



# Overview of 2020-2021 PBF project evaluations in Guinea-Bissau

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DRAWING ON EVALUATIONS OF INITIATIVES SUPPORTED BY THE  
SECRETARY-GENERAL'S PEACEBUILDING FUND IN GUINEA-BISSAU

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PROJECT TITLE	RECIPIENT ORGANIZATIONS	PROJECT BUDGET US\$	IMPLEMENTATION RATE	START DATE	END DATE
Support to political dialogue and national reconciliation	UNDP	807,328	93%	December 2017	October 2019
Boosting the media sector for greater Peace and Stability	UNDP (UNIOGBIS support)	801,877	97%	December 2017	March 2020
Supporting political and institutional stabilization of the Justice sector for peace consolidation	UNDP UNICEF	1,406,900	87%	December 2017	June 2020
Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents to serve as peacebuilding leaders	UNICEF UNDP	1,564,821	83%	December 2017	January 2020
Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation for Peace and Development	UNFPA UNWOMEN WFP	1,775,482	77%	December 2017	March 2020
Placing Women at the Centre of Justice Reform	UNDP	1,000,000	41%	November 2018	November 2020
Toward a new Gender Equilibrium	Interpeace Voz di Paz	961,898	100%	April 2017	September 2020

# Executive Summary

## Background and objective

This document compiles the main findings from evaluations of projects funded by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) in Guinea-Bissau, implemented between 2018 and 2020, and evaluated during 2020 and 2021. It highlights both (i) key actual results produced with the PBF support and (ii) lessons learned for what needs to be improved, including the main capacity and implementation constraints that should be considered in future interventions.

This exercise was commissioned by the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Guinea-Bissau, with a view of drawing lessons, making recommendations and providing a helpful tool to the United Nations System, the Government, and the PBF Steering Committee on the way forward for the PBF investment in Guinea-Bissau.

While the executive summary sheds light on key challenges and recommendations under five major areas (Monitoring & Evaluation, Communication, Management/Administration, Coordination and Project design), the following sections focus on specific findings for each PBF funded project regarding main results, recommendations for future programming, lessons learned and good practices.

## Common challenges and recommendations

The most common challenges highlighted in previous PBF project evaluations generally concern five main areas:

- i) Monitoring and Evaluation
- ii) Communications
- iii) Management/Administration
- iv) Coordination
- v) Project design

### *Monitoring and Evaluation*

#### Common challenges

- Qualitative and quantitative SMART indicators not defined from the beginning (*Boosting the media project*).
- Unclear monitoring and evaluation strategy and incomplete reporting in tracking results (*Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform project*).
- Monitoring system with several shortcomes affects the overall ability to understand social change. Most indicators identified focus on activities rather than results, and gender qualitative indicators are absent. (*Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project*)
- Gender-disaggregation missing from monitoring reports. (*Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform project*)
- Project management and M&E structures not fully developed, impacting the efficiency of the project. (*Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents project*)

#### Recommendations based on challenges

- Conduct early baseline surveys, elaborate since inception a clear monitoring plan and put in place an accountability system for M&E, and ensure same standard of reporting for implementing partners. (*Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents project*)
- Future projects should carry on at least quarterly internal monitoring reviews to assess whether the project is on track to meet its targets and outcomes. (*Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform project*)
- Early collection of baseline data for carrying out final project evaluations, and regularly monitoring and recording the project's results and achievements. Strengthen the M&E system of the project with regular field

visits and interactions with implementing partners, CSOs and remote locations. *(Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform project)*

- Qualitative gender indicators that show changes in gendered power relations and in the status of women and youth need to complement quantitative indicators of change. It is limiting to measure empowerment solely with numbers or representation. Projects should include indicators that also assess women and youth empowerment in terms of changes in relationships, values, norms, and status. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*

## **Communications**

### **Common challenges**

- Communication initiatives were not properly budgeted, affecting effectiveness not only as external communication but as communication for development, and therefore for behaviour change. *(Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents project)*
- Lack of early communications with beneficiaries when activities required them to advance money to pay for participation. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*
- Communication gaps during project implementation affected information flow, creating potential frictions between local authorities and young leaders. Some local administrators and political actors had been overseen by Implementing Partners because of difficulty to reach or not included in the implementation of activities. *(Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents project)*
- Many mentors and mentees did not know about the implementers or never heard about their projects. Communication and advertisement of the project and the work of organizations should be strengthened. *(Vers un nouvel equilibre project)*

### **Recommendations based on challenges**

- Ensure a proper budget for communication in funded projects. Build institutional memory. *(Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents project)*
- Promote joint consultations with state institutions and project beneficiaries, where professionals and representatives of CSOs, women and youth could think of innovative solutions *(Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform project)*
- New and innovative means of communication through radio, social media and online platforms could enhance the overall communication strategy with the broader public and with regional and local organizations, CSOs and citizen networks. *(Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform project)*
- Expand outreach activities with radios and beyond. Optimizing radio broadcast, with timing, frequency and content could increase the public knowledge, shaping public norms and attitudes. Develop flyers and short brochures, information leaflets about the organization and their work, and distribute in key public institutions to increase visibility. Use already existing evaluation reports and results to inform key stakeholders to facilitate learning and continuous buy-in from decision-makers at all levels of society. *(Vers un nouvel equilibre project)*

## **Management/Administration**

### **Common challenges**

- Slow bureaucratic process of recipient UN Agencies leading to delays in project implementation. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*
- Delays in initiating project implementation, lengthy negotiation process with key implementing partners, insufficient coordination staff for the work volume required to implement the project, inadequate timing of implementation of some activities that coincided with the electoral calendar. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*

- Slow and heavy UN agencies' administrative procedures. Agency was understaffed to respond effectively and promptly to project needs, causing important delays in the procurement of materials, payment of Grants, and hiring and payment of consultants, hindering the implementation of the activities. *(Boosting the media project)*

### Recommendations based on challenges

- RUNOs should clearly assess the risk of their bureaucratic processes to a timely project implementation. This analysis should determine if their bureaucratic systems are able to establish the necessary conditions for a project to initiate when planned to, and if not, necessary measures to mitigate this risk should be identified. PBF should include the assessment of these types of risks in the criteria and selection process leading to funding a PBF funded project. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*
- The agencies at stake should assign one staff member to work with the project to enhance effectiveness, ownership, and inter-agency collaboration. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*

### Coordination

#### Common challenges

- Delays at the beginning of the project caused by differences in the modus operandi of different agencies that had not been taken into consideration during the project planning. The process was longer than expected for the three UN agencies to build consensus around the Project Team profile to launch the recruitment process. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*
- The coordination at national level was not efficient. The Joint Coordination and Implementation Team and the Joint Program Management Committee and Steering Committee were not fully in place. Coordination struggles, especially from national to regional levels. *(Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents project)*
- Cooperation and communication within the Project Steering Committee and UN Agencies faced difficulties with implementing partners in the regions, mainly CSOs. Certain degree of lack of planning, coordination and communication, and insufficient time to carry out the planned activities. *(Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform project)*
- Non-involvement of CSO's based in remote regions in project planning activities and significant decisions affected the project's success at community level *(Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform project)*
- Lack of an "umbrella" governing body prevented functional synergy of project components. In absence of that, the additional governance burden placed on the Coordination Meeting, as the only joint body at the decision-making level, prevented it from performing some of its core functions to work as a "bridge" between decision at the strategic level and operational level. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*

### Recommendations based on challenges

- Ensure an efficient management structure in place, especially with multi-stakeholders projects, with a clear organigram indicating roles and responsibilities within the project. Clear-cut coordination and steering arrangements are necessary to ensure that integrated programming is carried out efficiently. *(Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents project)*
- Project coordination and communication with implementing partners, primarily CSO's based in remote regions and districts need special attention *(Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform project)*.
- RUNOs applying for PBF projects should identify clear pathways to ensure the sustainability of the project when the funding ends, either as integration into other interventions by the RUNOs or by connecting implementing partners with other donors or strengthening the capacity of implementing partners to raise funds to continue pursuing the outcomes of the project. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*

## *Project design*

### **Common challenges**

- Limited design and cohesion have affected the project's ability to deepen its benefits. As a short-term project with many beneficiaries and stakeholders, it was not deep enough to build capacity to sustain the outcomes without the initial funds. The program also lacked a clear exit strategy to ensure continuation of its outputs and outcomes when funding ended. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*
- Objectives of the project were overly ambitious for the context. Limited capacities of the coordination's mechanisms among UN and among Government administrative levels in a volatile context were significant challenges. *(Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents project)*
- The theory of change did not clearly define the pathways of change envisioned by the intervention. The different levels and hierarchies of expected changes are not clearly established (long term, intermediary and short term) and therefore the causal links between them are not elaborated in detail. Additionally, the theories developed do not consider the full extent of the sources and drivers of women and youth disempowerment, such as existence of institutional discrimination and deep rooted gendered and culturally power dynamics. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*

### **Recommendations based on challenges**

- The theory of change should develop clearer causal links between the different levels of project's outputs, so the relationship of what needs to happen between each output for the outcome to be achieved is clearly defined. *(Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation project)*
- Reduce the excessive number of activities to be implemented during a short timeframe *(Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents project)*
- Strengthen the design of the TOC process of future projects with realistic and achievable envisioned outcome-level changes, supported by better targeted human and financial resources on the one hand, and by an effective coordinated monitoring and evaluation mechanism, on the other hand, complemented with a clear communication strategy and Focal Point system between implementing agencies and partners. *(Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform project)*



## Boosting the Media Sector for greater Peace and Stability in Guinea-Bissau

**Short description:** The project aims to contribute to institutional stabilization of the media sector by helping create better conditions for journalists to perform their role in a democratic society in a more professional and responsible manner through an improved legal framework, governance of the media sector and capacity building.

**Implementing Partners:** Union of Journalists (SINJOTECS), Associação das Mulheres Profissionais dos órgãos de Comunicação Social (AMPROCS), National Community Radio Network (RENARC), Ordem dos Jornalistas da GB (OJGB), Ação para o Desenvolvimento (AD), Consórcio Media, Inovação da Comunicação Social (CMICS).

### Key findings

#### Relevance

In October 2016, the main problems and needs of the media sector were identified at the National Media Forum, supported by UNIOGBIS. Those were: i) Improve the media legal framework (the establishment of a professional regulatory body to issue journalists' press-cards, and the regulation of online communication); ii) Develop a national policy for the media sector that ensures its financial sustainability; iii) Establishment of a professional journalism school. **The project addressed all these needs.**

#### Efficiency

The approved budget was \$801,877, with **100% implementation rate**. The project had a high number of parallel activities, and some were difficult to implement in the timelines initially set. Nevertheless, the human and financial resources allocated were suitable. The only exception reported by the project team regards UNDP human resources, which was understaffed and struggling to meet the procurement and finance deadlines.

#### Effectiveness/Main achievements

**Activities were effective in progressing towards the project's objectives. Nevertheless, the expected results were partially accomplished**, mainly due to the political instability, inoperative government structures, and the covid19 pandemic.

**Outcome 1 - An improved and universally applied legal framework regulating the media sector and the journalistic profession contributes to enhanced professionalism and accountability as well as a decrease of tensions between media professionals and state actors.**

- **Three media laws were drafted.** One was approved (*the establishment of a professional regulatory body to issue press-cards for journalists*) and two are on the way to receive the Council of Minister's approval (*the draft law on online communication and the draft law on a new public fund for financing media*).
- **The consolidation of the media associations network** promoted a crucial cooperation for the development of the draft laws, the deontological code, and the code of conduct for the elections. Those last two were signed by 23 media outlets.

**Outcome 2 - Journalists, media professionals, outlets and associations organize more effectively and exercise greater professional and economic autonomy due to improved governance of the media sector.**

- **Three entrepreneurship grants offered to media professional women** (*Democrata, Donos da Bola, and Protoline*)
- **The election of the Union of Journalists' Representative**
- **The consolidation of the Bafatá Women Radio** (training, equipment, and salaries paid for 1 year and a half)
- **Creation of the Innovative Media Consortium (CMICS)**, composed by members of the local implementing partners. This consortium was an innovation when compared to past projects, and it manages the multimedia centre constructed under outcome 3.

- **The equipment of 5 radios and 2 community TVs with solar panels** has achieved the expected result: saving costs on electricity and contributing to the sustainability of the radios.

### Outcome 3 – Established and young media professionals produce quality, impartial and conflict-sensitive content.

- **The creation of the first professional journalism course in the country** (2 years and a half of duration, certified by the Ministry of Education). The course started in September 2020, with 40 students enrolled (including 5 women from vulnerable socioeconomic conditions which received scholarships), teachers were hired, and pedagogical manuals developed. Training modules were conducted on Conflict Prevention; Law; Investigative Journalism; Corona Virus and Fake News).
- **The construction of a fully equipped multimedia centre** placed in the Journalism School.
- **The first fact-checking website in the country was created** to ensure journalistic integrity during the elections, as an innovation in the country. A CSO – *Innovalab* - was supported to implement it; and E-training on State of Emergency, Fake-news, Protection, Prevention, was delivered.
- Several training modules were conducted in Conflict Prevention; Law; Investigative Journalism; Corona Virus and Fake News.

## Impact

### *Legislative and regulatory impact (media policies and professional regulation)*

The project improved the legal framework, increased the media corporative solidarity and professional responsibility, including during the elections campaign. This impact must be sustained by the further approval and enforcement of the remaining draft-laws and the media financial autonomy. The drafting of the 3 laws, the adoption of the deontological code and the code of conduct for elections, together with other project activities, **lessened tensions between media professionals and political actors. The code of conduct for elections had an impact on the journalist coverage of the electoral campaign** (some journalists reportedly refused to join political parties' caravans to write articles).

### *Institutional impact (media associations and journalists' empowerment)*

The project contributed significantly to **strengthen the journalist's professional skills and organizational capacities, causing a positive impact in the main media institutions** (SINJOTECS, RENARC, AD, OJGB, AMPROCS).

Beneficiaries increased their knowledge about journalists rights, national legislation, entrepreneurship, investigative journalism, fake news, and networking. **The trainings were extremely empowering and crucial to the success of the project.**

**Media management training produced tangible impacts.** The nationwide newspaper *O Democrata* dropped the price as a business strategy, making the newspaper more accessible to everyone. The newspaper *Donos da Bola* created its website, and a new communication company – *Protoline* - led by a woman, was legalized and entered the market.

**One of the most significant impacts achieved by strengthening media associations was the improvement of the journalist's protection.** The Union of Journalists positioned itself as one of the key players in the claim of the journalists' rights, supporting national journalists fight against censorship and political pressure during elections. **For the first time, the Union developed a financing proposal to support the deployment costs for journalists reporting in the field.** It also organized debates with different candidates in an independent and nonpartisan manner, allowing all political parties to express themselves publicly.

The project brought new institutions into the media sphere – the Media Innovation Consortium (CMICS) and the Journalists Professional School.

The project also had a remarkable impact at the community level in a) The promotion of female leadership in the media sector and b) An increased community radio broadcasting capacity. The success of the Bafatá Women Radio inspired other radios to hire female journalists, and the Union of Journalists (SINJOTECS) is led by a woman for the first time. Moreover, community radios supported with solar panels increased their broadcasting time, which represents an added value to rural communities, where radio is the single mean of communication.

#### *Social impact (peacebuilding and democratization)*

Class consciousness was strengthened as well as the importance of independent media for democracy and state accountability.

Some of the most significant changes reported were: i) increased number of women journalists working on other community radio stations; ii) increased number of young women willing to study journalism; iii) increased in situations where women feel safe to speak in public (in radio programs in which the public participates women are increasingly more participatory).

### **Sustainability**

The project design focused on the financial sustainability of the media institutions, but this was partially achieved mainly due to external factors such as the political instability and the Covid-19 pandemic. One of the major solutions would be the approval of the draft law on a new public fund for financing media. Even though SINJOTECS continues its lobbying strategy, the adoption of the law depends exclusively on the National Assembly.

The sustainability also depends on the partner organizations' capacity to implement the strategy and the tools designed by the project. A business plan for CMICS was developed, but it was not implemented, mainly due to COVID-19, which hindered the rental of the multimedia centre space and materials. Sustainability relies also on the partners' ability to find new sources of funding, but until the present, there is no new projects insight.

Despite the good performance of the CSO *Innovalab*, supported to implement the first fact-checking website of the country, it is not producing any content since August 2020.

Bafata Women Radio is the only initiative that seems to escape this risk since it continues to be supported by an international organization (the NGO Solidary Journalists from Seville).

### **Gender Mainstreaming**

Gender mainstreaming was consistently approached by the project, and the project contributed significantly to the empowerment of women journalists and to women's leadership in the media sector.

Gender equality, female leadership and women empowerment were considered in all outcomes through: i) The creation of safe spaces in the existing media institutions where women can take the lead and express their voice; ii) inclusion of gender parity in the Journalists deontological code approved; iii) training of women journalists and media managers; parity in the project grants awarding; iv) scholarships for Journalism School for 5 girls from vulnerable social environments.

The project budget was also gender-sensitive, with 31% effectively allocated to gender-related activities.

The project included targets for women participation, but it did not present established gender-specific indicators.

## Main Recommendations for future programming

### General recommendations

- **Qualitative and quantitative SMART indicators needed to be defined** to measure outcomes and impacts; including at least one impact indicator per Outcome, as well as measurable targets and reliable verification sources. These should include gender-related indicators and targets and present disaggregated data.
- When implementing capacity building activities, **indicators to measure the impact regarding knowledge or skills acquired by beneficiaries should be used** (tests before and after the capacity building activity).
- Risks were adequately identified in the design phase, but mitigation measures were not sufficient to relieve the impact of such risks. When designing projects, **participatory risk assessment** should be conducted to establish risks, its underlying reasons and mitigation measures.
- Regarding delays due to the political and sanitary contexts: **a participatory approach in project designing phase should be employed**, involving political parties' representatives. It would promote project ownership and could mitigate the risks of jeopardizing the results achieved due to Government changes.

### Specific recommendations and potential activities for future programming

- **There is a need for an institutional mechanism to monitor media compliance with the legislation (the laws and professional regulations)**. Partnerships could be established with national organizations to monitor the actors' compliance with the laws. The Union of Journalists or a CSO could play this oversight role. **Future Projects could invest in building CSOs monitoring skills to control the implementation of the media legal framework**.
- Establish media partnerships at the regional and international level to **provide in-site training in newspaper, radio, and television newsrooms**, as well as traineeships and exchanges programs.
- **Fact-checking** on issues outside the political agenda (such as Covid-19), proved to be a good strategy **to create a change in mentality regarding the reporting of misinformation** and the publication of research results.
- The project conducted two socio-economic studies: "Media habit of Bissau-Guineans" and "financial and social situation of media institutions". **The results of the studies may represent relevant contributions in terms of quantitative data for future projects**.
- Stakeholders described significant limitations in journalists' capacities to write and report in Portuguese. **The introduction of a Portuguese language module (written and spoken) in the Journalism course curriculum should be considered**.
- Local partners expressed concern about the **sustainability of the multimedia centre in the future**. They stressed the need to support the Journalism School and the Media Consortium activities, at least in its first year, to ensure autonomy in the future. **In future projects, the implementation of the sustainability strategies (not only the design of such strategies), such as business plans, should be included in the lifetime of the project**.
- **Although the first step towards the first national soap opera has been taken, the production agreements have been suspended due to the pandemic and have not yet been resumed**. 42 episodes were written (28 financed by the project and 12 by the Writers' Association of Guinea Bissau – AEGUI). With the change of the

Government, the National Television did not produce the pilot episode as agreed. AEGUI will try to find additional funds to continue this activity.

- The draft laws did not meet the specific expectations of the community media. **A lobbying strategy could be considered for the drafting of a specific law to regulate the community media sector.**
- Strengthening the media associations network enhanced partnerships among media owners, strengthened their management skills and promoted empowerment and cooperation. Nevertheless, the cooperative work between media institutions still needs to be improved. In future projects, **capacity building in resource management skills and strengthening professional networks at the regional level should be improved.**
- The project contributed significantly to women empowerment and leadership in the media sector. **Investments should be continued towards women journalists training and in promoting safe spaces for women to express**, such as the Bafata Women radio.
- The project had a remarkable impact at the community level through the enhancing of radio broadcasting capacity. In future projects, **funding solar panels to other community radios should be considered.**

### Lessons Learned

- **Slow and heavy UNDP administrative procedures.** According to key stakeholders, UNDP was understaffed to respond effectively and promptly to project needs, causing delays in procurement, payment of Grants, hiring and payment of consultants. Several partners, beneficiaries, and consultants reported that this was a hindrance to the implementation of activities.
- According to local partners, **some of the materials purchased with the project funds were not the best choice in terms of cost-benefit.** However, the **local partners received a grant and were themselves in charge of buying and choosing the equipment** and the solar panel installation was managed by RENARC.
- The project included targets for women participation, but **progress reports did not present disaggregated data for some project outputs. This would facilitate comprehensive monitoring of the gender impact at all project levels.**

### Good practices

- Both international and national partners were able to **optimize the existing resources and reduce costs.** For example, **UNIOGBIS has offered several logistical resources** such as offices, cars, drivers, expertise, conference rooms for training activities and meetings. **Local partners used their infrastructure for meetings and internal activities. This has saved significant costs.**
- Institutional relationship between National partners and the project team was collaborative, with a horizontal style, promoting a clear and efficient distinction of roles. This positively contributed to project ownership. The partners also highlighted the **importance of the participatory approach in decision-making processes.**
- **Partnerships with international organizations improved the quality of the activities,** (University of Dortmund on trainings in Migration; Association of Solidarity Journalists of Seville with Bafata Women Radio, *LUSA* in trainings on fake news.
- Gender mainstreaming, environment and democracy were consistently approached by the project:
  - **Gender equality, female leadership and women empowerment were considered in all outcomes;**

- Importance of involving key stakeholder institutions into main project decisions, including development of specific deliverables like courses;
- Importance of considering environmental impact of project activities and prioritizing use of sustainable environmental practices such as use of solar panels.

