



Peacebuilding Fund

FINAL PROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: 16 DECEMBER 2009 – 31 DECEMBER 2010

Submitted by:

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Country and Thematic Area²:

Sierra Leone, Peace Consolidation

Programme No: PBF/SLE/J-4

MDTF Office Atlas No: 00073335

Programme Title:

Independent Review Panel

Participating Organization(s):

UNDP, UNIPSIL

Implementing Partners:

- **National counterparts**
Office of the President

Programme Budget (from the Fund):

USD 25,000

Programme Duration (in months):

Start date³: 16 December 2009

End date: 31 December 2010

¹ The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

² E.g. Priority Area for the Peacebuilding Fund; Thematic Window for the Millennium Development Goals Fund (MDG-F); etc.

³ The start date is the date of the first transfer of funds from the MDTF Office as Administrative Agent.

I. Purpose

In March 2009, Sierra Leone was hit by the biggest eruption of violence since the end of the conflict in 2002. Violent clashes involving the supporters of the two main parties resulted in multiple injuries and destruction. On April 2, the two parties publicly pledged to work together to prevent further political violence in the country. In a Joint Communiqué signed in front of President and witnessed by the ERSG, the APC and the SLPP vowed to “work jointly in preventing all forms of political incitement, provocation and intimidation”.

In this regard, it was critical to determine the cause of the clashes. To that end, the establishment of an Independent Review Panel was called for by Government. The Panel was charged with the following responsibilities:

1. Reviewing and determining the circumstances as well as establishing the facts relating to the incidents of political violence that occurred during March 2009 in Pujehun, Freetown and Kenema, as well as the role and responsibilities of political parties, law enforcement agencies or any other persons or groups in relation to the incidents of political violence and intolerance;
2. Making necessary findings or conclusions that shall provide a full understanding of the circumstances that resulted in the incidents; and
3. Recommending measures to be taken and mechanisms to be put in place to effectively prevent the occurrence of any such incidents in the future.

It was expected that the Panel’s work will in the medium to long-term contribute to the following outcomes:

1. Reduction in political violence and intolerance;
2. Promotion of transparency;
3. Help foster reconciliation between the political parties;
4. Advance adherence to the Joint Communiqué.

II. Resources

Financial Resources:

The project received a total of 25,000 USD from the PBF.

Human Resources:

The following Human Resources supported implementation and provided oversight:

International:

- Civil Affairs Officer – UNIPSIL;
- UNV Programme Manager (Youth and Peacebuilding) – UNDP.

National:

- Civil Affairs Officer – UNIPSIL;

- Programme Associate – UNDP.

In addition, 3 Panel Members and 1 secretary and 2 support staff made up the Independent Review Panel charged with investigating the allegations of rape and sexual abuse.

III. Implementation and Monitoring Arrangements

The programme has been directly executed by UNDP in collaboration with the UNIPSIL Political and Peace Consolidation Section. The programme design and planning carried out primarily by UNIPSIL's Political and Peace Consolidation Section while UNDP provided technical and operational advice on effective implementation. However, UNDP was responsible for the overall management of the project. Procurement was carried out by UNDP and regular monitoring and evaluation was undertaken by UNIPSIL and UNDP jointly.

IV. Results

The Panel consisted of three members supported by a secretary and two additional support staff. The main office was located at the National Stadium Hostel for public sittings in Freetown and field trips were conducted to Kenema and Pujehun for hearings from witnesses in the field. The final report was submitted to the Office of the President in July 2010. However, a White Paper is yet to be issued by the Government. The membership of the Panel was bi-partisan and both the SLPP and the APC provided nominees.

The PBF specifically provided support to the Panel as follows:

- . Refurbished and equipped office space for the Chairperson of the Panel and Panel Members;
- . Provided sitting allowances for the Chairperson and Panel Members;
- . Provided transport to and within Kenema and Pujehun for field hearings;
- . Provided DSA for the panel members while in Kenema and Pujehun;
- . Provided stationary and photocopying services;
- . Provided sensitization and publicity for the Review Panel and their work.

Since the Panel's inception, it has held several public sittings in Freetown, Kenema and Pujehun in which testimonies were heard from a wide range of witnesses including the City Mayors, representatives of the APC and SLPP, the Sierra Leone Police and bystanders. Local stakeholders gave their full support and cooperated with the Panel. The Panel further intensified its approach by interviewing additional witnesses based on information received.

Once all field visits and public hearings in Freetown, Kenema and Pujehun were completed by the end of the 1st Quarter of 2010, the Panel focused on analyzing the information obtained and the drafting of a findings report. In July, the Secretary to the Commission submitted the report to the Office of the President. The Panel's expertise ensured that pertinent responses were elicited from the witnesses which greatly informed the development of critical recommendations.

The Panel was initially expected to submit the report by the 15 May 2010. However, the Members could not finalize the report in time as the investigations took longer than expected as a large number of witnesses were heard. Some of the key witnesses were uncooperative and the Panel had

to issue subpoenas to ensure that they testified which added to the delays. At each stage, UNIPISL and UNDP were in touch with the Panel, providing support when necessary in order to monitor progress and ensure the report's completion.

V. Abbreviations and Acronyms

APC	All Peoples' Congress
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowance
IMC	Independent Media Commission
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
PMDC	Peoples' Movement for Democratic Change
PPRC	Political Parties Registration Commission
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
UNIPISIL	United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme