

Peacebuilding Support Office
Civil Society Space Report - Input

The Peacebuilding Fund's engagement with civil society

Under its Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI), for the second year running the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) has supported both United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes and civil society organisations as direct recipients of funding for peacebuilding. The Peacebuilding Fund has approved 16 innovative peacebuilding projects of national and international civil society organizations in 10 countries since 2016 for a total of \$15.2 million. There is additionally a requirement for all projects of both UN and civil society under this initiative to allocate approximately 40% of funding to local civil society organizations as implementing partners. The PBF GYPI has helped the PBF exceed the fifteen per cent target of peacebuilding funding to gender equality and women's empowerment established in the 2010 Secretary-General's Seven Point Action Plan, reaching twenty per cent for the first time in 2016. Furthermore, PBF became the first donor to contribute to the implementation of Security Council resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security.

The special calls provide opportunities to test innovative approaches and engage under-utilized constituencies for peace. They provide the ability to increase partnerships with civil society actors in the context of the implementation of sustaining peace. GYPI projects include innovative interventions and approaches to address a particular peacebuilding challenge, such as facilitating women's and/or young people's access to decision-making bodies, creative ways to integrate gender and/or youth in justice and SSR processes, and projects involving the use of social media and innovative technologies.

GYPI CSO projects were particularly successful in articulating strong youth-inclusive peacebuilding project proposals that linked youth's empowerment and participation of young women and men to positive peacebuilding outcomes and focused on young people as political actors and engaged citizens while articulating solid gender considerations. This important UN-CSO partnership thus helps in building a body of good practices and innovative interventions, particularly on youth-inclusive peacebuilding.

In addition to this initiative, the Peacebuilding Fund is partnering with civil society organizations on programme design, including in Madagascar and Niger, and is piloting community based monitoring and evaluation through civil society organizations, including in Niger, PNG and Sri Lanka.

Another example of effective CSO partnership is the PBSO and Interpeace/IPAT Memorandum of Understanding signed in May 2017. In this MoU the partners "declare their intention to collaborate in the development of a joint programme of work establishing a surge capacity to support UN country teams to produce effective conflict prevention and peacebuilding programmes responding to high quality conflict analysis; and reinforce the

capacities of UN country teams to carry out conflict analysis and programmatic response, through “learning by doing” training courses. This country support has been the most concrete in the current exercises in Mali and Guinea-Bissau.

In Guinea-Bissau, Interpeace/IPAT is supporting the development of the next phase of PBF engagement in Guinea-Bissau after the end of current Peacebuilding Priority Plan. It has provided technical expertise as well as the facilitation of a national stakeholders’ workshop focusing on conflict analysis and the definition of strategic priorities (19-21 September). In addition, Interpeace/IPAT co-facilitated with PBSO the project development workshop held in Bissau on 26-28 September. Finally, technical support in form of backstopping of project documents will occur until the submission of projects to PBSO.

In Mali, Interpeace supported the UN Country Team by facilitating a ‘project clinic’ on project design at the beginning of the PBF second proposal development phase. The clinic was delivered in Bamako on 13-14 September and focused on developing and articulating a clear theory of change / peacebuilding added-value for each project with the applicant organizations applying for PBF funding. Interpeace will now provide ongoing support and guidance during the proposal development process, with at least two rounds of written and oral feedback on draft proposals. This phase of the Interpeace/IPAT intervention will focus on jointly reviewing the draft project proposals with each of the applicant organizations in order to provide concrete coaching and guidance on further refining the project design. This will be delivered remotely on an ongoing basis.

Youth, peace and security agenda and civil society (Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security requested by Security Council resolution 2250; co-led by PBSO)

Civil society organizations have played a critical role in the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2250 in December 2015, particularly in advocacy. SCR 2250 requested a Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security and civil society are critical partners, including by providing inputs, mobilizing youth, creating networks and ensuring that the voice of youth, particularly hard-to-reach youth is included.

The Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding was established in 2012 as part of the broader UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) and is co-chaired by the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), the United Network of Youth Peacebuilders (UNOY) and Search for Common Ground (SFCG). This is rather unique in the UN. It brings together a wide constituency of civil society organizations, including youth-led and youth-focused organizations, UN entities, donors, academia and inter-governmental bodies providing overall guidance and support to the growing community of practice on youth, peace and security (YPS). The WG-YPB helps coordinate ways to translate SCR 2250 policy into practice; improve and amplify evidence-based practice; and support and advocate for young people’s meaningful participation in peace and security efforts globally and locally.

Since its establishment the Working Group developed the Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding, which defined nine overarching principles to ensure meaningful involvement of young people in building peace. The Guiding Principles helped shift policy discussions towards the recognition of young people's role for building peace and paved the way for the Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security and the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 in December 2015.

In addition to the Working Group, key civil society partners sit on the Steering Committee for the Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security and fulfil an important function in providing substantive guidance to the overall process. Civil society partnerships have also played an important role in the organization and facilitation of focus group discussions, and the submission of country case studies and background papers as contributions to the Progress Study.

The Peacebuilding Commission's engagement with civil society

The involvement of civil society actors in the working methods of the Peacebuilding Commission, for both knowledge-sharing and consultation, is a welcome development, enhanced since the 2016 Resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture. The inclusion of some relevant civil society actors is now common practice in PBC country-specific configuration meetings, and more innovative initiatives have included the Vice Chair of the Commission co-hosting a multi-stakeholder forum on "Sustaining pace through transition in Liberia" in Monrovia in October 2016, in anticipation of the deliberations by the Security Council on the future of UNMIL. The PBC served an important bridging role to convey civil society analysis and experience to the Security Council.

The PBC is an important platform for policy discussions with a broad range of stakeholders, including CSOs. The multi-stakeholder forum that took place in 2016 is a good example of how the Commission can enrich its advisory role to the Security Council by engaging various partners. The Commission also convened discussions on good practices in peacebuilding, with a focus on transitions, where a CSO from Sierra Leone shared the views of civil society in that country. The PBC annual sessions, created to foster the Commission's partnerships role, have also been used to give space to CSOs to engage on thematic issues.