## Mobilizing rural Youth and adolescents to serve as peacebuilding leaders

**Short description:** The project aims to strengthen the resilience of youth and adolescents to instrumentalization and enable them to advocate on their own behalf for influence in decision-making processes that affect their future, especially those having to do with natural resource management and usage.

**Implementing Partners:** SWISSAID, ANADEC, National Institute for Education, NGO Palmeirinha, Ministry of Education, National Institute of Youth - INJ, National Youth Network - RENAJ, National Council of Youth - CNJ, Rural Forum for Peace and Population – FJP

### Key findings

#### Relevance

The project was aligned with national priorities such as the National Strategic Plan 2015-25 (*Terra Ranka*) considering youth involvement as crucial for peace and development. It was also aligned to the electoral period needs, besides the SDGs and UNDAF. The project approach and implementation also considered the needs of expected beneficiaries (adolescents and youth) in the most disadvantaged areas of Gabú and Cacheu Regions. Those approaches included accelerated learning for out of school, pre-professional trainings, peer to peer activities and radio programs.

#### Efficiency

The approved budget was \$1.564,821, and the implementation rate was 93%. Many activities implemented in the end of the project and excessive number of parallel activities reduced efficiency and hindered quality. The volume of activities was too great to be achieved within the project duration. Furthermore, COVID-19 affected the realization of some activities.

The coordination at national level was not efficient. The Joint Coordination and Implementation Team and the Joint Program Management Committee and Steering Committee were not fully in place nor coordination has been always optimal, especially from national to regional level.

Same results could not be achieved by other less expensive alternatives as funds were already overstretched. The project implemented several activities with a limited amount of resources, even exceeding targets regarding activities with adolescents, but those activities were run in a short time and without taking roots in the communities.

#### Effectiveness/Main achievements

The expected results were partially accomplished. The project served as a basis to inform and sensitize young people on their engagement in community decision-making, including electoral processes. Key achievements showed significant contributions to support the peacebuilding process in Guinea Bissau like: i) training on human rights issues, ii) conflict resolution, especially on dialogue and mediation of conflicts as an instrument of peace, mostly valued by teenagers, iii) Involvement of young people and adolescents in the construction of peace as a behavioural change, iv) Capacity building of young people through skills attained and adolescents in peace building, and v) Reconciliation in families between pastoralists and farmers.

The high illiteracy rate in targeted communities did not facilitate achievement of results. The Accelerated Literacy program, which was meant to address this particular barrier, could not be piloted due to several reasons linked to lack of gap analysis, effective planning, and lack of clear curriculum.



NGOs, regional and sector authorities, Tabancas, youth organizations were key for the implementation of the project. Established partnerships with NGOs promoted the achievement of the desired outcomes, but planned activities partly achieved the results over the implementation period.

**Outcome 1 - Youth leaders and adolescents (with special attention to inclusion of women and girls) from rural areas are engaged in peacebuilding and dialogue through increased knowledge, skills and experience within communities.**

- 13 Small Grants Projects gave youth the opportunity to engage in innovative endeavours and respond to problems in their regions;
- 180 adolescents' reporters developed their own radio programs, broadcasting them on 8 local radios, being involved in the write up of Community Newspapers, where they could report and make their voices heard.
- Safe working spaces were identified in 30 communities and equipped with writing material and informative literature to support the adolescent's periodic newsletters and workshops to engage as active peacebuilders.
- UNICEF Training Manuals on communication techniques for adolescents' reporters, animators; and rural adolescents;
- UNDP Manual on T4T regarding: Leadership, Gender, Human Rights, Rule of Law, Conflict Resolution, Natural Resource Management and Migration;
- 1,187 Adolescents trained on peacebuilding competencies; 473 Adolescents successfully complete the functional literacy course; 1,530 youth leaders trained on environmental and gender-sensitive peacebuilding; 184 youths trained on natural-resource management initiatives.
- 2 regional conferences led by UNICEF and 2 regional forums run by UNDP, 1 National Forum for Peace which brought out over 500 people, including UN Agencies, high level government representatives, traditional representatives at regional and national levels. All events were an advocacy opportunity for youth to make their voices heard in terms of developmental and peace priorities.

## Impact

**Increased participation of adolescents and youth in decision-making.** The project increased capacity of youth to engage as active peacebuilders for more impactful interventions, especially on environment matters, and participation of adolescents in all domains, including in meetings and decision making within family structures. After the project, there has been a substantial change involved in family meetings, and no negative changes were observed among adolescents and youth beneficiaries as a result of the project.

**Positive changes observed among adolescents, young people, parents and communities.** The impact of youth and adolescent supporting activities in the villages is related to the creation of youth clubs, which impacted on peacebuilding and conflict resolution skills. Another impact of the project was the access to economic opportunities, producing self-esteem in adolescents to face challenging situations and self-expression to articulate their needs. There was an increase in women and girls' project participation, but less progress in women's representation in decision making bodies or governance structures.

**The project helped influence the perception of families, beneficiaries and communities regarding their role in the peace building and decision-making processes.** Through the Small Grants Programme, a peacebuilding initiative in Suzana's area headed by three youth organizations made substantial progress not only in developing youth capacities to manage conflict within Communities but also in ensuring national ownership. The Ministry of Interior abandoned its law enforcement strategy with the communities of Suzana's sector and joined the small grant project implementors to advance a verbal solution for the intercommunal conflict.



## Sustainability

**National ownership was partly achieved.** The government, through its focal points at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and Ministry of Legislative Affairs were fully engaged and followed the implementation of various initiatives. Nevertheless, this was not the case at regional level, partly due to insecurity and to unavailability of implementing partners to stay in those areas.

Some of the noted positive factors that were documented as contributing to sustainability of gains were; i) trainings that brought about ownership and commitment of beneficiaries, and the ii) involvement of actors concerned in the implementation of the project.

**Significant challenges were present, including limited institutional memory and transitions of personnel.** A too broad range of activities, insecurity, difficult accessibility, and understaffing, with almost no M&E, made impossible to accommodate all the necessary conditions for ownership of the intended interventions at different local levels from administrations to communities' leaders.

**Peacebuilding activities with adolescents were proved to be more sustainable** because of engagement of adolescents and because they live where they are trained. Youth, at the contrary, especially those of the indicated age range 17-35 years, are often moving to Bissau or out of the country. Moreover, the project dimensions were incorporated into national peacebuilding practices at local level, in the sense that youth are more respected and listened by elders and can be part of decision-making processes.

## Gender Mainstreaming

**The project design required and effectively demonstrated an active involvement and participation of rural girls and young women during the lifetime of the project.** Specific activities were tailored for women as demonstrated in small grants that UNDP availed to Community based organizations. The project effectively made sure that a proportion of girls would be involved in the project activities and several actions were taken, particularly in relation to the selection of trainers and participants to trainings to identify and tackle the barriers that prevent girls' and women's access to the services made available in targeted communities.

**The gender aspects of intra-household dynamics were not fully addressed although those are part of the causes of conflict in communities.** Gender in-depth issues were not addressed or were carried out in a rush, like challenges involving decision making within the family, land tenure, domestic violence, premature marriage and social division of labour.

**The project contributed to equal opportunities in political participation and decision making, limited to the communities served by the project.** Trainings and sensitization were efficient to that effect. In addition, the Accelerated Education Program was an important aspect designed to promote the empowerment of women, since girls are the most affected by school dropout. However, this activity was only piloted and could not be scaled up before project closure. As a result, no girls were reached by this component.

## Main Recommendations for future programming

### General recommendations

- **Improve monitoring capacity:** i) Conduct early baseline surveys and gap analysis ii) Elaborate since inception a clear monitoring plan and put in place an accountability system for M&E iii) Ensure same standard of reporting for implementing partners
- **Improve coordination mechanism:** i) Ensure clear coordination mechanism is in place ii) Ensure efficient management structure is in place, especially with pluri-stakeholders projects, with a clear organigram indicating roles and responsibilities within the project.

## Specific recommendations and potential activities for future programming

- **Women in politics and decision making.** Enhance activities for women's representation in decision making bodies and governance. Address more gender in-depth issues like everyday challenges in the community, decision making within the family, land tenure, domestic violence, premature marriage, and social division of labour.
- **Focus more on life skills and skills building activities for short term programs** - This will increase job opportunities and peace
- **Scale up Accelerated Literacy and Education** - Accelerated Literacy program must continue, but it would require a program fully budgeted for at least 3 years
- **Invest more on youth and women associations as direct implementers**

## Lessons Learned

- **A project of this scope and complexity would benefit from a longer implementation timeframe or better delimitation of the range of activities that can have an impact in a short timeframe.** The project was very ambitious in developing a six-month programme to increase knowledge, competencies and life skills to rural adolescents, along with developing a compilation of 7 peacebuilding manuals at the same time, in a country surrounded by political conflicts and during election period.
- **Any activity carried out in the Regions need to consider aspects of mobility and age groups of adolescents and youth** to be in line with UN definition. Because of the high internal mobility, people age more than 24 years were not easy to find in their villages.
- **Communication initiatives did not have a proper budget, affecting effectiveness** not only as external communication but as communication for development, and therefore for behaviour change.
- **There is need to design a bottom-up approach to indicate the methodology on how government officials at peripheral level can better participate and remain informed alongside the project implementation.** Some local authorities felt that they were needed just when they were called for meetings or to sort out problems or when Implementing Partners needed assistance in the villages.
- **Involvement of elders is key for the intergenerational activities. Nevertheless, many traditional chiefs were not included as elders during activity implementation,** being only informed about the project at the beginning and after activities were done.

## Good practices

- **Established partnerships with NGOs promoted the achievement of the desired outcomes.** Partnership with other UN organisations, like UNWOMEN are worth to be further explored, especially when working with adolescents' girls and women, a priority for UNICEF and UNDP as well.

## Towards a New Balance in Guinea-Bissau: Creating the space for a real participation of women in peaceful conflict management and in governance “No Sta Djuntos!”

**Short description:** The project aims to tackle women exclusion from the decision-making process by strengthening national women's participation in governance and conflict management. It aims to do so by raising national awareness and by enhancing the capacities of female leaders in political advocacy, conflict mediation and facilitation of inclusive dialogues.

**Implementing Partners:** Voz di Paz (national NGO)

### Key findings

#### Relevance

The relevance of the project is very high in meeting individual and community-level needs of promoting women leadership. Resistance at the institutional level to advance women in higher echelons of political parties and DSF is still very high, leaving a massive space for Interpeace and VdP to explore possible entry points in the future.

#### Efficiency

The evaluation found an equitable distribution of funds and other resources, among project beneficiaries and different geographic regions. The results and achievements of the project in terms of reaching outputs is high, despite a modest budget. However, the centralized management system did not allow flexibility in incorporating local views and in tailoring more efficiently the available resources to the current needs.

The funds disbursed for project implementation were well accounted, and the COVID-19 situation, considering the lockdown imposed in March 2020, was efficiently used to redirect available funds for the pandemic impact analysis, mainly on how the lockdown affects the situation of women in Guinea-Bissau.

