

*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

FINAL EVALUATION

CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROJECT BETWEEN CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND LIBERIA FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND SOCIAL COHESION

Final Report

Mission carried out by:

Raymond ONANA, International Consultant, Head of Mission

Julius TOGBA, National Consultant, Liberia

Adrien KOUASSI, National Consultant, Côte d'Ivoire



Peacebuilding
United Nations Peacebuilding Fund

July 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	2
LIST OF TABLES	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
I - EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE - EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND INTERVENTION APPROACH	11
1.1 Evaluation Objectives and Scope.....	11
1.2 Approach.....	12
1.3 Performance rating scale according to the evaluation criteria	12
II. PROJECT BRIEF AND KEY DATA.....	13
2.1 Overview of the Project's key data	13
2.2 Context and justification of the cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia	14
III. MAIN EVALUATION FINDINGS	15
3.1 PROJECT DESIGN.....	15
3.2 . PROJECT RELEVANCE.....	20
3.2.1. <i>Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia: an innovative initiative for prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts characterized by its cross-border dimension.....</i>	<i>20</i>
3.3 PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS.....	29
3.3.1. <i>Actual and visible achievements that demonstrate the effective implementation of the programmed activities and the delivery of the expected outputs.....</i>	<i>29</i>
3.3.2. <i>The monitoring of the indicators of progress was based on approximations due the absence of baseline and end-of-project surveys required to establish baselines, targets and the situation at project completion.....</i>	<i>30</i>
3.4 PROJECT EFFICIENCY.....	39
3.4.1. <i>Compliance with the project implementation timeline.....</i>	<i>39</i>
3.4.2. <i>Efficiency of the Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia based on the resource absorption capacity of the RUNOs.....</i>	<i>39</i>
3.4.3. <i>Project efficiency based on the use of resources.....</i>	<i>40</i>
3.4.4. <i>Efficiency of the Project steering and management mechanism</i>	<i>42</i>
3.5 PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY:.....	47
3.5.1. <i>Consolidation of the achievements of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire-Liberia: a long-term priority</i>	<i>47</i>
3.6 PROJECT IMPACT.....	51
IV. THE WAY FORWARD	57
4.1 Lessons learned	57
4.2 Main recommendations	58
CONCLUSION	59

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	: African Development Bank
ASAPSU	: Association de Soutien à l'Autopromotion Sanitaire Urbaine (Urban Health Promotion Association)
CEC	: Consultative Ethics Committee
CLIRA	: Children's Life in Rural Area
CMC	: Civil-Military Committee
CPPC	: Conflict Prevention and Peace Committee
CBPB	: Cross-Border Project Board
CSO	: Civil Society Organization
CBTMC	: Cross-Border Technical Monitoring Committee
DDR	: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DIM	: Direct Implementation Modality
DRC	: Democratic Republic of Congo
DSF	: Defense and Security Forces
ECOWAS	: Economic Community of West African States
EU	: European Union
EVD	: Ebola Virus Disease
EWER	: Early Warning and Early Response
GoL	: Government of Liberia
GPOT	: Government of Liberia Plan for UNMIL Transition
IEC	: Information - Education – Communication
IGAs	: Income Generating Activities
IOM	: International Organization for Migration
ISSSS	: International Strategy to Support Security and Stabilization for the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo
JCCEM	: Joint Council of Chiefs and Elders Meeting
JICA	: Japan International Cooperation Agency
JSC	: Joint Steering Committee
LDEA	: Liberia Drugs Enforcement Agency
LIS	: Liberia Immigration Service
LNP	: Liberia National Police
MRU	: Mano River Union
NDP	: National Development Plan
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
NIM	: National Implementation Modality
PBF	: Peacebuilding Fund
PBSO	: Peace Building Support Office

POE	: Point of Entry
PRODOC	: Project Document
RUNO	: Recipient United Nations Organization
SDG	: Sustainable Development Goal
SSS	: Strengthening the Security Sector
TD	: To Determine
UN	: United Nations
UNCT	: United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	: United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
UNMIL	: United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOCI	: United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
UNS	: United Nations System
UNV	: United Nations Volunteer
WAEMU	: West African Economic and Monetary Union

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF BASELINE DATA ON THE CROSS-BORDER PROJECT BETWEEN CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND LIBERIA	13
TABLE 2: SYNOPTIC VIEW OF THE CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE PROJECT'S PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	17
TABLE 3: PERFORMANCE OF THE INDICATORS AND LEVEL OF PROJECT'S OUTPUTS AT COMPLETION CLOSURE	31
TABLE 4: ILLUSTRATION OF THE RESOURCE ABSORPTION CAPACITY OF THE RUNOs.....	39
TABLE 5: EVOLUTION OF DENUNCIATIONS OF CRIMINAL ACTS BY THE POPULATION FROM 2016 TO 2018	52

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A final evaluation mission on the “**Cross-border Cooperation Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia for Sustainable Peace and Social Cohesion**” was conducted from 7 January to 7 March 2019 by an international consultant, with the support of two national consultants, one for Côte d'Ivoire and one for Liberia.

The mission was organized in close collaboration with project managers, implementing partners, national authorities in both countries, technical and financial partners, NGOs responsible for the project implementation in the field and the project target groups. The analyses presented in this report were conducted from a gender and human rights perspective and considered the specificities of the area covered by the Project.

Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to gather information and to adequately address the objectives of the evaluation, the mission reviewed the available project documentation and conducted individual and group interviews with implementing actors and direct recipients of the project. The meetings were alternately held in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire: from 14 - 16 January 2019 in Monrovia, from 17 - 18 January 2019 in Abidjan, from 21 - 24 January 2019 in the departments of Taï and Tabou, from 25 - 30 January 2019 in the counties of Maryland and River Gee, and from 31 January to 1 February in Monrovia.

The final evaluation of the Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia Cross border Project focused on examining its performance based on an analysis of the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the intervention.

This analysis was based on the following performance indicators:

Very satisfactory	: the expected results were achieved as - or better than expected
Satisfactory	: the positive aspects are more important than the negative aspects
Moderately satisfactory :	: the positive aspects are important, but the achievements remain fragile
Moderately unsatisfactory	: the results obtained are encouraging, but require additional efforts to meet expectations
Unsatisfactory	: the positive aspects are weak compared to the negative aspects
Very unsatisfactory	: serious gaps, very few positive aspects

THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION IS DEEMED GLOBALLY SATISFACTORY WITH AN OVERALL SCORE OF 5/6.

PROJECT PERFORMANCE

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

In the light of the findings, the implementation of the Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia is considered generally satisfactory and scores 5/6. This score is based on the average scores obtained for the different criteria that were evaluated (Relevance: 6/6; Design: 5/6; Effectiveness: 5/6; Efficiency: 4/6; Sustainability: 5/6; Impact: 5/6).

Consequently, the evaluation recommends that the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, PBSO, UNDP, IOM and all stakeholders supporting initiatives that aim at strengthening security, peacebuilding and social cohesion in both countries, continue providing support in order to preserve the gains achieved and consolidate the impact of the results that have been attained. Interventions relating to the security of persons and property, the restoration of trust between the populations and the Defense and Security Forces (DSF), social cohesion, the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts, and the development of cross-border trade, which need to be consolidated as part of a scale-up across the border area, need further support.

PROJECT PERFORMANCE RATING ACCORDING TO THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

➤ **RELEVANCE: VERY SATISFACTORY with a score of 6/6.**

- The specificity of the project lies in its cross-border dimension and was facilitated by the commitment of the stakeholders to act in a concerted manner to address the security and social cohesion challenges that prevailed between the border communities of the two countries. This was illustrated among other things by : (i) the evaluations on border security and social cohesion carried out in both countries in 2015, (ii) the high-level meeting of the Heads of State of both countries, held in Guiglo, Côte d'Ivoire in June 2016, (iii) the submission of a joint request for the project funding, (iv) the project budget allocation in equal parts between both countries, (v) the conduct of similar interventions on both sides of the border, and (vi) the development of an organizational structure involving actors of both countries.
- With regards to the coherence (between the context of the project area and the needs of the recipients), the Project results, outputs and activities focus on the root causes that have contributed to ongoing tensions and led to the displacement of many families on both sides of the border, including: (a) a weak collaboration and distrust between security forces and populations, (b) a low level of border communities protection, (c) the lack of access to land, (d) youth unemployment, (e) women's vulnerability, and (f) border porosity.
- Beyond its alignment with the SDGs (mainly the SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 16 and 17) and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Project is also in line with sub-regional and national priorities and with the cooperation programs of the development partners of both countries in the areas of security, peacebuilding, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence, i.e. : The 2013 Joint Cross-border Security Strategy for the Mano River Union (MRU), the Extension of the results achieved with the implementation of 2012-2015 National Development Plan (NDP) of Côte d'Ivoire, the 2012-2017 Agenda for Transformation of the Government of Liberia, the Transition Management Plans for UN Security Operations in both countries, and various interventions that have benefited from the support of the development partners of both countries, including the United Nations System, the EU, the PBF, Japanese Cooperation, etc.
- The evaluation team also identified some good practices that have reinforced the project's relevance. These include: (i) the consultative/participative approach which consists in involving key actors and stakeholders of both countries in decision-making processes, including the planning and implementation of activities, (ii) the special focus of the project designers on the promotion and strengthening of women and youth in the community peacebuilding process, (iii) the pragmatic approach that consists of delimiting the project's intervention area on the basis of mirror villages.

➤ **DESIGN: Overall SATISFACTORY with a score of 5/6.**

- The Project design approach was particularly outstanding in terms of project preparation: at the end of the preparation phase, most of the tools needed for the project launching, implementation and monitoring and evaluation were in place. During the project design phase, a set of risks related to the implementation of the project, as well as the resulting mitigation measures had been identified and described.
- The continued alignment of strategic choices with the development objectives of both beneficiary countries, and with the « Gender Marker Score 2 » combined with the quality of the project design precluded technical adjustments throughout implementation.
- Risks have been regularly monitored and appropriate action taken to anticipate and control their impact. One of the mitigation strategies adopted by the project for political and social risk was to focus the awareness-raising themes towards the concepts of civic and peaceful coexistence. The long lead-time required to mobilize staff and select partners or suppliers, and the inaccessibility to the project sites due to the deterioration of roads did not have a negative impact on the project implementation schedule. Further, the health risk associated with the resurgence of Ebola in Central Africa and Lassa fever in West Africa was monitored throughout the project.

- The project management arrangements highlight precautions related to: (i) the combination of the National Implementation Modality (NIM) and Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) with a view to securing the resources allocated to the project, (ii) the setting up of various entities for an effective and efficient coordination in the conduct of the operations, (iii) the existence of a Cross-Border Technical Monitoring Committee (CBTMC) comparable to a quality control mechanism for project interventions, (iv) support for national ownership through the sustained involvement of all stakeholders in decision-making, and (v) the recruitment of UNV and NGOs in the framework of the intervention strategy at the community level, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire.

➤ **EFFECTIVENESS: OVERALL SATISFACTORY with a score of 5/6.**

- The documentation made available to the evaluation team, as well as the exchanges with implementing partners and direct recipients, provide extensive information on the effectiveness of the Project's achievements, of which the completion rate is estimated at 97%. Most of the fifteen (15) activities planned in PRODOC have all been initiated or completed, but some of them need to be completed (renovation work on the Immigration Services offices in Duokodi, Kablaken and Nyaaken in Liberia).
- The overall completion rate of the project outputs upon project closure is 132.02%. This rate results from the completion average rate of the five project outputs, namely: output 1.1: 186.5%; output 1.2.: 153%; output 1.3.: 100%; output 2.1.: 91.7%; and output 2.2.: 128.7%.
- Considering the absence of complaints from recipients about the intrinsic quality of the gains achieved through the project, the evaluation mission can a priori conclude that they were of high quality, despite a few specific cases that seem to require adjustments to facilitate optimal utilization of the project benefits (motorboats acquired without an initial set of life jackets, the provision of computer equipment without previous training on their use, the provision of a stock of printer ink boxes that does not correspond to the references of the printers received, problems in the functioning of the communication system installed at Prollo, etc.).
- The assessment during the field visits leads to the conclusion that the Project has strongly contributed to the:
 - security of people and property, to the restoration of trust between the populations and the FDS through the organization of joint patrols between the Defense and Security Forces (DSF) of both countries, the instauration of community dialogues, as well as sports and socio-cultural activities, which were significant opportunities to bring communities closer together and to dismantle walls of mistrust and misunderstanding between the populations and the DSF;
 - social cohesion illustrated by testimonies from recipients and by the level of participation of members of border communities in focus groups organized by the evaluation mission;
 - prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts, as a result of the combined action of the Conflict Prevention and Peace Committees and the Civil-Military Committees;
 - the increase in cross-border trade, that is demonstrated through the fact that travelers with a valid pass or passport and an updated international vaccination booklet can now easily travel on both sides of the border.

➤ **EFFICIENCY: MODERATELY SATISFACTORY with a score of 4/6.**

- A priori, the Recipient United Nations Organizations (RUNOs) have had sufficient funds available during the entire duration of the project. Based on the new financial commitments that applied as of 3 October 2018, the overall uptake of resources is estimated at 98%.
- The project implementation started from the date of the first disbursement (31 March 2017) for the duration of 18 months, as provided in PRODOC. Based on the gap between the ProDoc signature date (9 December 2016) and the first disbursement date (31 March 2017) as well as the one no-cost extension (2 months) provided to the project, the completion of project activities were delayed. Usually, any extension beyond the initial duration planned for a project is a sign of efficiency weakness

- The project-efficiency based on the use of resources is estimated at 0.9, which corresponds to the situation of a project that is globally effective and moderately efficient due to the extremely high costs related to product delivery. Indeed, staff costs represented 18% of the total expenses while the operating cost of the project amounted to US\$ 1,458,892.34, i.e. nearly half of the total budget. This places the project beyond the conventional margins allowed by institutions such as the World Bank or the African Development Bank (AfDB).
- The institutional system put in place was characterized by its heavy procedures, and by a lack of clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities assigned to the various levels of its architectural structure. While the mission was able to document the functionality of the Cross-Border Project Steering Committee and the National Joint Steering Committees, very little information exists on the activities of the Cross-Border Technical Monitoring Committee. In addition, the positioning of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) Secretariats and their role as Co-Chairs of the National Joint Steering Committees have placed them in an operational position where they are held accountable for the project's outcomes.
- The lack of a baseline study was an obstacle to the monitoring of the Project performance indicators. Regular monitoring of the Project by the steering and supervision authorities and rigorous planning of activities as well as constant flexibility efforts among the coordination teams in both countries compensated for this.

➤ **SUSTAINABILITY: OVERALL SATISFACTORY with a score of 5/6.**

- The alignment of the project objectives with the respective national priorities of the two recipient countries, as defined in their development strategies, offers multiple opportunities to mobilize additional funding for a scale-up of the recently completed project.
- The participatory approach adopted during the design phase through broad consultations of all stakeholders involved in the project implementation translates the determination to align this initiative with the priorities and needs of the recipients. The structuring of the project's institutional structure, articulated around steering, decision-making, coordination and implementation bodies that included representatives of technical and financial partners, the Government and civil society from both countries, appears to have played a critical role in the appropriation of the project achievements and the continued inter-community dialogue for peacebuilding, security, conflict prevention and peaceful resolution, as well as capacity-building of local and cross-border mechanisms.
- The special attention paid by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to the Civilian-Military Committees (CMCs), through the direct involvement of the Secretariat of the National Security Council, which is housed in the Office of the President of the Republic, reflects the commitment and priority given by the country's highest authorities to the CMC. The process adopted for their implementation and structuring makes it possible to answer various questions relating to the sustainability of the project achievements, in particular those which refer to: (i) the availability of technical and financial capacities as well as the level of leadership that will enable partner institutions to continue working on the Project, to ensure its empowerment or the sustainability of the project achievements, and (ii) the level of ownership by institutional partners and political and administrative authorities to ensure the monitoring and consolidation of the achievements.
- The representativeness of all CMCs social categories demonstrates the intention of the project designers to ensure its integration in the field and to promote harmonious relations between the populations and the Defense and Security Forces. However, this positive contribution to the institutionalization of the CMCs could be counterbalanced by the structuring approach that was adopted (top-down approach) and by the low level of articulation and synergy of CMCs with existing comparable mechanisms.
- The sustainability of joint patrols, which were catalytic for information exchange and collaboration in the framework of security maintenance on both sides of the border, depends on the normative framework and institutionalization of both countries. Security management institutions in both countries would therefore benefit from ensuring that the identified good practices are documented and built on, that associated procedures are developed and disseminated to stakeholders in the field, and that the resources required for replication are secured.

