



**LIBERIA**

**PROJECT HALF YEARLY PROGRESS UPDATE**

**PERIOD COVERED: JANUARY – JUNE 2014**

<b>Project No &amp; Title:</b>	PBF/LBR/D-12: Strengthening Local and Traditional Mechanisms for Peace (Project ID 00088059)		
<b>Recipient Organization(s)<sup>1</sup>:</b>	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)		
<b>Implementing Partners (Government, UN agencies, NGOs etc):</b>	MIA/PBO (Lead) ,UNMIL, CSOs		
<b>Location:</b>	Liberia (15 counties)		
<b>Total Approved Budget :<sup>2</sup></b>	US\$ 1,500,000		
<b>Preliminary data on funds committed :<sup>3</sup></b>	US\$ 108,000	<b>% of funds committed / total approved budget:</b>	7.2%
<b>Expenditure<sup>4</sup>:</b>	US\$ 108,000	<b>% of expenditure / total budget: (Delivery rate)</b>	7.2%
<b>Project Approval Date:</b>	4 October 2013	<b>Possible delay in operational closure date (Number of months)</b>	6 months
<b>Project Start Date:</b>	4 November 2013		
<b>Expected Operational Project Closure Date:</b>	30 August 2015		
<b>Project Outcomes:</b>	County Peace Committees (CPCs) and Early Warning & Early Response (EWER) mechanisms prevent and resolve local disputes in 15 counties		
<b>PBF Focus Area<sup>5</sup></b>	2.1: National Reconciliation		

<sup>1</sup> Please note that where there are multiple agencies, only one consolidated project report should be submitted.

<sup>2</sup> Approved budget is the amount transferred to Recipient Organisations.

<sup>3</sup> Funds committed are defined as the commitments made through legal contracts for services and works according to the financial regulations and procedures of the Recipient Organisations. Provide preliminary data only.

<sup>4</sup> Actual payments (contracts, services, works) made on commitments.

<sup>5</sup> PBF focus areas are:

*1: Support the implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue (Priority Area 1):*

(1.1) SSR, (1.2) RoL; (1.3) DDR; (1.4) Political Dialogue;

*2: Promote coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflicts (Priority Area 2):*

(2.1) National reconciliation; (2.1) Democratic Governance; (2.3) Management of natural resources;

*3: Revitalise the economy and generate immediate peace dividends (Priority Area 3);*

(3.1) Short-term employment generation; (3.2) Sustainable livelihoods

*4) (Re)-establish essential administrative services (Priority Area 4)*

(4.1) Public administration; (4.2) Public service delivery (including infrastructure).

**Qualitative assessment of progress**

*For each intended outcome, provide evidence of progress during the reporting period.*

*In addition, for each outcome include the outputs achieved. (500 words max.)*

**Outcome: County Peace Committees (CPCs) and Early Warning & Early Response (EWER) mechanisms prevent and resolve local disputes in 15 counties**

Project just started activities so we are able to report on outcome; however, the achievements mentioned below will contribute towards the achievement of outcome over time.

**Output 1: County Peace Committees reactivated and strengthened in 15 counties**

Awareness on the key activities of the project and involvement of CPC was created among CPCs in Bong, Nimba and Lofa the months of February and March 2014. In the initial stage, other counties could not be reached because needed resources could not be accessed by the project team. The assessment exercise helped in informing the development and modification of project schedule, work plan and monitoring and evaluation plan.

The team conducted a technical brainstorming session in June for the development of a two year gender sensitive training module for the training of 900 members of county peace committees in two years. The session brought together twenty staff from partner agencies including Ministry of Gender, West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, Ministry of Education, Interreligious Council of Liberia, among others. A detailed report with key topics for inclusion into the training module was completed. The two year contents are being developed and will commence rollout during the next reporting period.