#### Effectiveness/Main achievements

The project's outcome 1 has been achieved, despite the pandemic which halted the implementation of some advocacy and training events. For outcome 2, targets under most outputs have been met, even exceeded. Regarding outcome 3, the targeted results have been achieved under each output, obtaining a high-level success rate in radio broadcasts, video projections of a short movie about promoting social cohesion by removing barriers between men and women, and video-clips that have been posted on social media.

**Outcome 1: Strengthen the capacity and self-esteem of key men and women, members of political parties, CSOs and DSF to improve the division risks mitigation.**

- 232 individuals (43% women) participated in trainings across the country on non-violent communication techniques;
- 45 women members of the Regional Dialogue Spaces trained in leadership and management of conflict (mediation);
- 20 success stories on the important role of women in the resolution of conflicts were documented;
- The mentorship component developed with 25 pairs of mentors-mentees.
- A study about how the pandemic impacted the situation of social cohesion in the regions of the country with a focus on women.

**Outcome 2: Strengthen the institutional capacities of political parties, CSOs and DSF in Bissau to mitigate the risks of division and of resistance and to maximize their contribution through social cohesion through women's promotion.**

- Mapping on organizations active in women leadership promotion

- Training of 30 representatives from the political parties, DSF and CSOs in conflict-sensitive programming with a focus on gender

**Outcome 3: The public is becoming more conscious about the importance of female leadership in peacebuilding and of good practices for division risks mitigation and is aware of the success stories of men and women.**

- 269 people participated in the projection of a short film nationwide which aimed to create greater understanding on how to promote women’s empowerment and social cohesion - the short film presented good practices collected under outcome 1;
- Social media campaign reached more than 25 thousand young people, mainly from the urban areas, while the radio broadcasts and video projections had a very positive reception at the community level.
- 14 programs produced and distributed to 2 national radios and 30 community radios to increase awareness about women leadership and the importance and the role of women in the society and the decision-making spaces, mostly at the level of traditional authorities, in tabancas.

## Impact

**The outcome-level changes envisioned by the project have been met almost entirely**, with some delays faced due to COVID-19. Project strategies and the used methodology were very successful in promoting individual and community-level changes and breaking down stereotypes and polarization. The institutional-level changes in promoting women in decision-making structures in political parties, the SDF (Security and Defence Forces) and in traditional institutions show the **willingness of decision-makers to open up restricted spaces for women, with improvements expected in the future.**

Furthermore, four cases of women advancement in higher echelons of key institutions were identified as a direct result of the project:

- One woman, member of the Regional Space for Dialogue in Mansoa, entered the traditional Committee, in Amedalai, Oio region.
- One woman politician appointed as a General Secretary, in her political party, in Biombo region.
- One Security and Defence Forces officer promoted as the Head of the Logistical Department in her Unit.
- A woman on the Canhabaque island entered into the Committee of Tabanca.

**Private initiatives of participants have been recorded as highly impactful. For example, one head teacher in Catió talked about how his school became one of the most attractive school for parents, because he is promoting gender-equality principles** in the school and in the classrooms. He organized contests applying a quota system for girls, to facilitate the access of female students to learning, scholarships and future opportunities. Moreover, a few SDF participants from Bissau, Catio and Quinhamel shared how their role as gender Focal Points within their department provides them fulfilment in their work, accompanied by interesting activities to promote their work, contributing to their institution’s social cohesion.

As a result of these interactions, **the rhetoric of women leadership promotion and the language style changed a lot. Slogans like “We are advancing together”, “Women can participate”, “We are all in” are commonly used expressions in communities**, and most importantly, these ideas are slowly conquering and changing mindsets. Many respondents pointed out how non-violent communication helped SDF and political parties in talking and dealing with people in a more decent, respectful and human way. **The added value of this skill within SDF is so high that they requested VdP to collaborate more in the future in this regard.**

One civil society representative shared the result of his work with more than 50 families in Oio region, where many young girls are forced to drop out from school and to get married. His work with these families resulted in convincing 17 families of the importance of girls' education and in keeping the 17 girls in school.

## Sustainability

The Regional Spaces for Dialogue (ERDs) created and developed by VdP contributed to the existence of a sustainable and long-lasting structure and network, with sufficient human resource capacity to continue the work started by Interpeace/VdP, even after the end of the project.

The involvement of ERDs in conflict mediation at the local level started to create a sustainable way of support for a few communities. For example, one representative of ERD shared the following: **“Instead of going to traditional leaders and leadership for conflict resolution, community members are contacting us to mediate the conflict. We are competing with the traditional justice system because sometimes the decisions taken by traditional leaders are still punishing women.”**

Finally, mentors and mentees expressed that the personal relationships developed through this project component are a long-lasting connection, resulting in family-type connections and interactions.

## Gender Mainstreaming

The project received a Gender Marker Score 3 from the PBF, meaning all project objectives and strategies, activities are designed in a gender-sensitive way, promoting the equal participation and inclusions of men and women in all project phases and activities. Project implementing partners, including the ERDs, and beneficiaries in Bissau and the regions know about the importance of promoting gender equality in the society and strengthening social cohesion with inclusive principles.

## Main Recommendations for future programming

### General recommendations

- Voz di Paz has a lot of knowledge, technical capacities and human resources, including access to institutions as well. The inclusive approach of sharing spaces and inviting everybody to participate in discussions and debates is a model that other institutions find attractive and want to apply.
- Content of radio broadcasts should be diversified and adapted more to local issues so that the population can identify with the issue/problem much more straightforward.

### Specific recommendations and potential activities for future programming

- **Mentorship is seen as very beneficial and successful**, and young girls are benefiting a lot from this experience. Therefore, the program could be extended to other women and girls.
- **Respondents have signalled Bissora and Nhacra as challenging in women promotion, where there is a need for focusing more on keeping girls in school and working with families.**
- Women promotion in political parties in leadership positions depends mainly on the political party leadership. **Involving political party leaders in future projects would assure a higher rate of success for women promotion.** Party leaders need incentives to participate in projects, and “VdP has the resources, credibility and the courage to continue this useful work”-shared one-woman politician.
- **Awareness-raising and training activities, combined with public lectures, are seen as very useful in educating Security and Defence Forces’ personnel about women promotion and existing laws and regulations in this regard.**

- **Women education could go further than awareness-raising, and women should be trained in leadership skills, in community and state affairs.** As one women administrator pointed out: “If women want to participate in the public sphere, administration and politics, they need to be politically aware.”
- **There is a need to address power relations at the community level if a long-term change is envisaged.** For this to happen, community leaders, both men and women, should be included in project activities. For mentorship programs, there is a necessity of better matching the mentors with their mentees, based on needs, interest and future career options.
- Radio personnel expressed their views about the content of the broadcast, which could involve:
  - Sensitization
  - Role-model promotion
  - Non-violent means of communication

### Lessons Learned

- The radio broadcasts on women leadership and the importance and the role of women in the society and the decision-making spaces were produced in Bissau, dealing with topics and issues with which people in the regions cannot associate. Mapping out of local conflicts, issues, and discussing them, together with the public, could increase the popularity of these radio broadcast, and as a result, their impact.
- Some local administrators pointed out the improper timing of the activities – e.g., activities on weekends. **Many people do not want to participate on weekends**, or they come only for a short time, having a negative impact on project results.
- Besides men and women, many participants shared their views that **families, including parents and grandparents, should be included in non-violent training activities.**

### Good practices

- Activities unanimously considered very successful and very effective: non-violent conflict mediation, non-violent communication and the mentorship program.
- Participatory drama and theatre in Bubaque island are among the most successful methods in mediating local-level conflicts. Communities appreciate the fact that even children are included in setting up the context and in finding solutions to the issues that affect community life.

## Placing Women at the centre of Justice Reform in Guinea-Bissau

**Short description:** To promote women's rights and gender equality via placing women at the centre of the ongoing justice reform efforts, bringing a gender sensitive lens to the revision of the legal framework, training relevant actors on gender issues and develop adequate mechanisms to process cases, while sensitizing and training women on their human rights and their role on peace and security processes.

**Implementing Partners:** The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the National Institute of Woman and Children and the National Committee for the Abandonment of Harmful Practices, the Legal Aid Centres (CAJ); Law School of Bissau; Legal Information Centre (GICJU); National Human Rights Commission, Voz di Paz, Liga Guineense dos Direitos Humanos (Human Rights League of Guinea-Bissau); Ordem dos Advogados da Guiné-Bissau (Bar Association of Guinea-Bissau); RENLUV - Rede Nacional de Luta Contra a Violência baseada no Género e Criança da Guiné-Bissau (National Network on Violence Against Gender and Children of Guinea-Bissau); Child Friends` Association; Juris Consult; Ana Pereira Foundation; National Volunteers Committee.

### Key findings

#### Relevance

**The project was highly satisfactory in addressing the identified needs and priorities of the national government institutions, CSOs and formal and traditional justice system actors to promote women's rights and access to justice.** The project started under the New PBF Strategy of Guinea-Bissau for 2018-2019. Consultations with UN and national stakeholders held on 2017 shed light on the necessity of strengthening cooperation and support with the government structures involving women peacebuilders, traditional leaders, and targeted to access to justice and promoting peace, among others. The project was very relevant in addressing the objectives formulated during these consultations, namely: revision of legislation; training of magistrates and justice actors; strengthen the coherence between the formal and traditional justice system; sensitization of citizens regarding fundamental rights and institutionalization of counselling services.

#### Efficiency

The project's efficiency is assessed as Moderately Unsatisfactory. The political instability and the halting of project activities due to COVID-19 contributed to this assessment. Moreover, 90% of interviewees expressed their dissatisfaction with some or more aspects of the project implementation, namely: (1) delays in allocation of funds from UNDP to implementing organizations; (2) human resources difficulties at project management level; (3) weaknesses in obtaining written information based on standardized reporting procedures and data about SGBV in general, and from CAJ and the National Commission on Human Rights in particular; (4) the short timeframe for project implementation impeded achieve visible results; (5) weak institutional buy-in of the state, mentioned by the majority of respondents as "absence of the state" from executing structural and institutional changes; (6) CSOs difficulty in participating in planning activities and obtaining clear information about project execution and implementation; (7) weak logistical support; (8) limited geographical outreach.

Some activities were planned but never implemented due to one or several reasons outlined above. **The project could not reach many people in the tabancas, where the actual need to provide judicial services for women and the communities lies.** Moreover, CSOs expected more support from UNDP for women access to justice projects - CSOs have a lot of structure in dealing with victims of SGBV violence that were also not supported adequately by this project because of a lack of proper long-term planning and sustainable financial support.

The project successfully adapted its strategies to the COVID-19 situation, but this resulted in spent USD 31,408.68 on commodities and materials to conduct the sensitization campaigns. The cumulative average delivery of the budget is 41%.



## Effectiveness/Main achievements

**The efficiency of the project is assessed as Satisfactory.** The lack of a Project Manager for eight months, coupled with the political impasse after elections and the global pandemic, contributed to delays in project implementation, resulting in that by mid-June 2020, most of the activities could not be carried out. This situation was also reflected in the project budget – most of the funds remained unspent. The project to a certain extent did not achieve its indicators, and the lack of a baseline data made it impossible to measure the desired changes at outcome level.