- The enhancement of their operational capacities by the Project has empowered the border control officials and the security forces who seem more able to facilitate the quick and secure border crossing of various communities. However, the insufficient attention given to the maintenance and renewal system of the equipment obtained from the Project, leads the evaluation team to express reservations about the capacity of the national institutions to consolidate the achievements.

➤ **IMPACT: GLOBALLY SATISFACTORY with a score of 5/6.**

- The communities along the border of the project area feel better protected and valued. The combination of joint patrolling and community involvement in the Conflict Prevention and Peace Committee (CPPC) and Civilian-Military Committee (CMCs) has contributed to the deterrence or arrest of individuals involved in illegal activities, a significant decrease in abuses and acts of extreme violence against border populations, as well as the virtual disappearance of abusive controls and illegal taxations and a significant reduction in the time taken by security forces response time to emergency situations. Several cases of conflict resolution (conflicts between villages, land conflicts, interpersonal conflicts, generation conflicts, etc.) confirm the consolidation of peace and social cohesion within the border communities in the project area.
- Data collected at the Duokodi police station in Liberia illustrate the restoration of population's trust in the security forces through the evolution of denunciations of criminal acts made against the police by the people since the project launching. While in 2016, the lack of public confidence in the security forces resulted in a lack of collaboration and the retention of security information, the restoration of confidence is reflected in the flow of information to the police year after year.
- On the socio-economic level, the reports and interviews with key informants suggest that the population's living conditions will improve, as evidenced by the resumption of socio-economic activities in the project area, the development of new IGAs, and the increase in cross-border trade that results from the significant increase in the flow of people crossing the border and the increase in food supplies on both sides of the border.
- The rebuilding of social cohesion has also had an impact on health. There has been an increase in the use of the Nyaaken Clinic services in Liberia by the Ivorian population over the project implementation period, reflecting improved security, as well as the restoration of trust between cross-border communities.
- The project has had a significant impact in improving the status of women and has contributed to their empowerment within the targeted communities. Indeed, through their active involvement in the bodies bringing together civilians and the Defense and Security Forces, women have positioned themselves as key actors in the promotion of security and peacebuilding on the border between both countries. Several women claim to have not suffered physical or verbal violence since the beginning of the project activities. It is the case of 17 women out of 21 met in Bliéron as part of a focus group.

➤ **THE WAY FORWARD: LESSONS LEARNED AND MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS**

Lessons learned

- The joint approach adopted for the planning and implementation of Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia appears to be the main success factor that has driven the positive changes observed at project completion.
- The mobility of members of cross-border communities living on either side of the Cavally River will remain a challenge to socio-cultural integration and to the expansion of cross-border trade, as long as people living on both sides of the border do not benefit from identical facilities to cross the border.
- Attempts of illegal or clandestine smuggling, illegal acts of violence and taxation against persons caught in the act will continue as long as the imbalance in the number of entry points opened in both countries remains.

- *The commitment of national partners is a guarantee of sustainability that reassures technical and financial partners of a significant return on investment of the support they provide as part of their contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals*

Main recommendations

»» To the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia

- *Maintain the joint and cross-border approach in the framework of the request to be submitted to technical and financial partners for scaling-up the intervention initiated with the financial support of PBSO. Codify, disseminate and popularize the regulations on crossing formalities at entry points between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.*
- *Strengthen the partnership with technical and financial partners by providing easy access to information related to the project progress indicators*
- *Take the necessary measures for the optimal operation and maintenance of the equipment and rolling stock acquired with the support of the project*

»» To the Government of Côte d'Ivoire

- *Consider the possibility of increasing the number of crossing points on the border with Liberia.*

»» To the Government of Liberia and UNDP Liberia

- *Organize the formal acceptance of migration office buildings in Duokodi, Nyaaken, Kablaken and Fish Town that were renovated with the financial support of the project.*

»» To the RUNOs and the PBF

- *Organize a media event to present the results achieved by the Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia as well as the prospects envisaged for the capitalization of the project achievements.*

»» To the RUNOs

- *Update the data of the joint evaluations conducted on border security and social cohesion in 2015 in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire as baseline studies for the formulation of the request for funding for a subsequent phase of the project.*
- *Adopt identical approaches and intervention strategies for the implementation of the project in both countries.*
- *Respect the commitments made to ensure the visibility, among recipients, of the financial partner.*
- *Streamline the governance and operational management structure of the project with a view to enhancing its efficiency.*

»» To PBSO

- *Favourably review the funding request that could be submitted with a view to capitalizing on the project's achievements, and to scaling-up the project to a subsequent phase of a minimum duration of thirty-six (thirty-six) months*

I - EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE - EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND INTERVENTION APPROACH

1.1 Evaluation Objectives and Scope

1. The "**Cross-border cooperation project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia for sustainable peace and social cohesion**", which ended on 30 June 2018, went through an external evaluation conducted in the field from 14 January - 1 February 2019 by a team of experts composed of an international consultant, who was the head of mission, and two national consultants, one for Côte d'Ivoire and one for Liberia.
2. The terms of reference developed in this respect required that the results of the evaluation be documented under three deliverables corresponding to the main stages of the evaluators' mission, namely: (a) **the inception report** which was submitted on time and whose content was aligned to the requirements, (b) **the provisional report corresponding to deliverable n°2**, and (c) **the final report**. **Each of these last two deliverables were structured** around (i) an **Executive Summary** including a brief description of the project, the context and purpose of the evaluation, the main conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned; (ii) **an Introduction** that recalls the purpose of the evaluation, the methodology explaining how the evaluation was conducted; (iii) the main **findings** regarding the project formulation, implementation and achievements; (iv) the **Recommendations** based on the findings; (v) the **Lessons learned** on project implementation and finally (vi) the **Annexes**.
3. **The availability of all these deliverables must contribute to achieving the main objective of the evaluation**, which is to assess the performance of the Project through the review of (a) the coherence of its conceptual approach and the relevance of the targeted objectives, (b) the assessment of its effectiveness and efficiency, essentially illustrated by the quality and the level of the outputs and the achievements, as well as (c) the prospects for the consolidation and/or sustainability of the gains obtained at the end of its implementation through the changes resulting from the project activities. In this perspective, the tasks assigned to the team mobilized for this mission is to:
 - *Assess the alignment of the Project's interventions with the expectations of the targeted communities;*
 - *Assess the results obtained with the objectives initially defined in the Project;*
 - *Assess the changes resulting from the Project's interventions;*
 - *Measure progress in terms of cross-border cooperation between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia;*
 - *Evaluate the use of the funds made available to the Project in relation to the needs initially identified;*
 - *Identify the constraints related to the implementation of the Project;*
 - *Make recommendations to consolidate the achievements of the Project;*
 - *Draw general lessons from the Project that will be useful to the United Nations System agencies involved in this project and to the Government in the implementation of other programs in the same area.*
4. **To achieve these objectives, the scope of the final evaluation of the Project** concentrated on the analyses of the:
 - **Project design** (identification and formulation of the project, etc.);
 - **Project relevance** (conformity with national priorities, and with the recipient's needs, coherence with partners' interventions, etc.);
 - **Project implementation** (strategic approach, output and progress towards expected results, effectiveness of activities, effectiveness of the resources, effectiveness of the team and the implementing partners, resource efficiency as well as constraints and obstacles encountered);

- **Sustainability of the actions carried out** (the sustainability of the strategic area of intervention and of activity ownership, the level of management, the maintenance of the equipment, institutional and financial sustainability);
- **Outputs and impacts expected at the end of the project;**
- **Contribution to national capacity building in terms of cross-border cooperation** in the project intervention areas;
- **How the achievements contribute to addressing national and cross-border challenges**, in particular in terms of security, trust between security forces and communities, the restoration of the authority of the State, social cohesion, the improvement of livelihoods, etc.;
- **Overall operational effectiveness of the target structures**, and the assessment of each project component's contribution to the overall operational capacity;
- **Assessment of the partners' contribution in achieving the expected results, and the partnership synergies and resource mobilization strategies** developed to ensure sustainability beyond the closure of the project;
- **Partnership strengthening** (quality of partnership relations, added value, etc.);
- **Consideration of cross-cutting themes**, in particular gender, youth and human rights.

1.2 Approach

5. **Combining qualitative and quantitative methods to access information and adequately respond to the evaluation objectives**, the mission used available project materials, conducted semi-structured interviews (17 in Côte d'Ivoire and 30 in Liberia), and focus groups with the project implementing stakeholders and the project direct recipients (nine in Côte d'Ivoire and nine in Liberia). The team of consultants met with 310 people in both countries, including 213 in Côte d'Ivoire and 97 in Liberia. The team also visited **some of the sites where the project activities were carried out**, including: (a) Abidjan, Taï Centre, Daobly, Tabou Centre, Prollo and Bliéron in Côte d'Ivoire, (b) Monrovia, Harper, Duokodi, Kablaken, Nyaaken and Fish Town in Liberia. **The list of visited sites and people, as well as the data collection tools, are included in the appendices of the inception report.** The data collected during the meetings was used in strict compliance with the required confidentiality.

1.3 Performance rating scale according to the evaluation criteria

6. The project performance was evaluated on **the basis of a scoring scale ranging from 1 to 6** corresponding to: **1** (Very Unsatisfactory); **2** (Unsatisfactory); **3** (Moderately Unsatisfactory); **4** (Moderately Satisfactory); **5** (Satisfactory); **6** (Very Satisfactory).
7. The project performance is described as: (a) **Very satisfactory** when the activities implemented have contributed to achieve or go beyond the project expected results; (b) **Satisfactory** when the activities carried out have enabled the achievement of results whose positive aspects are more important than their negative aspects; (c) **Moderately satisfactory** when the achieved results are significant with important positive aspects but the gains remain fragile; (d) **Moderately unsatisfactory** when the results obtained are encouraging, but require additional efforts to meet expectations; (e) **Unsatisfactory** when the positive aspects of the results obtained are less compared to the negative aspects; (f) **Very unsatisfactory** when the results obtained show serious gaps with very few positive aspects.

II. BRIEF PRESENTATION AND KEY DATA OF THE CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROJECT BETWEEN CÔTE D'IVOIRE AND LIBERIA

2.1 Overview of the Project's key data

8. The data in Table 1 below was extracted from the PRODOC. It summarizes the main features of the Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

Table 1: Summary of baseline data on the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia

Project title: "Cross-border cooperation project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia for sustainable peace and social cohesion"			
Overall objective: Strengthen internal and cross-border security, social cohesion and cooperation between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia			
Duration of the intervention: 18 months			
Targeted localities: Côte d'Ivoire : Olodio, Prollo, Nero Village, Tibeken, Bleron, Dahioke, Ranouinké, Grabo, Gnato, Tai, Zagné, Faïta1 Liberia: Yobloken, Suken, Pedebo, Deke Town, Libsuco, Kablaken, Gyedebaken, Nyaaken, Yangbadour, Saykliken, Geeblaken, Zloh, Tarslah, River Gbeh/Glaro/Freetown, Welbo, Geeplaken.			
Implementing Partners: UNDP and IOM. Responsible party: UNDP			
Output	Budget		Activities
	Côte d'Ivoire	Liberia	
Outcome 1: Trust between security forces and border communities increased through capacity building of joint local and cross-border mechanisms as well as increased cooperation.			
Output 1.1: Local authorities, security forces, border officials and key government actors are trained on human rights, gender, child protection, conflict prevention and management	342 883,16	554 053, 96	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Comprehensive diagnostic assessment of capacity building needs at border entry points (PoEs)Strengthening of the operational capacities of priority PoEs for the two border regionsTraining of border service officers on human rights, gender, child protection, conflict prevention and management, community border management
Output 1.2: Relationships between security forces and communities, including women, youth and vulnerable groups, are improved through regular awareness-raising and mobilization campaigns on relevant issues, such as law, human rights, conflict resolution, social cohesion, peaceful coexistence, etc.	470 584	323 953, 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Facilitation of dialogue between security institutions/forces and the communitiesOrganization of awareness and advocacy campaigns through radio broadcasts and IEC materialsOrganization of inter-community sports competitions/cultural activities and confidence/peace-building campaigns between institutions/safety forces and communities
Output 1.3: Cross-border security strengthened through regular dialogue, information sharing and joint patrols.	147 348	163 953,8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Alternating mobilization, dialogue and coordination of stakeholders in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders on both sides of the border, through cross-border dialogues/meetings between community leaders, security agencies and relevant entitiesSetting up of channels for regular information exchange between the concerned bodies in each country, in particular along the bordersConduct of periodic joint patrols along the border between the two countries, with acceptance that available resources and support should be used for the mutual benefit of both countries
TOTAL RESULT 1	960 815,16	1 041 961,56	
Outcome 2: Social cohesion and peaceful coexistence within cross-border communities are improved through frameworks for dialogue between cross-border communities as well as enhanced cooperation resulting from local conflict resolution mechanisms and socio-economic and cultural exchanges			
Output 2.1: Local and cross-border mechanisms for resolving and preventing cross-border conflicts reinforced.	268 067	193 953,8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identification and strengthening of existing community mechanisms for conflict prevention and managementSupport to data / information collection and dissemination to communities and relevant government structures
Output 2.2: The rapprochement of cross-border communities, stability and social cohesion strengthened through joint socio-cultural and economic activities.	172 987	165 953,8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Setting up of a joint committee for the organization of cross-border activitiesOrganization of cross-border trade fairs, in collaboration with the Mano River Union, local media and other relevant national and regional organizations, aimed at considering related local economic development opportunitiesSupport to community-based organizations in the organization of cross-border cultural exchanges and sports activities for public officials, police forces and communities aimed at strengthening relationshipsOrganization of biannual joint visits and review meetings (one in Liberia and one in Côte d'Ivoire) to assess progress.
TOTAL RESULT 2	441 054	359 907,60	
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	1 401 869,16	1 401 869,16	
MANAGEMENT FEES 7%	98 130,84	98 130,84	
TOTAL	1 500 000,00	1 500 000,00	