To ensure the harmonization of peace structures in counties and prepare them to serve as active facilitators of peace in their respective communities, the team along with UNMIL in July of 2014 conducted a field assessment covering twelve counties namely: Bong, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, Maryland, River Gee, Grand Kru, Grand Bassa, Rivercess, Grand Cape Mount, Bomi and Gbarpolu. Despite difficulties and the lack of timely support, the team conducted the exercise gathering vital information relating to the status of CPC in those counties while identifying other structures and capacities for peace available. A full report is being completed that will feed into the holding of a peace structure harmonization workshop currently being planned for quarter three.

In collaboration with other project units of the MIA, a draft communication strategy which will serve as the overall strategy for the reconciliation programme, was developed. Validation and approval process is on-going. A project specific visibility and branding plan is being developed as part of this overall strategy.

**Output 2: Early Warning and Early Response Centers established and functional at 3 Regional Hubs (Bong, Grand Gedeh and Maryland)**

The project team started activities under this output by conducting a desk review on the establishment of the EWER Centers, leading to the holding of an inception briefing with authorities of MIA, UNDP and UNMIL. Consultations were held with key actors in the Justice and Security sector with the goal of creating awareness and solicit their support and cooperation in the setting up of EWER centers at the three regional hubs. We have assurance that there is a room available at the Gbarnga hub for the first center which will be operational by the end of August 2014 and managed by volunteers from the Gbarnga EWER Working Group. Modalities are being worked out for the location of office space at the other two hubs.

The EWER data is stored on an internet based platform managed by the National EWER Working Group. The web address is [www.lern.ushahidi.com](http://www.lern.ushahidi.com) A project result is to include disaster-related indicators on this platform. In order to do this, two sessions of the Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Working Group were held to review LERN indicators/categories. A final revision and inclusion will take place during the Working Group planning retreat scheduled to be held in August. Collaborative meetings for improvement will also be held with the Liberia National Red Cross Disaster Response Unit.

**Output 3: CSOs and CBOs capacity strengthened to support CPCs to respond to emerging threats to peace at the district and communities to prevent and resolve conflict**

4 Consultative meetings were held with CSOs intended to solicit ideas on the best mechanism to be used for the awarding of small grants to CSOs and CBOs. As a result, a detailed mechanism was developed and put in place along with key partners including UNMIL and UNDP. Request for

	<p>proposals was published and Proposals received by the project. A committee was set up to review and examine the proposals during the reporting period. An amount of US\$ 155,000 will be awarded by the end of October 2014 to help support the efforts of qualified peace committees at the community level in resolving and managing violent conflicts under the small grant scheme.</p> <p><b>Other Results:</b></p> <p>The recruitment of 4 project staff, an achieved output that has contributed to initial achievement of many activities during the reporting period including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up of a Project Management Office at the Ministry of Internal Affairs (ground floor of the PBO building).</li> <li>• Annual Work Plan for 2014 was reviewed and finalized;</li> <li>• Completion and submission of procurement plan;</li> <li>• A comprehensive M&amp;E Plan was developed. The plan sets the basis for field monitoring etc. during the implementation of the project.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Do you see evidence that the project is having a positive impact on peacebuilding? (250 words max.)</i></p>	<p>It is too early to determine but from field visits conducted so far, there is a lot of anxiety on the part of project participants which signals the fact that there are hopes that the necessary impact will be made in the time to come.</p>
<p><i>Were there catalytic effects from the project in the period reported, including additional funding commitments or unleashing/unblocking of any peace relevant processes? (250 words max.)</i></p>	<p>Yes. As we were working to jumpstart the project activities, the Government of Liberia announced that it was committing an additional US\$ 3 million to the reconciliation process. A significant part (still not clear on how much) of this money will be used to carry out activities that will complement those in this project. For example, a portion of this money will be used to set up two additional Early Warning Early Response (EWER) centers in two concession areas namely Grand Bassa and Grand Cape Mount.</p>
<p><i>If progress has been slow or inadequate, provide main reasons and what is being done to address them. (250 words max.)</i></p>	<p>Firstly, the project started with a very slow start. It took almost five months to commence start-up activities. Project staff recruitment was not done until the second quarter of 2014 making it impossible to carry out key activities of the work plan. Progress has been slower than anticipated due to a very complex medium of communication with UNDP. Until recently, an effective feedback mechanism was not in place causing delays in implementation of key activities. For example, under the current</p>