The main achievements are summarized as follows:

- The project successfully conducted a needs assessment study about mainstreaming gender into the basic legal framework of Guinea-Bissau.
- The basic codes: The Criminal and Civil Procedure Code, and the Penal and Civil Code had been updated, revised and their presentation and discussion with approximately 100 participants, including magistrates, lawyers and CSO was planned for November 2020, after the project closure. The adoption and implementation of the updated codes therefore is still in progress.
- 41 magistrates, 161 clerks, 40 judicial police officers, 30 traditional authorities were trained on women's rights, gender equality and women's contribution to peace.
- 268 people from remote regions of the country, representing 135 men and 133 women have been provided assistance by CAJ to access the justice system, in the form of legal representation.
- Eight cases being processed in the Court as part of the pro-bono lawyer assistance supported by the project.
- Sensitization events against gender-based violence in the COVID-19 context involved approximately 91,000 individuals.
- 9 workshops about women's access to justice with a total of 2297 participants.
- The gender-based strategy to provide better services to women at the CAJ was drafted and approved by the CAJ and its implementation is being supported with the elaboration of a data base to better report on cases related to women and GBV.
- The Gender Action Plan developed by IMC for revising the anti-human trafficking, gender equality and child rights' legislation has been drafted and its implementation is in progress.
- The project, in partnership with UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP, contributed to the launching of the BLOKSAN platform, by the Ana Pereira Foundation, that provides online support through innovative messages, TV and radio programmes and social media communication about harmful cultural practices directed towards women and children, and encourages the victims and the public to denounce these manifestations through all possible means.
- The work with CSOs resulted in implementing seven projects in different regions of the country:
  - Training and Awareness Raising on Women Human Rights and Gender-Based Violence During Confinement, in Bissau and Tombali Region, implemented by the National Commission on Human Rights;
  - Sensitisation on COVID-19 in Gabu and Bafata Regions, carried out by the National Committee of Volunteers of Guinea-Bissau;
  - Tertulia / Djumbai in the country's 38 sectors, on instruments and mechanisms to protect the rights of women and girls in Guinea-Bissau, Biombo, Cacheu, Oio, Bafatá, Gabu, Quinara, Tombali and Bolama Regions. Micro-project implemented by the National Network to combat Violence Against Women and Children (RENLUV);
  - Women Project "firkidja" in Oio Region, implemented by the National Network of Human Rights Defenders (RNDDH);
  - Djumbai on Access to Justice and Gender Equality, in Bissau, Bafata and Gabu Regions, implemented by GICJU;



- Protection and Promotion of Women's Rights, in Bissau, Biombo and Cacheu regions, implemented by the Association of Children's Friends (AMIC);
- "Code proposal" validation workshop, implemented by the Law School of Bissau.

## Impact

**Awareness raising and the pedagogical aspects were the most impactful interventions. Many magistrates and CAJ technical staff were not familiar with the restorative justice concept, or GBV-related conflict-resolution at the regional level, using traditional justice methodologies.**

The changes initiated with the revision of the four legal codes and the Constitution with gender-lens is an essential step in strengthening decision-makers accountability.

**Bringing in more prospective women magistrates and lawyers is considered an indirect positive impact.** As a result of the law graduate course instituted by the Bar Association and the Bissau Law School, 17 female students entered the course, an increase with 50 % compared to previous years.

**Women increased their access to CAJ**, evidenced by the 268 cases (out of which 133 women) considered under ADR and by 8 cases submitted to the Court.

The change of values, attitudes and behaviours reported by traditional leaders changed their way of looking at women's rights, the decisions they apply in their community justice ruling and the way they are responding to their own conflicts.

## Sustainability

**The project exhibits Satisfactory/Highly Satisfactory scores in laying the ground for a sustainable continuation of the structural and institutional changes of the justice system.** The BLOKSAN platform, the revision of the four Civil and Penal Codes, the changes in the national family laws and social protection provisions and the residency program introduced by the Law School in Bissau in attracting more female magistrates and lawyers, accompanied by instituting four different type of graduation certificates, constitute strong evidence for a successful continuation of the already achieved changes.

There is a high likelihood that justice actors, traditional leaders and women will continue to apply their acquired knowledge and skills through trainings, to enhancing gender equality in their institutions, advance women's access to justice, and initiate changes in how women access the justice system and in combating harmful traditional practices.

## Gender Mainstreaming

The project took steps to ensure gender mainstreaming in its activities and to contribute to the WPS agenda, as demonstrated by the gender-mainstreaming approach to influence state institutions to apply a gender lens when designing strategies and action plans including gender budgeting principles. The project aligns well with the gender marker score 3 - project reached out to women who improved their understanding of their legal rights and their participation in the community decision-making process. However, more men than women have been reached out directly by project activities. The BLOKSAN platform reached out to more women indirectly, evidence that needs to be taken into consideration into future project design.

## Main Recommendations for future programming

### General recommendations

- **UNDP project monitoring and reporting needs to be improved involving collaboration and coordinated efforts with other UN Agencies and implementing partners** towards successful project implementation.
- **The design of the ToC should be based on realistic assumptions of the type and nature of changes a UN Agency can achieve.** To track indicators and targets on a regular basis, future projects should carry on at least quarterly internal monitoring reviews to assess whether the project is on track of meeting its targets and outcomes, complemented with a clear communication strategy between implementing agencies and partners.
- **Promote joint consultations with state institutions and project beneficiaries, where justice service professionals and representatives of CSOs, women and youth could think on innovative solutions related to women access to justice.**
- More time should be allocated for changes to happen and a possible sustainability strategy for project continuation, allowing government institutions enough time for decisions and implementation.

### Specific recommendations

- **Create more Centres of Access to Justice (CAJ) at district level and support the functioning of the existent Court system in the regions,** which could be supported by trained justice service technicians. Involve local volunteers to provide counselling to the local population about human rights and the procedures of how and where to seek for justice. Design innovative communication strategy with available tools that is reachable for most people living in the districts and at tabancas (radio broadcasts and social media communication can engage the whole spectrum of the society, including justice system stakeholders, traditional leaders, the Police). **Creating and developing local legal information centres, where people can ask questions, information and receive advice in solving their problems would have been impactful.**
- Harmonize to a certain extent the formal and traditional justice system, and continuously train and educate traditional leaders in methods and techniques of mainstreaming human rights and women's rights into their decision-making practice.
- Create a victim support fund, that could finance judicial services for the vulnerable population, including women and girls, victims of domestic violence of SGBV. New and innovative means of communication through radio, social media and online platforms could enhance the overall communication strategy with the broader public. Involve the Police, health, social protection and justice providers in developing jointly a victim protection strategy against SGBV, that can be supported by UNDP.
- Future projects should consider the multi-ethnic nature of society and the fact that most of the population uses the traditional justice system. Future projects should train the technical staff of public institutions and justice providers who should harmonize the formal and traditional aspect of justice.
- **Support long-term educational projects in law, political science, public administration that introduce gender parity into their student selection process,** contributing to the formation and education of future female law and public administration professionals.

### Lessons learned

- The project did not consult women beneficiaries at the design stage on project goals and objectives.
- The project was too ambitious to consider that in the existing political context and within masculine institutions, like the formal justice sector, it can achieve structural and institutional change. The project designed the basics of a system governed by the rule of law and created mechanisms for implementing the

new regulations, but the absence of the state and the short timeframe of the project represented a considerable impediment for changing the access to justice practices of women.

### **Best practices**

- An innovative element was the joint debates, discussions and reflections that traditional leaders conducted together with women, youths and radio representatives. The BOKSAN platform introduced a different type of communication in the Bissau-Guinean society, where men became regional Focal Points, working side-by-side with women, cooperating with the Police to denounce abusive behaviours, crimes that otherwise would not be disclosed.

## Supporting political and institutional stabilization of the Justice sector for peace consolidation in Guinea-Bissau

**Short description:** To enhance access to justice for the population by enabling the institutionalization and strengthening of alternative dispute resolution mechanism within the formal and informal justice system, in line with international standards of administration of justice and human rights.

**Implementing Partners:** The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights (MJHR), the Public Prosecution Service, the Supreme Judicial Council, the Ministry of Interior, the National Committee for the Abandonment of Harmful Practices to Women and Children, the Women and Child Institute, the Association of Traditional Leaders, various religious associations, and the NGO Voz di Paz/Interpeace.

### Key findings

#### Relevance

**The Project was highly relevant for peacebuilding, and adequately captured the ongoing processes in the country,** which promoted conflict resolution and socio-political stability through dialogue. The project was designed and implemented with a participatory approach that brought together actors from different sectors to learn about and discuss approaches to justice and their practical applicability to the country's context. Moreover, the project was relevant in reinforcing the need for cooperation in the existing justice system, contributing to deepen the understanding of the limits of traditional justice, which was relevant for the peacebuilding process between the justice systems that co-exist in the country.

All traditional leaders affirmed that the project supported their role and what they consider as priorities in their exercise of justice administration in their communities. Traditional leaders found it particularly relevant the improvement of their skills in Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanism (ADR), considering the knowledge the project provided about actors, structure and procedures of the formal justice system relevant and useful.

The efforts to promote the rights of women and children and the importance of proposing a legal framework to expand the protection of children were seen as relevant by most stakeholders.

#### Efficiency

**Several factors negatively affected the cost-effectiveness of the project.** The implementation team was minimalist, and project management personnel changed during the short life of the project. A dedicated project manager left before project closure. The project's cost-effectiveness suffered from poor planning, risk management, and delays in the implementation of many activities due to long procurement processes and release of funds. Administrative personnel at UNDP Guinea Bissau office were insufficient for the scope of operations the office handles, resulting in significant procurement and funding disbursement delays. In the first 10 months of the project, only 12% of the budget was implemented, before the 2019 election crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

**The timeframe for implementation was not aligned with the management of a project that had peacebuilding objectives.** The processes that had to take place for the project to realize desired results required much more time and relationship management than the actual timeline of the project. In addition, more dedicated human resource time was needed for managing the project more strategically, including relationships.

**The partnership with UNICEF in the justice sector through the Project was effective and the collaboration was productive and well-coordinated.** UNDP has been the main cooperation partner supporting the justice sector in Guinea Bissau. UNICEF's support to the justice sector has complemented well UNDP's capacity building efforts and efforts to improve the administration of justice with a focus on human and children's rights.

## Effectiveness/Main achievements

The Project was not effective in improving access to justice for the population, which was an overambitious objective for a project of such small scope and duration. Nevertheless, the Project was effective in strengthening ADR within the informal and formal justice systems and in upskilling justice sector actors, improving the technical capacities of traditional leaders in ADR, including approaches involving community and traditional leaders. The project also improved the legitimacy and the value of ADR as international practices for conflict resolution. The RJ Project was also effective in improving the alignment of the country's legal framework to comply with children's rights, and also contributed to improving the awareness of human rights in the informal justice system.