2.2 Context and justification of the cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia

9. **The Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia cross-border project intervention area context is described in the PRODOC as one that is characterized by recurrent crises since 2002, which have led the United Nations to set up peacekeeping operations in these two countries.**
10. Indeed, it is in 2003, following the signing of the Peace Treaty in Liberia, that the United Nations System established the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) with a mandate to protect the Liberian authorities and the civilian population from threats of physical violence, to support the reform of security and justice institutions, including the promotion, protection and monitoring of human rights, and to protect United Nations staff.
11. UNMIL interventions that received financial support from the PBF focused on reducing tensions and incidents of violence in border communities between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. The threats that these tensions posed to peace and security in one of the two countries had a direct impact on the development of the other. Beyond tensions and acts of violence, border communities in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire that share many socio-economic and cultural dynamics have also seen the social cohesion they maintained eroded and observed a substantial decrease in their interactions due to the emergence and spread of the Ebola virus (EVD) disease that appeared in Liberia and Guinea in March 2014. The outbreak of this epidemic in both countries led to the closure of the international land borders between Côte d'Ivoire and these two neighbouring countries, which contributed to the impoverishment of Liberian border communities.
12. Similar to the one established in Liberia, the United Nations Security Council, established with its resolution of 4 April 2004, the UNOCI (United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire) with a mandate to facilitate the implementation of the Peace Agreement signed in January 2003 by the Ivorian parties. Following the 2010 presidential election and the post-electoral crisis that followed, UNOCI remained in the field to protect civilians, support the Ivorian Government in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants, as well as security sector reform, monitoring and human rights promotion.
13. In general, the security situation along the border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia was characterized by regular incursions of unidentified armed individuals from Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, and increased tensions leading to the displacement of many families on both sides of the border. This situation was being perpetuated by many factors of conflict, insecurity and instability, the most important of them were highlighted in the joint assessments on border security and social cohesion conducted in September 2015 in Maryland and River Gee Counties, Liberia, by the UNDP, IOM and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL); and in November 2015 in Côte d'Ivoire by UNOCI, the United Nations agencies and relevant government partners. The evaluations identified among others: (a) a weak collaboration and mistrust between security forces and populations, (b) difficult access to land, (c) youth unemployment, (d) vulnerability of women, (e) a low level of protection of border communities, and (f) border porosity, as the main factors of conflict, insecurity and instability along the border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.
14. Following the withdrawal of UNMIL and UNOCI in June 2016, and the release of the political agenda in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, which included legislative and local elections in Côte d'Ivoire in November 2016 and presidential and representative elections in Liberia in 2017, tensions re-emerged in cross-border communities between indigenous and non-indigenous populations. The deteriorating situation observed at that time led the Heads of State of both countries to organize the joint High-level meeting held in Guiglo in January 2016, with a view to developing strategies aimed at reducing the tensions.

15. The "Second Meeting of the Joint Council of Traditional Chiefs and Elders" brought together traditional chiefs and elders of both countries around their respective Heads of State to discuss and develop strategies to reduce tensions. The meeting concluded that the continued commitment of both countries in finding sustainable solutions for security and socio-economic development would contribute to consolidating peace and social cohesion between border communities that share historical and cultural ties.
16. *The "Cross-border cooperation project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia for sustainable peace and social cohesion" was developed to address these challenges and **increase cooperation and trust between Ivorian and Liberian border communities through the strengthening of border security, and mitigation of potential escalation of conflicts and regional destabilization, thereby contributing to improved community engagement, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.***

III. MAIN EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1 PROJECT DESIGN : GLOBALLY SATISFACTORY, with a score of 5/6.

The evaluation of the design of the Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia aims to ensure that: (i) the project was highly conducive to the achievement of the expected results, from the approval phase to the closure phase; (ii) the project was relevant from the initial phase of the project and remained relevant throughout implementation; and (iii) that any adjustments related to technical solutions were made in a timely manner to ensure the achievement of the expected outputs and impacts.

17. The conceptual approach of this Project is essentially characterized by the quality of its preparation. At the end of the preparatory phase, most of the tools necessary for the project launching, implementation, monitoring and evaluation were in place. The PRODOC was structured around: (i) the detailed budget broken down by recipient, result and activity; (ii) the results framework; (iii) the risk management matrix; (iv) the exhaustive list of intervention sites selected on either sides of the border; (v) the complete list of activities to be implemented; (vi) the governance and project management structure.
18. The questions that the evaluation mission selected in order to assess the quality of the design of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia generated information on: (a) the identification and the integration, from the outset, of risks that could influence the project implementation, as well as the effectiveness of the monitoring and control of these risks; (b) the relevance of the project execution and implementation procedures; (c) the adequacy of the governance and organizational structures; (d) the quality of performance indicators; and (e) the quality of gender mainstreaming from the conceptual phase.
19. In relation to risks, the project design identified and characterized a set of risks related to its implementation, and the associated mitigation measures. These risks highlighted the need to avoid potential negative impacts which could arise from: (i) delays in the implementation of the DDR programme in Côte d'Ivoire and the illegal possession of firearms within border communities; (ii) the deterioration of the political context and the escalation of social tensions generally observed in the pre and post-election periods; (iii) the erosion of social cohesion that is an intrinsic element of insecurity and can result in reduced mobility of cross-border communities; (iv) non-compliance with commitments made by implementing partners (governments, private sector and civil society partners, recipients, etc.); (v) long delays in mobilizing staff and selecting partners or suppliers; (vi) inaccessibility to project intervention sites due to deteriorating road infrastructure; (vii) potential resurgence of the Ebola outbreak; (viii) new security challenges related to the gradual withdrawal of UNMIL and UNOCI; (ix) persistent poverty in border communities benefiting from the project.
20. The reports consulted by the evaluation team and the exchanges with the actors met in the field revealed that these risks have been regularly monitored and that appropriate actions have been taken to anticipate and even control their impact. For example, the 2018 annual reports produced by Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia indicated that regular monitoring of the risks identified at the beginning of the project has resulted in the long-term mitigation of

their impact on the activities. With regard to political and social risk, one of the mitigation strategies adopted by the project was to focus on the awareness-raising campaigns on civic responsibility and peaceful coexistence.

21. The risks related to delayed staff mobilization and selection of partners or suppliers, as well as the difficult access to project intervention sites, due to the deteriorating road infrastructure, was effectively managed. This is corroborated by the project compliance with the initial implementation schedule. Indeed, the project closed on 3 October 2018, in conformity with the schedule set by the Contribution Agreement signed by the stakeholders.
22. **Although all the risks identified have been re-assessed at each stage of the project, the evaluation mission considers that they have not completely disappeared.** The impact of most of the risks remains plausible, and they should be considered relevant in the event of a renewed intervention in the areas targeted by this project, in view of the changing political and social context in both countries. In Côte d'Ivoire, the prospect of a presidential election in 2020 could result in a reconfiguration of the apparatus and a reproduction of alliances likely to generate new political tensions. At the same time, the arrival of a renewed political class following the elections in Liberia in 2017 could weaken the expected quality of leadership due to its inexperience in running the affairs of the country.
23. The management arrangements of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia illustrate precautions related to:
 - i. **Prudential and security regulations of the resources allocated to the project** through the combination of the NIM and DIM implementation modalities, which provided that : (i) UNDP should ensure the coordination of interventions as lead partner of the United Nations System recipient Agencies, (ii) these agencies should manage the financial resources made available for the project implementation, (iii) national United Nations Volunteers be recruited to coordinate the implementation of activities at community level, while civil society organizations would help recipient communities implement locally planned activities;
 - ii. **The obligation to guarantee the quality of the project interventions by setting up a quality control mechanism.** This was illustrated by the setting up of the Cross-Border Technical Monitoring Committee;
 - iii. **The need for effective and efficient coordination in the conduct of operations** through the various entities (Cross-Border Project Steering Committee, Joint Steering Committee), PBF Secretariat);
 - iv. **The importance of ensuring national ownership and sustainability of the project achievements** through sustained involvement of all stakeholders in results-oriented decision-making (Co-chairing of the Cross-Border Project Steering Committee by high-level representatives from Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia).
24. A critical review of the indicators was carried out in order to ensure their quality. The result of this review is presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Synoptic view of the critical review of the project's performance indicators