	<p>mechanism, UNDP handles almost all requests and coordinates all payments, much of which is not timely executed, creating bottlenecks to timely implementation. To solve this problem, towards the end of quarter two, the project team intensified its engagement with key staff at UNDP including promptly alerting senior officials of delays when it became very necessary. Additionally, the PBO is planning a DIM to NIM workshop in July which is anticipated to help UNDP's partners, including the project team, to better understand the current project implementation modalities.</p>
<p><i>What are the main activities/expected results for the rest of the year? (250 words max.)</i></p>	<p>For the rest of the year 2014, key project activities will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete the assessment of peace structures and the holding of harmonization and restructuring workshops.</li> <li>- Holding of training workshop for 200 CPC members (reducing project target of 900) members of county peace committees from seven counties namely Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Margibi, Grand Gedeh, Margibi and Montserrado.</li> <li>- Support the development and implementation of CPC Action Plan.</li> <li>- Set up conflict early warning and early response centers at two of the three targeted regional hubs.</li> <li>-Deliver three training and provide training materials and logistical support to the Conflict early warning working group in hub regions.</li> <li>-Provide financial support to at least 8 selected CSOs and CBOs to intervene in conflicts and facilitate dialogues using small grant mechanism developed in previous quarter.</li> <li>-Assess and strengthen existing institutional capacities of national CSOs and CBOs for conflict resolution, management and transformation</li> <li>- Recruit, train and provide incentives for 50 Early Warning Focal Persons</li> <li>-Develop and support project visibility plan.</li> <li>- Development of a two year gender sensitive training module.</li> <li>- Conclude validation and commence roll-out of the communication strategy.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Is there any need to adjust project strategies/ duration/budget etc.? (500 words max.)</i></p>	<p>The strategies remain strong with no need to adjust. However, due to delay in the commencement of key activities coupled with delays in processing requests through UNDP system, there may be a need to adjust the project end date by requesting a six month non-cost extension. Appropriate actions will be taking during the coming weeks in this regard.</p>

<p>Are there any lessons learned from the project in the period reported? (500 words max.)</p>	<p>We have planned to gather lessons learned during monitoring visits and the project M&amp;E plan has been developed to facilitate learning. However, due to the late commencement of the project, no monitoring visit was conducted yet. The project team will be in a better position to report on some lessons in the 2014 annual report.</p>
<p>What is the project budget expenditure to date (percentage of allocated project budget expended by the date of the report) – preliminary figures only? (250 words max.)</p>	<p>To date, the project has expended approximately 7.2%. This however excludes funds already committed through contracts and purchase orders currently awaiting payment. When added, the total is estimated at 8.72%. The slow start of the project due to previously mentioned delays contributed to this low rate; notwithstanding, it is important to also note that the project was designed in a way that most of the funds for year one are to be expended in quarters three and four of 2014.</p>
<p>Any other information that the project needs to convey to PBSO (and JSC) at this stage? (250 words max.)</p>	<p>A need to consider a possible request for a six month non-cost extension is necessary. Bureaucratic bottlenecks caused the project to commence at a very slow pace. Though we expect more challenges, we can rapidly adjust and effectively deal with the management of each of the triple constraints (cost, scope and schedule) if this adjustment is approved when the official request is made.</p>

**INDICATOR BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT:** *Using the Project Results Framework as per the approved project document- provide an update on the achievement of key indicators at both the outcome and output level in the table below. Where it has not been possible to collect data on indicators, state this and provide any explanation in the qualitative text above.*