Main achievements:

- Draft ADR/RJ draft Law submitted to the Ministry of Justice
- Draft Child Protection Law submitted to the Ministry of Justice
- Draft Law on the role of traditional authorities in the field of justice
- 13 awareness-raising events with members of the ERD<sup>1</sup>, CAJ and justice professionals, traditional leaders and others to promote human rights and prevention of violence and abuse against women and children, involving 12,000 people from 6 regions, including 82 traditional and 94 religious' leaders.
- 4 videos produced about the traditional leaders' view of traditional conflict resolution mechanisms; the perspective of women on these mechanisms and the way in which the conflicts that surround them are resolved; the treatment of children and young people in the traditional justice system; and the division of preferences between the two systems of justice.
- Two international conferences on RJ and ADR, including four Judges from Brazil, members of the National Council of Justice of Brazil, from Portugal and Mozambique, with members of the formal and informal justice sectors, civil society organisations and other public sector actors
- A workshop for the creation of the public defender
- Training of around 80 actors from both traditional and formal justice system in ADR mechanisms.
- Publication of "*Nô Obi Mindjer ku Mininu*" - Justice practices at the tabanca: a look at the traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution in the regions of Oio, Gabú and Tombali
- Capacity Building Plan of Traditional Justice Actors
- Seminar on implementation of RJ in schools, organized with students and parents

## Impact

The stated expected outcome of the project was not achieved. The project made valuable contributions to the justice sector but there is no evidence that it improved access to justice for the population. Although draft laws were produced and submitted to the Ministry of Justice, as well as the Capacity Building Plan of Traditional Justice Actors, there is no evidence that these proposed Laws have been appropriated by the higher ranks in the formal justice system, nor any sign of mobilization in civil society to engage in discussion of these legislations.

The project represented a seed of RJ in the country, planted to set into motion a process of cooperation and dialogue about different perspectives for conflict resolution and access to justice. Key informants mentioned that the long-term effect of the project will be realized when the younger generation of magistrates and lawyers rise into the upper echelons of the justice system. For most, improving the access to justice for most people in Guinea Bissau remains a long-term project.

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<sup>1</sup> Espaços Regionais de Diálogo (Regional Dialogue Spaces)

**An important contribution was to settle the discussion about the need for cooperation between the formal and informal justice sectors as a means to expand access to justice that is more aligned with current structures and funding for the justice sector, human rights, women and children’s rights.** The project’s objectives and goal received strong support from the civic sector and from parts of the formal and informal justice sectors. The project also made available evidence (a study) which shows that sectors of the population in the regions support cooperation between justice actors in the formal and informal sectors. This shows that large part of the population understands that cooperation between the formal and informal justice sectors is a viable solution for improving the quality and access to justice in the country.

The project also contributed to improving interactions between the formal and informal justice actors on an individual basis, even though it was not able to improve cooperation through a formal mechanism or systemwide.

**The Project made a valuable long-term contribution to children’s rights,** proposing the Child Protection Law and advocating for its passage into law. However, most stakeholders noted that the implementation of the Child Protection Law will run into the same problems as other laws, because there is no budget for implementation and monitoring of the law in both the formal and informal justice sectors.

**The project also contributed to clarifying the situation of women’s rights in the justice sector,** both formal and informal. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that the project made any impact on women’s rights in the administration of justice in the country.

## **Sustainability**

**The Project was not able to sustainably establish restorative justice as a conflict resolution model in the judicial system.** Factors affecting the sustainability includes insufficient incentives for changing the mentality and behaviours of key actors in the formal and informal justice sector and lack of resource and capacity in the civic sector to sustain the progress achieved by the project. Eighteen months was too short to familiarise the main actors in the country with a new concept of justice, and the short timeframe did not even enable some of the project’s outputs to be completed (e.g., monitoring of access and quality of traditional justice). Furthermore, at present, there is no organisation in the formal justice sector nor in civil society leading discussions on Restorative Justice since the closure of the project, and there is no active advocacy work to integrate RJ into the justice sector or its reform process.

**The implementation of the Child Protection Law may be undermined by lack of change in access to justice and lack of resources.** The project was able to raise awareness of children’s rights among stakeholders consulted but traditional leaders indicated that poverty in the regions, particularly lack of access to health and schools and lack of mechanisms for promoting and protecting the rights of women and children, hinder the implementation of protective measures for children.

## **Gender mainstreaming**

The project had a strong gender component implemented through awareness and advocacy on women’s rights, and it reinforced the efforts of UNDP’s “Placing Women at the Centre of the Justice Reform” Project (also funded by PBF) in bringing about improvements in women’s rights in the informal justice sector.

The gender and human rights focus of the project was relevant to most actors and to the context in the justice sector and in the country. The project increased traditional leaders’ awareness of women’s rights, but there is no evidence that the project was able to effect any change in the rights of women in the administration of justice.

The project brought evidence to confirm the vulnerability of women in both formal and informal justice systems, but left uncertainty about how to improve women’s rights. Most stakeholders mentioned that there was no initiative or guidance to provide information about areas and venues for future interventions.

## Main Recommendations for future programming

### General recommendations

- **The next project should define a strong implementation strategy, include a risk assessment and mitigating measures and an M&E plan that includes collection of baseline and end line data.**
- **UNDP should improve project management, ensuring a more strategic approach to project management.** This entails developing and monitoring an implementation strategy and risk assessment for projects. To focus on and improve project results, UNDP needs to ensure that projects’ M&E are useful as management tools. The agency is in urgent need of improving administrative processes to prevent project implementations being bottlenecked by administration capacity.
- **The agencies administering a future Restorative Justice project should ensure the project has the appropriate human resources,** ensuring that staff hired to manage the project has the capacity to apply strategic management (or results-based management). Hiring conditions, including salary, should seek retention of staff to project completion. The agencies should also ensure that there is sufficient time allocated for staff to manage relationships and that the synchrony between projects and political cycles are well managed.

### Specific recommendations

- **The next stage of the RJ process should be pursued, but as a longer-term project.** At least a 3-year term would be more appropriate for projects with peacebuilding objectives in the context in Guinea Bissau.
- **A future project should focus on carrying on where the last project left off.** Focal areas could be integrating RJ into the justice sector or its reform process, formalizing cooperation between justice systems, existing methods to expand access to justice, and improving the quality of justice administration. The project should also consider a viable way to build the capacities of traditional leaders in a more consistent way, and it should extend coverage to all regions of the country. Alternatively, attention should be given to a capacity building plan that identifies regions and communities where need for knowledge is more acute and collaboration between formal and traditional system needs greater support.
- **Accessibility of laws should be improved.** The Child Protection Law as well as basic law codes are too complex for most traditional leaders to understand. The codes’ language and format should be adapted for persons without a legal background and with all levels of education, what would also facilitate the awareness work of NGOs in the communities.
- **In terms of further training, topics include reinforcement in RJ mediation, conciliation, and arbitration as well as training in children’s rights.**

**Table 11: What traditional leaders considered important targets for improving access to justice in Guinea-Bissau and for strengthening the rights of women and of children within the justice system.**

Access to justice in general	Rights of women and children
Reinforce the RJ model and value and invest in traditional justice, including training.	More training and advocacy for the rights of women and children, particularly raising awareness of gender-based violence.
When the formal justice system becomes impartial and independence. Change in the situation of impunity and corruption.	Projects that include more women, more training for traditional leaders and the inclusion of women in decision-making centres.
Raising the performance of the security forces and in the administration of justice, including change in the slowness of justice.	When there is more access to children's education.



Change of mindset and improved cooperation between justice actors, including solving the problems of competences between police, courts and traditional power. Let the cooperation between formal and traditional justice change.	Better coordination of efforts to protect women and children.
Presence of the CAJ throughout the national territory.	More awareness efforts for the abandonment of harmful practices
When there is more and better education for the population.	Mechanisms: (a) for promoting and protecting the rights of women and children; (b) to avoid inheritance conflict; and (c) to promote and protect children's rights at the local level (tabancas) in a continuous basis.

## Lessons learned

- **Collaboration with the informal justice sector is necessary to improve the capacity of traditional leaders to comply with the country's laws and human rights.**
- **In proposing legal reforms and compliance with human rights in justice administration in Guinea Bissau, a long period for advocacy and dialogue with the population is necessary** for a law to become accepted and followed.
- **Agencies could have predicted the delays based on their past records and should have informed them, avoiding unnecessary locking of resources while waiting for procurement or funding.** Political developments that affected implementation, although beyond the agencies' control, could have been foreseen, such as the possible disruption in the aftermath of the 2019 election. Risks could be better assessed, and the project could have integrated mitigation measures. Minimally, this would have avoided the closure of the project before activities were fully implemented.
- The project's sequencing was clearly defined in the beginning of the project, but the planned sequence for implementation was affected by the difficulties in mobilizing the expertise at the desired time and delays in procurement. Administrative personnel at UNDP Guinea Bissau office are insufficient for the scope of operations the office handles, resulting in significant procurement and funding disbursement delays.

## Best practices

- **The project provided a pathway for actors to engage in dialogue about solutions, roles and practices in the formal and informal justice systems.** It led other sectors of society such as NGOs, academics, educators, journalists, women and religious associations to participate in the dialogue. It also brought together actors of formal and traditional justice system. Of importance, the project brought in the views and experiences of communities from the regions with both formal and informal justice systems, and the perspective of women in both systems. The Project set the stage for different justice stakeholders to improve their understanding of each other, of the existing justice systems, of the issues deterring cooperation and limiting access to justice for the population at large.
- While other projects supported the capacities and structure of the formal justice sector, this intervention extended support to building the capacity of the traditional justice system and focused on strengthening interactions between the formal and informal systems. **The project enabled the implementation of a more holistic approach to improving access to justice in the country.**



## Supporting Women's and Youth Political Participation for Peace and Development in Guinea-Bissau

**Short description:** The project is an integrated strategy to increase participation of women and youth through greater and more inclusive ownership of electoral results and development policies, including policies impacting economic opportunities and access to resources by rural communities. It supports citizen engagement of women and young people to promote and defend their rights to participate in political and economic life and provides channels for practical use of acquired skills for more effective participation in political debates, formulation of development and spending priorities, and election monitoring to build a more inclusive.

**Implementing Partners:** Tiniguena, Plan International, Women's Political Platform, INEP (National Institute of Studies and Research), Directorate-General for the Development of Education (INDE), Directorate-General for Literacy (Alfabetização), IPAV.

### Key findings

#### Relevance

**The project is relevant to the situation of Guinea Bissau and fully aligned with the government's national development objectives.** These objectives are in line with internal legal and policy frameworks but which the government fails for various reasons to implement. It addressed the lack of conditions, skills and resources to facilitate women's and youth participation in formal political processes in order to participate in or influence decision making processes. By providing skills building, access to information and to dialogue with high level political leaders, the project has contributed to increasing women's and youth's access to political decision forums.