Deliverables	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Consistency of the indicator
OUTCOMES		
Outcome 1: Trust between security forces and border communities has increased through capacity building of joint local and cross-border mechanisms as well as increased cooperation.	Performance indicator 1 a: % of community members in the target areas reporting improved community protection and safety (data disaggregated by age, gender, target area and county)	Baseline: Not Determined The project monitoring and evaluation plan recommended that baseline and end-of-project recipients' surveys be conducted as a data collection method to inform these indicators. Since the surveys have not been carried out, the evaluation mission can only rely on stakeholders' testimonies to back up the opinions expressed on the changes resulting from the project. NON-SMART INDICATORS
	Performance indicator 1b: % of local authorities and traditional leaders who report having contributed to the peaceful resolution of conflicts	
	Performance indicator 1c: % of community members in the target area indicating an increased trust in security actors (data disaggregated by age, gender, target area and country)	Baseline: the evaluations that were conducted indicate that the current level of public confidence in security institutions is low due to harassment and their alleged involvement in illegal activities Target: Increased level of trust in security agencies in 20 communities The formulation of this indicator suffers from two weaknesses that confirm the need for UNDP to acquire specialized technical expertise in monitoring and evaluation: Weakness #1: the indicator lacks clarity: Is it meant to determine the % of community members that report an increase in trust or is it meant to determine the increase in the level of trust in security agencies in 20 communities? Weakness #2: absence of a baseline that could allow a percentage to be drawn. A percentage is calculated from an absolute figure as a reference value, which is not provided in this case. Inaccurate and inconsistent indicator: NON-SMART
Outcome 2: Social cohesion and peaceful coexistence within cross-border communities have improved through frameworks for dialogue between cross-border communities and the strengthening of cooperation between local conflict resolution mechanisms and socio-economic and cultural exchanges	Performance indicator 2 a: % of community members in the target areas that report the easing of inter-community tensions and better conflict prevention	Baseline: 0 Target: At least 60% The unavailability of a baseline study and an end-of-project survey does not allow the indicator to be appropriately informed: NON-SMART
	Performance Indicator 2 b: % of community members in the target areas that indicate an increase in trust and solidarity within and between communities	Baseline: 0 Target: At least 60% The unavailability of a baseline study and an end-of-project survey does not allow the indicator to be appropriately informed: NON-SMART
OUTPUTS		
Output 1.1: Local authorities, security forces, border officials and key government actors are trained on human rights, gender, child protection, conflict prevention and management.	Output indicator 1.1.1.: Number of trained stakeholders.	Baseline: 0 Target: At least 200 community leaders and security officers trained The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity: SMART
	Output indicator 1.1.2: The number of conflicts resolved peacefully by border actors has increased	Baseline: TD Target: TD The evaluation of the project's performance in terms of conflict resolution suffers from a lack of comparative elements from which the level of progress of this indicator can be determined: NON-SMART
	Output indicator 1.1.3: Number of institutions equipped (...) and trained in the use of the new equipment	Baseline: Most border posts lack the necessary equipment to operate efficiently Target: 16 institutions (local chiefs, local government offices, police and border security agencies / forces) have had their capacities reinforced in the use of equipment Baseline poorly formulated but precise target: SMART

Output 1.2: Relationships between security forces and communities, including women, youth and vulnerable groups, are improved through regular awareness-raising and mobilization campaigns on relevant issues, such as laws, human rights, conflict resolution, social cohesion, peaceful coexistence, etc.	Output indicator 1.2.1: Number of dialogues and socio-cultural activities involving security forces and populations in the target areas	Baseline: 0 Target: 116 community and cross-border dialogues between security institutions/Forces and organized communities. <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>
	Output indicator 1.2.2.2: Number of advocacy and IEC, materials, and radio programs developed.	Baseline: 0 Target: 18 radio broadcasts, 8,000 IEC materials, various products and broadcast programs <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>
	Output indicator 1.2.3: Number of joint awareness initiatives developed.	Baseline: 0 Target: 8 sports/cultural activities, including 2 cross-border; 15 joint activities for peace and trust building <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>
Output 1.3: Cross-border security strengthened through regular dialogue, information sharing and joint patrols.	Output indicator 1.3.1: Number of security institutions / recruitment of cross-border forces	Baseline: 0 Target: 12 joint recruitment sessions <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>
	Output indicator 1.3.2: Number of joint patrols	Baseline: 0 Target: 12 joint recruitment sessions <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>
	Output indicator 1.3.3.3: Number of regular meetings held by coordination platforms	Baseline: 0 Target: 3 joint coordination forums <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>
Output 2.1: Local and cross-border mechanisms for resolving and preventing cross-border conflicts strengthened.	Output indicator 2.1.1.1: Number of existing local early warning and response (EWR) mechanisms (including peace committees) identified / established or strengthened in target areas	Baseline: Some communities have established peace committees, while others do not have any Target: Peace committees are established/strengthened in the 24 project communities. Baseline poorly formulated but: SMART
	Output indicator 2.1.2: Number of conflicts resolved peacefully by local peace committees	Baseline: TD Target: TD <i>The evaluation of the project's performance in terms of conflict resolution suffers from a lack of comparative elements from which the level of progress of this indicator can be determined: NON-SMART</i>
	Output indicator 2.1.3: Number of training sessions organized for field monitors and focal points on ARP mechanisms	Baseline: 0 Target: 28 participants in total (26 monitors and focal points in total) <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>
Output 2.2: The cross-border communities have come closer; stability and social cohesion strengthened through joint socio-cultural and economic activities.	Output indicator 2.2.1: Set up a Joint Functional Committee to facilitate cross-border activities.	Baseline: No reference Target: Set up a Joint Functional Committee to facilitate cross-border activities. <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>
	Output indicator 2.2.2.: Number of cross-border trade fairs and cultural activities organized	Baseline: 0 Target: 4 cross-border trade fairs with cultural/sport activities organized <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>

	Output indicator 2.2.3: Number of CSO/CBOs involved in cross-border cultural exchanges and number of organized sports/cultural activities.	Baseline: 0 Target: 20 <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>
	Output indicator 2.2.4: Joint biannual visits and number of review meetings (one in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire) to assess progress	Baseline: 0 Target: 3 <i>The indicator is precise, direct and consistent with the concerned activity. SMART</i>

The evaluation team recommends, in the eventuality of a follow-up to the project and considering the shortcomings of the results framework of the first phase, that UNDP, as lead agency, ensures the quality of the indicators through the full involvement of its Quality Assurance Division in the development and validation of all planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation tools of the project document (PRODOC).

25. Despite the limitations noted above, the quality of the conceptual approach of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia was substantially enhanced by the continued alignment of the strategic decisions with the development objectives of both recipient countries. This alignment is corroborated by the fact that no technical adjustments were necessary throughout project implementation to ensure the achievement of the expected outputs and outcomes. Indeed, the overall the Project objective remained aligned with the development strategies of the two countries and with the cooperation programs of the partners throughout the eighteen months of the project implementation.
26. Finally, with regard to gender mainstreaming, the alignment of the project with the "Gender Marker Score 2" shows the stakeholders commitment to ensure that the main activities would comply with the spirit and letter of the Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1612, 1888, 1889, and thus take into account the critical and essential contribution of women to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and to the consolidation of peace and social cohesion in cross-border communities.

Ultimately, the analysis of the results framework highlights some limitations regarding the formulation of activities and related indicators. Insofar as the limitations did not require major strategic or technical adjustments and/or reorientations or an extension of the project deadline, the evaluation mission considers that they did not compromise the achievement of the overall objective of the project. The observed limitations provide room for improvement and could be adjusted. Therefore, the design of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia is considered overall satisfactory with a score of 5/6.

3.2 . PROJECT RELEVANCE: VERY SATISFACTORY with a score of 6/6.

Relevance is the adequacy of the objectives regarding the real problems, needs and priorities of the target groups and recipients that the project aims to address, considering their environment. Relevance encompasses the Project's capacity to react to change and to the emergence of priorities and needs.

3.2.1. Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia: an innovative initiative for prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts characterized by its cross-border dimension

27. **The specificity of the project for sustainable peace and social cohesion in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia lies in its cross-border dimension.** In this regard, the stakeholders commitment to act in a concerted manner to address the security and social cohesion challenges that prevailed between the border communities of both countries was illustrated by a range of factual data, including: (i) the evaluations that were conducted simultaneously in 2015 in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire on border security and social cohesion, and (ii) the high-level meeting of the Heads of State of these two countries, held in Guiglo, Côte d'Ivoire in June 2016, with a view to endorsing the results of the evaluations and to take the necessary corrective measures. In addition, the complementarity and synergy characterize the integrated approach required for this project. It is from this perspective that the evaluation mission understands the decision of the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia to:
- submit a joint request for project funding;
 - keep the same United Nations system agencies on both sides of the border for the project implementation, as they represent comparative advantages (governance and conflict resolution, a good knowledge of migration issues and the context of the project intervention sites);
 - allocate the project budget equally (US\$ 1,500,000) between both countries;
 - conduct similar interventions on both sides of the border through the identification and selection of recipient communities based on objective criteria (level of security or insecurity within a community or between neighboring communities; means of transport used to cross the border; possibility to strengthen social cohesion taking into account social and cultural links; frequency and volumes of cross-border exchanges; alignment and/or proximity of a community in the neighboring country: territories and mirror villages; access to communities for the implementation of project activities);
 - define an organizational structure involving stakeholders from both countries;
 - plan socio-cultural activities involving communities in both countries, as well as large-scale actions such as joint patrols illustrating that the protection of border communities is a priority for the governments of both countries.
28. **Other elements of the cross-border dimension were reflected in the programming of the activities** such as the letters of agreement, the action plans and/or activity reports of CSO implementing partners, in particular through:
- the organization of a cultural exchange tour to Tembo, Liberia (mirror locality of Daobly) with the participation of Taï women's associations and traditional chiefs;
 - the organization of cross-border trade fairs (Ponan/Taï hosted the Liberian communities of Youston and Tembo, mirror towns of Ponan and Daobly);
 - the capacity building sessions for the Ivorian and Liberian Joint Peace and Protection Committees;
 - the organization of joint training for recipients on both sides of the border;
 - the organization of football matches in the target localities in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