	<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Indicator Baseline</b>	<b>End of project Indicator Target</b>	<b>Current indicator progress</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance/ Delay (if any)</b>	<b>Adjustment of target (if any)</b>
<b>Outcome 1:</b> County Peace Committees (CPCs) and Early Warning & Response (EWER) mechanisms prevent and resolve local disputes in 15 counties	Outcome Indicators: 1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4	Report on outcome indicators due annually	Report on outcome indicators due annually	Progress towards achieving the Outcome is listed below under the various Outputs (still too early to report on progress)	N/A this reporting period	None
<b>Output 1:</b> County Peace Committees reactivated and strengthened in 15 counties	Indicator 1.1.1: # of peace structures including County Peace Committees assessed, re-activated and strengthened	7 counties CPCs partially functional and access limited support (Sep 2013)	13 CPCs structures fully functional by 2016	Peace structures including CPCs in 12 counties assessed  Reactivation and strengthening of peace structures including CPCs in progress	Late commencement of project activities including delays in the hiring of project staff, acquiring of office space, and work plan approval process, etc.	None

	<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Indicator Baseline</b>	<b>End of project Indicator Target</b>	<b>Current indicator progress</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance/ Delay (if any)</b>	<b>Adjustment of target (if any)</b>
	Indicator 1.1.2: # of CPCs trained in conflict mediation leadership and general peacebuilding	325 CPC members trained (Sept. 2013)	900 CPC members trained, of which at least 30% women (December 2015)	Technical brainstorming session for the development of a gender sensitive training Curriculum/module held. Training of 200 to take place in Q3-4	Late commencement of project activities including delays in the hiring of project staff, acquiring of office space, and work plan approval process, etc.	None at this time
	Indicator 1.1.3: % of CPCs and target communities benefited from small grants to intervene in emerging conflict	7 CPCs benefited from grants to address conflict at local level (Sept. 2013)	13 CPCs access grants to address local conflict	CPC and other county peace structures are being accessed. During the second half of the year, action plans will be developed and support grants will be provided	Late commencement of project activities including delays in hiring project staff.	None
	Indicator 1.1.4: # of CPCs deployed and functional	0 CPC anchored within county council (September 2013)	At least 7 CPCs anchored within the County Council (CC) once the CC is functional	Not started	Due to commence in quarter 4 of 2014	None
<b>Output 2:</b> Early Warning and Early Response centers	Indicator 2.1.1: # of Counties with EWER working group	4 Counties EWER Working Group in place	30 CPC nominated EWER reporters recruited and trained in 7 counties of which	Recruitment is on-going. Training to be held in quarter 4 of 2014		

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established and functional at 3 Regional Hubs (Bong, Grand Gedeh and Maryland)	and monitors in place at county and district levels responding to threats and escalation of violence	(Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Grand Gedeh) (Sep 2013)	at least 30% women (August 2016) 95 EWER reporters trained in 13 counties (August 2016)			
	Indicator 2.1.3: % of support to EWER center	0	50% logistical support including computer, transport, communication, etc. (August 2016)	Computers procured. Additional support to be provided once centers are set up.	Late commencement of project activities including delays in the hiring of project staff, acquiring of office space, and work plan approval process, etc.	None
<b>Output 3:</b> CSOs and CBOs captivity strengthened to support CPCs to respond to emerging threats to peace at the district and communities to prevent and resolve conflict	Indicator 3.1.1: # of mechanisms in place to access grants  Indicator 3.1.2: # of CSOs and CBOs awarded small grants  Indicator 3.1.3: # of conflicts collectively	8 CPCs/CBOs benefited from PBF funds (Oct 2013)	25 CPC/CBO benefit from PBF funds by September 2015	Small grant acquisition mechanism in place. Proposals being received. Grants to be disbursed beginning quarter 3 of 2014		None

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	(CSOs, CBOs including CPCs) resolved, mitigated and alerts provided for timely response					