**The programmed plan of the project was also timely in the context of Guinea's complex political dynamics.** It was due to begin before the legislative and presidential elections took place, giving it time to strengthen the human capital, leadership skills and environment, necessary for peaceful political processes, including electoral ones

#### Efficiency

**Various reasons led to the non-attainment of some outputs:** delays in initiating project implementation, a lengthy negotiation process with one of the key implementing partners, insufficient coordination staff for the work required to implement the project, inadequate timing of implementation of some activities that coincided with the electoral calendar, and the COVID-19 pandemic. **The project was successful in establishing synergies with other interventions and actors not envisioned in the project design that were key for project implementation.** This was important to avoid duplication of efforts and well appreciated by the beneficiaries as a contribution to their capacity development. **The financial resources allocated to the components they implemented was enough to achieve the intended results.** Although disbursements were often delayed which was challenging for the management of their resources and particularly for the resources of individual beneficiaries.

#### Effectiveness and main achievements

Both project outcomes were partially achieved, following the failure to achieve output 1.1 – 'Women and youth leaders trained in functional and political literacy' and output 2.1 – 'Top members of political parties, governors (specially youth and women) are trained in political leadership and peacebuilding skills'. The non-achievement of the output 1.1 affects contributions to one of the major limitations to women's access to political participation forums, which is access to literacy and/or education. The second output not reached affects the capacity and/or opportunity to promote change in social norms that limit women and youth's political participation from within political parties.

**Outcome 1: leaders and members of women and youth organizations actively participate in democratic processes and contribute to peace and stability through implementing change/dialogue initiatives.**

- **New curricular booklet for functional and political literacy developed** by the General Directorate of Literacy and Non-formal Education (DGAENF) and the National Institute for the development of education (INDE)
- **Training of trainers (T4T) course for literacy facilitators** successfully rolled out for 60 participants in a 6-day participative workshop in Bafatá, Buba and Mansoa.
- **960 people trained on Leadership for grassroots leaders in urban areas** with 36-hours curricula also developed by the project in partnership with Ubuntu Academy
- **Grant's facility established – 27 small grants were funded to women and youth organizations** to address obstacles to building peace in their communities. Grants' recipients benefited from trainings understand UN reporting and financial standards and learn conflict management skills, coalition building, political engagement strategies and gender equality issues.
- **2.000 women were trained in Productive skills Associativism and Political participation.**
- **National forum organized with 50 rural women selected to represent their associations.** The forum served as a space to build and strengthen their advocacy and public speaking skills.
- A study to understand the socio, economic and political contexts in the 3 regions of intervention was produced (*'Mulheres Rurais na Guiné-Bissau: estudo de base e diagnóstico participativo nas comunidades de Leste e Norte da Guiné-Bissau'*), shedding light on the limitations and opportunities for women's participation in decision making and peace building forums.

**Outcome 2: Women and youth effectively participate, accompany and ensure fair and equitable electoral processes.**

- **96 electoral candidates trained by the project, accounting for 19 of the 21 legal political parties.** The training was provided for women and youth candidates on skills and information useful for their campaigns, such as preparing and carrying out campaigns, using the internet for campaigning; to understanding the legal and political context in which elections take place.
- **A civil society election monitoring and situation room was established during the legislative elections in March 2019**, in collaboration with the European Union, UN Women, UNFPA, UNIOGBIS and various CSOs. 420 monitors were mobilized all over the country to verify the occurrences that could have affected the adequate conduct of the voting process, including gender-based violence.

## Impact

**The project has had an important impact in increasing the awareness and knowledge of the target population about their internal powers to change their circumstances, the social construct of the unjust norms that govern them.** The project's facilitation to access to resources such as discussion forums, training on political processes, dialogue with politicians and candidates and electoral observation forums had an impact in creating a culture of political dialogue, in increasing women and youth's participation in political processes and in the visibility of women and youth as political actors.

**It also contributed to challenge certain discriminatory social norms by increasing the visibility of women and youth as active and not passive political actors,** by providing training to enhance their participation in political and peacebuilding processes and by facilitating the political forums. Nevertheless, the project seems to not have had any impact on one of the factors that limit youth and women's participation as candidates in electoral processes – **the lack of financial resources to fund their campaigns.** Most parties in Guinea Bissau favour candidates that have the resources to fund their candidacy. Women and youth are usually not among this group, even with a strong program, due to their lack of ability to self-finance their campaign.

**Regarding rural women, they have increased their awareness of their status in society and the gender inequalities they are subject to.** They are able to articulate how discriminatory norms they are bound to affect their ability to contribute more to the political, peacebuilding and development processes as a whole. Although no evidence was found of them having initiated actions to deal with their low status and discriminatory norms, awareness is a step in the process of empowerment and can be capitalized in future interventions.

Through interventions and collaborations, **the Project contributed to the efforts related to the approval of the Parity Law.** The final version of the law fell short of expectations, as it resulted in a Quota Law and not a Parity law. And the proposal to impose 'zebra lists' where women and men's names in the list are presented successively, was also not included. Nevertheless, 36% still accounts to a higher number of women representation than has ever been seen in the country.

The project also contributed to the preparation of a Code of conduct on behaviour ethics to be observed during the elections, which was signed by 8 presidential candidates.

## **Sustainability**

**The Project did not have an exit strategy to ensure its continuation.** Although all local stakeholders expressed interest in continuing work on women and youth political participation, the dependency on external aid is a key challenge.

**The Government's involvement in the literacy component strengthened the capacities of the technicians and brought a commitment from the staff to defend the need to include literacy in the national budget.** Institutions plan on continuing with the literacy component when funds are made available.

Some individual beneficiaries are pursuing some of the project's goals on their own - some literacy facilitators are carrying out literacy classes in their backyards, even without enough literacy materials for all the trainees.

Community-based organizations improved their management systems (bookkeeping, reporting systems, monitoring systems, transparent financial management systems) and awareness of gender equality issues and human rights. Some organizations are still using the tools introduced by the project.

**Women's associations continue active; however, they lack the resources to replicate similar spaces of dialogue with politicians.** Moreover, local decision-making forums have not been changed to accommodate women's participation or interests - they function as they did before the project was implemented.

Local initiatives supported by small grants addressed local issues involving local actors, which are likely to sustain, given that stakeholders have owned the processes. However, the weakness of state institutions to guarantee the application of the legal instruments, as the Parity Law, makes such achievements vulnerable.

## **Gender mainstreaming**

**Gender equality and human rights concerns have been integrated in the design and implementation of the project.** The project design was influenced by a consultation forum with women and youth, that helped identify the limitations and priorities for women and youth political participation in the country. Through the small grants and the electoral monitoring outputs, the project created space for groups usually excluded from development and peacebuilding processes – women, rural women, people with albinism, people with disability, youth, to benefit from it.

Women's organizations were engaged and active in the project, contributing to its' ownership and to influencing change at grassroot levels. Additionally, the project engaged women and youth as trainers,

trainees, electoral monitors and as a result in most of the activities, the participation of women was around 50% or more and all the males involved were youth.

Although gender equality was the principal objective of the project, no qualitative gender indicators were included to measure the changes in gendered power relations the project intended to change.

## Main Recommendations for future programming

### General recommendations

- **Stronger theory of change needed.** PBF should ensure that IRF projects have stronger Theories of changes. The ToC should develop clearer causal links between the different levels of project's outputs, so the relationship between what needs to happen between each output for the outcome to be achieved is enhanced. Additionally, qualitative gender indicators, that show changes in gendered power relations and in the status of women and youth need to complement quantitative indicators
- **RUNOs should in the projects they submit for PBF funding, identify clear pathways to ensure the sustainability of project outputs and outcomes when the funding ends** – by integrating the project's results into other interventions, connecting implementing partners with other donors or strengthening the capacity of implementing partners to raise funds to continue pursuing the outcomes of the project.
- **Address the risks related to slow bureaucratic process of RUNOs leading to delays in project implementation** - RUNOs should clearly assess the risk of their bureaucratic processes to a timely project implementation.

### Specific recommendations

- When gender marker 3 projects are implemented, approaches that couple strategies for gender equality and women empowerment should adopted. Approaches with focus on (i) work around power relations with men, addressing 'toxic' masculinities; (ii) facilitating action learning processes based on individual and collective (particularly at household level) reflections to change unjust power relations, (iii) challenging and questioning structural causes of women and youth's participation in peacebuilding and decision-making processes in households, communities and political parties, such as discriminatory social norms, hierarchy and discipline with parties and lack of resources for women and youth to fund own electoral campaigns. Suggestions of such approaches include the Gender action learning systems developed In Uganda, gender action learning developed by Gender at Work or Household Gender Analysis for Gender Transformation developed in Ethiopia.
- **Continue support to small grant schemes.** This approach allows for funds to be accessible to small organizations faster than through regular project funding mechanisms. On the other hand, CBOs in rural and remote areas can easily design projects that require little funding and allows them to promote peacebuilding by solving burning issues in their local areas. Priority can be given to women and youth led organizations and to initiatives that seek to solve issues related to women and youth exclusion from decision making forums.

### Lessons learned

- The intervention was smoothly implemented by WFP as a stand-alone initiative 6 months before the other two recipients started. UNFPA and UN Women experienced considerable delays to start, which could be explained respectively by lack of a dedicated person to this project and high staff turnover.

- **Women and youth empowerment require addressing deep cultural norms at multiple levels.** Just empowering the youth and the woman is not enough. Men (in the political parties and in the communities) also need to be empowered to deconstruct unjust social norms.
- **Women and youth's political participation cannot be sustained with one or few-times events.** Interregional forums where women and youth can interact with local and national leaders are important, but if they are not accompanied with mechanisms for women and youth to follow up on how their demands are being addressed, or with actions to make local decision forums more inclusive, they are hardly replicable.
- **The 18-month duration for projects is too short for effective peacebuilding and effective women and youth empowerment.** This may especially be the case in contexts of successive political instability like Guinea Bissau where the weakness of state institutions means processes of collaboration take longer, which affects the period of project implementation.
- Dispersity of beneficiaries leads to the dispersity of resources which limits sustainability. It would be better to support a smaller set of beneficiaries, support them in different spectrums of political participation (electoral, leadership, gender equality and inclusivity), and offer inputs that can be continued with little resources.
- **Projects aiming at excluded groups can be an added burden or source of frustration to participants if they have to advance money to participate in activities.** The terms of cash advancement to participate in project activities must be communicated when participants are being invited to participate in the activity.

## Best practices

- **The project introduced innovative approaches to address the inequalities it had identified. It facilitated access to small grants for community-based organizations to address pressing issues in their communities.** This approach managed to reach groups that usually do not qualify for project funding by donors and allowed them to 'promote their own concept of development' with relatively small funds, tapping into local stakeholders, methods and interests. It allowed the organizations to practise peacebuilding in their communities by solving issues that could be or are sources of conflict locally.
- **Another innovation is related to the support to the Electoral Observatory cell** which integrates gender-based violence indicators in the kit of indicators to be observed by the electoral monitors, mitigating one of the risks of promoting women empowerment and mainstreaming GBV issues into main interventions in electoral processes as an important stream of political participation and decision making.
- A third innovation is the facilitation of **advocacy forums for rural women to dialogue and express their needs and interests to decision makers.** Due to rural women's systemic exclusion, this output created precedence and ground for strengthening rural women's participation in decision making forums. Although the forum created under the project is not sustainable, it was a one-off event, the rural women have been trained on advocacy and those skills can be capitalized on to facilitate more inclusive local decision-making forums.