29. **The project implementation also demonstrated that several support materials initially programmed as national activities proved to be cross-border in their implementation.** This is particularly the case for tarpaulins, chairs and sound systems that were allocated to Ivorian border communities and are often borrowed by Liberian communities.

Similarly, the director of the community radio station that was renovated by the project at Taï City Hall declared that he regularly received feedback from Liberian communities within a 50-kilometre radius on the peace and social cohesion awareness programmes broadcast by the station. Moreover, the motorized canoe provided by the project will improve the traffic flow between the border communities of Daobly and Tembo and enhance security measures at the Cavally River crossing point that marks the border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.



On the left: an old canoe which did not allow crossing of the river during the floods in the rainy season

On the right: Motorized canoe provided by the project for crossing the Cavally River in Daobly at all-season crossing. The canoe will be jointly managed by the cross-border communities on both sides of the river.

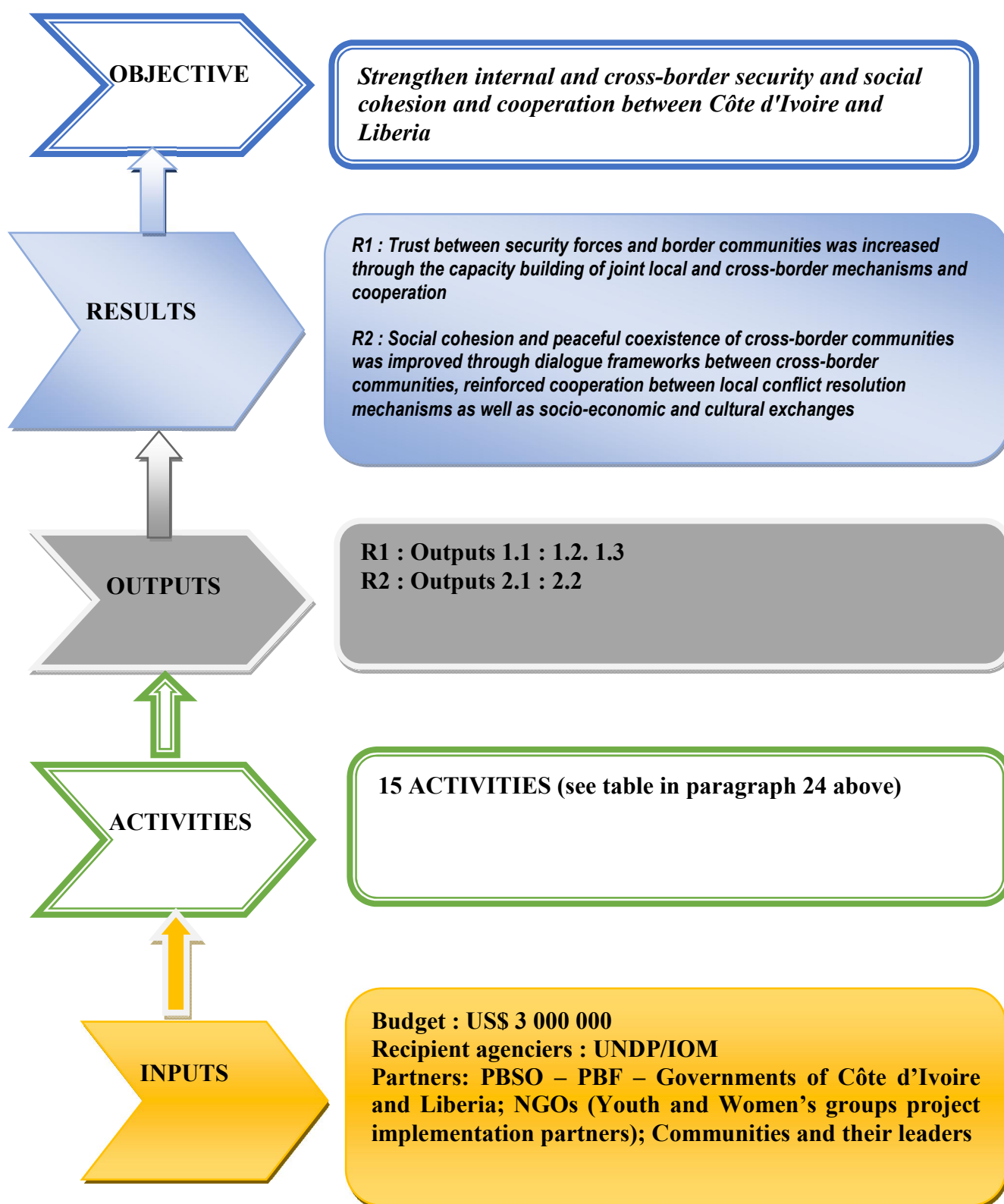


Community Radio Studio in Taï, which was renovated with the support from the Project

Despite the fact that Tembo was not specifically targeted in the PRODOC, some activities including cross border communities of Tembo and Daobly were carried out within the project by KOUADIO (a subcontractor of UNDP acting in the Division of Taï as an implementation partner). Based on its approved action plan, KOUADIO organized a cultural fair in Daobly from 5 - 7 July in which people from Tembo were invited¹.

30. With respect to the coherence between the project area and the needs of the recipients, the evaluations carried out in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire in 2015 provided sufficient insight into the correlation between the root causes that fuelled the tensions which led to the displacement of many families across the border and the project's main areas of intervention. **Thus, Outcome 1** and outputs 1.1 to 1.3 and related activities focus on two of the six root causes identified during the evaluations, namely: (a) the low level of collaboration and mistrust between security forces and populations, on the one hand, and (b) the low level of protection of border communities, on the other hand. **Outcome 2** and its outputs and activities addressed all other causes identified during the same evaluations, namely: (i) access to land difficulties, (ii) youth unemployment, (iii) the vulnerability of women and (iv) border porosity.
31. With regard to the congruence between the objectives of the project, the selected intervention axes and the activities to be implemented, this report has developed a framework to illustrate the internal coherence of the cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

¹ See the KOUADIO's report on the activities carried out throughout the Division of Taï from June to July 2018, page 5 - 6



32. **In addition to its internal coherence, the relevance of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia** is also measured by its alignment with sub regional and national priorities and its consistence with the development partners' cooperation programs in the areas of security, peacebuilding, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence of both countries.
33. **At the WAEMU sub-region level**, the project is aligned with the 2013 Cross-border Security Strategy of the Mano River Union (MRU), which promotes inclusive cross-border dialogue between communities and security actors to strengthen regional stability.

At national level, the Cross-border project is in line with the achievements resulting from the implementation of the 2012-2015 National Development Plan (NDP) of Côte d'Ivoire. One of the major achievements of the 2012-2015 NDP of Côte d'Ivoire was the return to peace, as well as the restoration of social cohesion and gradual return to national reconciliation throughout the national territory. Following the restoration of the rule of law and the security of property and people, the security index of Côte d'Ivoire was comparable to that of cities like New York or Geneva. This situation encouraged the return of institutions such as the African Development Bank to its statutory headquarters in Abidjan in September 2014.

