-data analysis and synergies between PBF projects and others) it could provide evidence of what works or not, and why.	**REC6.** Finalize the incorporation of all the data into the monitoring system and test its potential, according to each agency and partner's priorities to analyze past results and future planning. Draw a first assessment of the system at the end of 2020.