## Support to political dialogue and national reconciliation in Guinea-Bissau

**Short description:** Support the political process by enabling constructive dialogue among key political stakeholders and advance the national reconciliation process, including through the preparatory work for the National Conference "Paths to Peace and Development"

**Implementing Partners:** OCNC (Organizing Commission of the National Conference), NGO *Liga de Direitos Humanos*, Tiniguena, INEP, Women Council, WMN, Faculty of Law

### Key findings

#### Relevance

Overall, the project was relevant to the mandate of UNIOGBIS, the mandate of the UN PBC and the PBF Strategic Plan for 2017-2019, as well as to the decisions/communiqués of ECOWAS and the African Union on Guinea-Bissau. The project was relevant also given its support to the Conakry Agreement reforms and the Stability Pact (that became a key priority for the Government).

#### Efficiency

The project had an operational implementation rate of 70%, with delivery rates specially slowed during the first year of operation due to political crises and stalemate at the National Assembly. Additionally, several factors may have impacted upon the Project's efficiency, including: i) lengthy and complicated procurement procedures; ii) delayed disbursement of funds to grant recipients; iii) lack of political will from OCNC to absorb technical inputs and expertise; iv) the extent to which UNIOGBIS managed to orient the UNVs involved to the UN-system and reporting obligations; v) management of the UNV's; and vi) a lack of internal clarity and agreement between UNIOGBIS and the PBF office as to extent to which the Project should support mediations at the local level and the ultimate goals of such support.

#### Effectiveness and main achievements

**The Project to a large extent achieved and surpassed the indicators in its Results Framework.**

**Outcome 1: Political stakeholders engage in dialogue to address the current crisis and root causes of instability through the strengthening of national capacities for dialogue on political and institutional reform issues**

- Women's Council for Dialogue Facilitation (*Conselho das Mulheres*) (WC) capacitated to take on a role as a facilitator and convenor of dialogue, holding 6 individual meetings with the President of the Republic, Parliament and a series of individual meetings with Political Parties leaders as well as other CSOs.
- The Project enabled WC to hold the first Women's Forum (WF) in May 2018. More than 800 women attended the first Forum from 70 different women's associations —the National Forum of Women and Girls for Peace. The second Forum occurred in January 2019, with 600 women. These events gave women an opportunity to discuss issues related to reconciliation and to formulate recommendations for key political actors. Moreover, approximately 500 persons (400 female, 100 youth) representing various social segments, including women, youth, traditional leaders and local/regional political leaders, participated in nine regional forums held in all regions in 2018.
- The Women Mediators Network (WMN) received trainings on conflict prevention, women's rights, and on how to effectively intervene in land conflict surrounding the resettlement in Djobel and Arame.
- Mapping of community conflict and mediation actors in six regions of Guinea-Bissau.
- Forum on Peace and Security held on June 2019 by the Women's Council on peace and stability, with the participation of 140 women, the main political parties and CSOs.

- Capacity building of CSOs to advocate for the implementation of the “road map” and the Conakry Agreement. Workshops were held focusing on the justice and security sectors, political and electoral reforms and constitutional law and administration.
- Consultations followed in each region of the country to present results of the workshops and status of the reforms. The Network was supported to produce radio programmes and a documentary report on the status of the reforms and citizen engagement. The next step was to lobby and advocate with members of Parliament, which was hindered by the political situation.
- Support to the Annotated Constitution - prepared with Project support by the Faculty of Law of Bissau. In total, 283 of the 313 articles of the Constitution were reviewed.
- Establishment of a “CSO Network for Guinea-Bissau”: in 2019, six CSOs were selected as the first members of the Network: “Tiniguena”; “Liga”; “Amic”; “Aloof”; “RENAJ” and “RENARC”. These CSOs monitor not only the six reforms of the Conakry Agreement and the Stability Pact, but also their respective areas of experience: environmental rights, justice and human rights, rights of children, women’s rights, youth, and communications and media. The CSO Network has undertaken regional consultations on key reforms. This outreach and monitoring enable civil society to prioritize their work on the reforms.

**Outcome 2. Political and civil society actors representing various segments of the Bissau-Guinean society actively and jointly engage in the process of design of an institutionalized national reconciliation process as a unifying national objective**

- OCNC raised awareness, published the report “*Em Nome da Paz*”<sup>2</sup>, and built a website and communications capabilities, increasing its visibility in Guinea-Bissau and within the Diaspora.
- Trainings and workshops were provided to the OCNC on different models and scenarios pursued by other countries on conflict reduction, mediation and reconciliation and stability.
- UNIOGBIS supported OCNC consultation meetings in the regions and with technical advice in designing communications materials.
- A campaign to sensitize the population about national reconciliation and OCNC activities was developed - OCNC produces videos and a song for peace building.
- Project Support to the OCNC’s work on the “Stability Pact”.
- Support to OCNC to undertake regional consultations in 2019 surrounding the report “*Em Nome da Paz*”. OCNC also conducted outreach sessions for the Bissau-Guinean diaspora in Lisbon and in Dakar on the publication and the “roadmap” for peace; attended by over 600 persons.
- Micro-grant to INEP<sup>3</sup> for Educating Citizens on the National Conference and Reforms. INEP deployed a team around the country to capture opinions from the entire territory. Many towns, ethnic groups, men, women, the elderly and youth were canvassed. INEP was able to produce a photo display and a television documentary, aimed at helping citizens to better understand their own country and its history. Nevertheless, the final exhibition did not take place.

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<sup>2</sup> The report touches upon themes of justice, good governance, structural reforms, human rights and equality, and national reconciliation and peace. Over 3,000 people, including all socio-economic groups were interviewed in the formulation of the report. The role of the judiciary and courts is examined, as well as that of the defence and security forces. Other key issues include economic issues; unemployment; monetary policy; youth; Gender and the current political crises (Evaluation Report).

<sup>3</sup> National Institute of Studies and Research



## Impact

The Project managed to open avenues for political dialogue with key political actors in Bissau and place women near or at the table of power which was highly relevant to the reform process and to achieving the goals of UN Resolution 1325. It also made significant impact and contributions to political dialogue and peace in Guinea-Bissau during 2018 and 2019 and marked the first time that many organizations came together to seek a solution to the political crises in Guinea-Bissau.

The success of the Women's Council to hold meetings with political stakeholders in Bissau such as the President, PAIG, the President of the ONA, the President of the Supreme Court and others, and the institutionalization of the annual Women's Forum is the most successful and impactful aspect of the Project at the higher political level.

The Project was successful in strengthening the capacity of CSOs to hold workshops and dialogues surrounding the Conakry Agreement's reforms. A CSO Network was formed with Project support to monitor progress towards the reforms and conduct regional consultations. This is perceived to have positioned these CSOs to communicate more effectively and advocate for reform.

The Project's grant to the Faculty of Law of Bissau to prepare an annotated Constitution appears to be a particularly successful output of the project.

The Project supported the OCNC to hold consultations in the regions; to become more visible; to communicate with the Bissau-Guinean diaspora; and print copies of the report "Em Nome da Paz", which increased awareness among the population at large and national level political actors of the reform process and different types of reconciliation models that could be appropriate for Guinea-Bissau. Yet, as of early-2020, no date for the National Conference had yet been set by the President.

## Sustainability

The Women's Forum gave women an opportunity to discuss issues related to reconciliation and to formulate recommendations for key political actors. This is cited by UNIOGBIS and in reports of the UN SG as a major accomplishment. The Women's Forum decided to reconvene every two years on the commemoration of Guinean Women's Day. Nevertheless, further capacity building of Women's Council is needed to establish a clear strategy and vision for the future and its resource requirements to conduct trainings for women's organizations.

There is a question as to the sustainability of the CSO Network going forward, as the members of the Network informed the Evaluation that there is no regular plan of meetings.

## Gender mainstreaming

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## Lessons learned

- The Project could have focused more on helping citizens from rural areas to voice their concerns more effectively to political actors in Bissau—especially the inequalities between the urban elites and the peoples of the interior. This divide shows itself in the continuing political divide between the landed and educated class and those from rural areas.
- There is a lack of comprehensive documentation on the numbers of trainings (locations and participants) as well as numbers of mediations conducted by members of the WMN. There could have been a more robust documentation of results and support to the CSOs to record their achievements.



- The Project did not sufficiently take advantage of the youth capacities to ensure their voice in the high-level political dialogue. Youth groups were included in activities, but this was somewhat “tangential”. Although the Project apparently never managed to generate a proper agenda for youth, many youth organizations received indirect support.
- Assessments of UNIOGBIS and UNDP were not without criticism—primarily concerning delays in disbursement of funds and payments. Overall, Project partners highly valued the UN and its support.

## Main Recommendations for future programming

### General recommendations

- **It is important that the project design phase of a project include sufficient time to map the needs of all anticipated project beneficiaries** and assess their capacities for absorbing technical advice.
- **Embedding consultants or UNV staff in a government partner can lead to certain risks** (i.e., that consultants will align themselves too closely with the institutions; or that technical advice will not be welcomed) that can be mitigated by managing the expectations of partners and providing communication of the scope and purpose of such technical advice.

### Specific recommendations

- When women and youth from rural areas are included in political dialogues, this ensures that their voices reach political actors in Bissau, reinforces the equal rights of women and links women to the reforms of the “road map”. Also, **it is important to incorporate Guinea-Bissau’s “non-elites” into the leadership structures of such groups as the Women’s Council**; allowing them to participate and make visible the impacts of the political crises on the lives of people from rural areas.
- **Future projects should contain more robust outputs for youth CSOs at the local level to build their capacity to become more involved in the high-level stabilization efforts/dialogues** and raise the profile of youth networks with powerholders in Bissau. This is needed to give youth networks high-level visibility and enable their involvement in negotiation.
- Further capacity building of the Women’s Council is needed to establish a strategy and vision for the future and its resource requirements to conduct trainings for women’s organizations.
- Supported CSOs need more training on independent means of financing and building their institutional governance to ensure sustainability.
- **Continued focus on alternative dispute resolution at the local level; working with traditional leaders and communities; and empowering women and most vulnerable groups to bring their voices to Bissau is an important peacebuilding work.**
- **Any future project that supports mediations in Guinea-Bissau should incorporate a mechanism (database) to track the type, location and numbers of mediations as well as their outcome** in order to systemize these and allow analysis, data, information and lessons learned to inform “upstream” higher-level political dialogues and reforms.
- **PBF and UNDP should continue to explore ways to reinforce the format for the reflections upon a reconciliation model within the political and social sector and to facilitate the participation of civil society in the process.** It is recommended that the UN support the national reconciliation/transitional mechanism identified by the National Conference or other entity, provided that such mechanism fully complies with UN guidelines on amnesty and other human rights-based considerations.

## Best practices

- **The Project's approach to communication and knowledge management was strong.** CSOs were furnished with materials to use in their workshops and publications for dissemination to the public, and the UN Mission was also heavily involved in supporting stakeholders to communicate their work with the public and the promotion of reforms and consultations surrounding the Conakry Agreement reforms.