



The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund

The Gambia




PEACEBUILDING
FUND

AUGUST 2021

PBF Investments in

TOTAL APPROVED  **\$18.7 M**

CURRENT PORTFOLIO  **\$14.2 M**

Focusing on

-  Transitional Justice
-  Good governance and leadership
-  Youth Participation
-  Reintegration of returnee Migrants
-  Climate Security
-  Rule of law

Partners



PEACEBUILDING CHALLENGES

In 2016, the refusal by President Jammeh to accept defeat in the presidential election triggered a constitutional crisis and a military intervention by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Negotiations resulted in Jammeh's peaceful departure and President Barrow's inauguration as The Gambia's third president in January 2017. Since then, The Gambia has been undergoing a peaceful democratic transition. Moving quickly to show The Gambia's citizens the benefits of democratic and accountable governance, the new Government immediately sought the assistance of the United Nations and the international community in support of a reform agenda that included overhauling the country's institutions, laying a new foundation of respect for the rule of law, addressing past human rights' abuses, promoting national reconciliation and opening the public space.







PEACEBUILDING FUND IN ACTION

The PBF was an early responder to the transition priorities in The Gambia, approving a first package of \$3.1 million in 2017 to support critical interventions in the areas of transitional justice - including the establishment of the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) - security sector assessment and reform, and strengthened coordination in the President's Office.

The Fund supported nation-wide consultations on the establishment of the TRRC and provided guidance to the Government regarding its operationalisation, including on the creation of its Secretariat and the training of its Commissioners. The Fund facilitated the establishment of the TRRC in October 2018. In the area of Security Sector Reform (SSR), PBF support strengthened the Government's capacity to strategically coordinate the SSR process, complete an assessment of the security sector, identify key threats and gaps in the security architecture, and provide a foundation for the planning of needed reforms.

Following the Secretary-General's declaration in September 2018 of The Gambia's eligibility to access PBF resources, an additional package of \$7 million in support was approved, furthering assistance to transitional justice and human rights, and also providing support for the resolution of targeted land and natural resource conflicts, strengthened engagement of women and youth in political decision-making, and enhanced management of challenges regarding

KEY FIGURES REGARDING WOMEN & YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

-  **1,125** women in Mothers' clubs supported to settle minor conflicts in schools and community
-  Over **1,000** youths mobilized through the U-Report platform and other **1565** youths mobilized on importance of participation in decision making processes
-  **25** trainers and **13** women and young people trained in Early warning mechanism
-  Children National Assembly established with **56** female and **49** male members
-  **50** aspiring female candidates trained and mentored ahead of the 2021-2023 elections
-  **50%** increase in targeted women who believe women should be given equal opportunities to participate in politics

de-stigmatisation and psycho-social needs of returning migrants and their host communities. Between 2019 and 2020, the PBF approved nearly \$9 million to: (i) enable more accountable and inclusive governance and to promote inclusive citizen engagement with institutions and leaders, including dedicated support to youth participation and the prevention of hate speech, (ii) better understand and start to address climate change related conflicts, (iii) support enhanced access to justice by the most vulnerable with a specific focus on community policing and effective responses to sexual- and gender-based violence; and (iv) further community reintegration of returnees to the country. In 2021 the PBF is planning to (i) kick-start support to the post TRRC processes and (ii) respond to cross-border community tensions in border zones between The Gambia and Senegal

PEACEBUILDING FUND IMPACT

PBF support has helped to catalyze critical peacebuilding processes in a very short period, helping to prevent the country from collapsing into violence during this fragile transition period. Thanks in part to PBF assistance, the Government of The Gambia has made commendable progress in sustaining peace, particularly in the areas of transitional justice, constitutional review, security, judicial and civil service reform and economic development.

Most notably, the transitional justice processes and the TRRC, in particular, have generated considerable public interest and the participation of victims and their families, witnesses and perpetrators in public hearings, statement-taking, investigations and perpetrators in public hearings, statement-taking, investigations and outreach activities. Over 35,000 Gambians have been directly engaged in community-led outreach missions on the transitional justice process, including among the diaspora. The TRRC is, according to experts quoted in the New York Times, the "most accessible truth commission in history." On July 13, 2021, the Commission presented an award to UNDP, OHCHR and PBF in recognition of their support to the TRRC and the transitional justice processes.

The PBF also facilitated the establishment and operationalization of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), paving the way for increased respect for and awareness of human rights in The Gambia. With regard to SSR, the country's first National Security Policy was launched in June 2019 following an inclusive dialogue. Together with ECOWAS and the EU, PBF support contributed to the establishment of the Office of the National Security Advisor and the development of the National Security Policy and SSR Strategic Plan 2020-2024. The Fund has also been supporting increased participation of women and youth in political decision-making, which culminated in ten major parties formally committing to this goal in 2019. In addition, with the support of the Fund, the National Coordination Mechanism on Migration was launched in 2019 with the goal of leading a coordinated and strategic approach to migration governance, with the help of 6 thematic working groups.

With the Fund support, there has been increased inter-party dialogue among political leaders through activities implemented by the Inter-Party Committee (IPC), including dialogue on the Elections Bill 2020, quarterly breakfast meetings, and discussions on increased women's participation in politics. There has also been an increase in youth political participation through the establishment of the Youth Branch of the IPC. In support of the Open Governance Initiative, 15 dialogue sessions were held between public service leaders and citizens through television, radio, and town hall meetings.

The simplification of strategic plans for local councils and sensitization of the communities in four local councils led to the development of citizens' demand charters that identified priority needs of communities. Four review town hall meetings of these charters were held between council leaders and citizens where, for the first time in The Gambia, council leaders updated citizens on progress made on implementation.







PEACEBUILDING COMMISSION ENGAGEMENT

Since its initial engagement in support of a democratic transition in The Gambia in March 2017, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) has maintained its attention to and helped mobilize international support for the Government's peacebuilding priorities. In particular, the PBC has consistently expressed support for challenging reforms in the areas of security, transitional justice, constitutional review, human rights, women and youth empowerment, press freedom and good governance, all of which have been supported by the PBF. The PBC has committed to using its convening power to sustain attention to The Gambia, including in support of efforts to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

ABOUT THE PEACEBUILDING FUND

The UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund is the organization's financial instrument of first resort to sustain peace in countries or situations at risk or affected by violent conflict. The Fund may invest with UN entities, governments, regional organizations, multilateral banks, national multi-donor trust funds or civil society organizations.

KEY FIGURES REGARDING THE TRRC

- 
23 public hearing sessions held
392 witnesses testified (including **238** victims, and **100** women)
- 
 Over **2,800** videos of live footage produced and accessible publicly
- 
66 religious and traditional leaders (**27** women) sensitized on their role in reconciliation initiatives and 119 youth leaders (**54** women) engaged in Youth Leadership Fora
- 
 Over **50,000** Gambians engaged in community outreach on transitional justice
- 
90% of Gambians from a 1,200 sample felt that TRRC is performing very well or well (from a 2020 perception survey)
- 
8 gender and youth CSOs trained on support for victims