With respect to Liberia, the project is aligned with the Agenda for Transformation (2012-2017) of the Government of Liberia's (GoL), which highlights the importance of improving border security and strengthening public trust in security actors.

In line with their national priorities, both countries have developed a United Nations Security Operations Transition Management Plan, namely the "UNCT Transition Plan for UNOCI" for Côte d'Ivoire and the "Government of Liberia Plan for UNMIL Transition (GPUT)" for Liberia. The plans aimed at: (i) restoring national reconciliation and social cohesion; (ii) reforming the security sector during the post-conflict reconstruction process; (iii) strengthening security institutions; and (iv) establishing peaceful coexistence within communities, considering the role of youth and women.

34. The relevance of the project was also examined from the perspective of its consistence and/or complementarity with the various interventions that were supported by the development partners of both countries, in particular the United Nations System, the European Union, the Peacebuilding Fund, and the Japanese Cooperation. The complementarity has been well demonstrated with initiatives such as: (i) the UNDP-ECOWAS-EU Small Arms and Light Weapons Project, (ii) the Government Capacity Building project on Arms Control Policy after the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), (iii) the projects aimed at strengthening the relationships between the police and the population, and (iv) various projects designed to support the implementation of the Security Sector Reform in Côte d'Ivoire.
35. Out of the existing seventeen (17) **Sustainable Development Goals**, a minimum of nine, namely: SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 16 and 17 were included in the project. Regarding the project **consistence with the principles of ownership, alignment, harmonization, results-based management and mutual accountability** that are targeted in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and were reinforced by the Accra Agenda for Action, it is worth noting that in terms of:

- **Ownership** - Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia are among the countries that have adopted national development strategies (e.g. NDP for Côte d'Ivoire) with strategic priorities associated with a global medium-term expenditure framework and sectoral medium-term expenditure frameworks;
- **Alignment** - the aid flow to these two countries is aligned with national priorities and is provided through coordinated programs, consistent with the national development strategies of their partners. Most of the aid flow focuses on capacity building;
- **Harmonization** - at least two-thirds of the assistance provided to both countries is provided through programme-based approaches such as UNDAF;
- **Results-based management** - progress in the implementation of countries' development strategies can be assessed through the performance evaluation frameworks developed for this purpose;
- **Mutual accountability** - the presence of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia on the list of countries and organizations that have endorsed the Paris Declaration constitutes proof of their acceptance to submit to mutual evaluation of progress made in the implementation of aid effectiveness commitments.

- **The correlations between the SDGs mentioned above and the project are established as follows:**
- **SDG1: End poverty in all forms by 2030:** *The project intends to ensure that the targeted beneficiaries, men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance (Correlation established with SDG 1.4).*
- **SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and Promote sustainable agriculture :** *The project provided support to targeted project beneficiaries, especially small-scale food producers (women, family farmers) in order to allow them to double their agricultural productivity and incomes through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment (Correlation with SDG 2.3)*
- **SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and Promote well-being for all at all ages:** *Contribute to EVD prevention was one of the action to be taken in line with the risk management plan for the project. (Correlation with SDG 3.3 stating that "By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases")*
- **SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and Empower all women and girls:** *In its intervention areas, the cross-border project ensured women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at a lot of levels of decision-making such as in the CCMs lead by women in Côte d'Ivoire (Correlation with SDG5 stating that "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life")*
- **SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all:** *The project gave opportunities to youth not in employment to create income generation activities notably in Taï and Tabou (Correlation with SDG 8.6: By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training")*
- **SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries:** *The SDG 10.7 intends to "Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies" This was one of the main objectives of the cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia*
- **SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable:** *Through cross-border trade fairs, the project has contributed to Target 11a of this SDG, which aims to promote positive economic, social and environmental linkages between urban, peri-urban and rural areas*
- **SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and Build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels:** *The project's contribution to the SDG 16 is linked to its focus on issues of security, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence.*
- **SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development:** *The mobilization of development partners for the financing and implementation of the project contributes to the realization of global efforts for developing countries*

36. On the relevance of the programmatic strategies adopted for the implementation of the project, the on-site-visits and exchanges with key informants enabled the evaluation team to identify some good practices that should be capitalized on in order to scale up this intervention.

For example, the induced effect of the consultative/participatory approach, which involved key actors and stakeholders from both countries in the decision-making process, including the planning and implementation of project activities, was demonstrated.

Indeed, seeing the decision-makers of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, who hardly spoke to each other before this project, work together through the governance and management entities, and plan, coordinate and validate actions aimed at security, peaceful coexistence and social cohesion with the border communities of their respective countries, seems to have convinced the recipient communities to break down the walls of mistrust with the security forces and within their own communities. This was demonstrated in Cote d'Ivoire, where the project has been able to set up Civilian-Military Committees (CMCs) where representatives of all social categories in the localities concerned sit alongside those that represent the armed forces. In some localities, such as Tabou, the mission noticed that a civilian chairs the Executive Bureau of the CMC.



Picture of the Executive Bureau of the CMC of Tabou chaired by a civilian where we see the effective presence of armed forces

Similarly, multisectoral committees including representatives of civil society organizations, women's associations, youth and security forces were mobilized in Liberia, and worked together in Harper, Fish Town, Nyaaken, Kablaken and all other project communities to achieve the same objectives. They are called the Peace and Protection Committees.

Another good practice that the assessment mission intends to highlight is the particular attention that the project designers paid to promote and strengthen the role of women and youth in the community peacebuilding process. Indeed, in the context of security tensions, women and young people can become the most exposed segments to the violence that prevails in such circumstances because of their vulnerability. At the same time, they could also become vectors of insecurity because of their precariousness. In this case, the precarious situation of women due to their extreme poverty and difficulties to access land, and the limited opportunities and access to decent jobs for young people could have resulted in the above-mentioned assumptions.

The fact that the project promoted them through specific actions, and ensured their representativeness within the project target groups, has certainly helped to avoid any hint of protest or suspicion that they might have had with regard to the project.

For the evaluation team, the delimitation of the project intervention area based on mirror villages was a pragmatic approach that made it possible to overcome the difficulties inherent in the language barrier, given the similarity of the customs and habits that mark the history and customs of the border communities targeted by the project.

However, it is important to highlight some frustration and sometimes acts of brutality that took place during attempts to cross the border illegally by members of Liberian border communities from localities marginalized by the project due to the absence of mirror communities on the Ivorian side of the border, or their remoteness from the limited number of open entry points on the Ivorian side².

Finally, one project beneficiary (a community member) declared that the restoration of social cohesion within their respective communities stems from the project's support, which enabled them to unify their energy and resources around common interests, essentially the Income Generating Activities (IGAs), in other words, towards improving their living conditions. Indeed, it can be said that the implementation of socio-cultural activities in the perspective of peaceful coexistence and social cohesion is not contradictory with anti-poverty support. This was demonstrated by: (i) the women of Tai who formed a cooperative to organize the sale of fish in their locality, (ii) the women of Bliéron who pooled their savings to ensure the selling of their food products through the cart they obtained from the project, and (iii) the fact that border communities of Daobly and Tembo will now be able to share the use of the motorized canoe acquired through to the project.



Refrigeration container acquired by the women of Tai with the support of the Project

This equipment, which will support the organization of the "Fish Commercialization" sector, has made it possible to bring together women from all communities in Tai around a project of community interest.³

² Along the entire Ivorian-Liberian border covered by the project, there are twelve (12) entry points on the Liberian side and only two (2) on the Ivorian side. This asymmetry indicates that Liberians wishing to travel to Côte d'Ivoire are obliged to travel very long distances to complete their border crossing formalities. Very often, those who are reluctant to submit to the formalities endure acts of violence from the Ivorian communities while trying to cross the border illegally.

³

In fact, this picture intends to show the completion level of this activity by the end of the project. There is no evidence that the said activity may become functional until additional funds are provided to the beneficiaries for access to electricity and the necessary cash flow needed. Otherwise, the IGA set up might collapse.

37. **Addressing the needs of the recipients.** The alignment of the project intervention axes with local needs should undoubtedly be considered as the result of the consultations carried out during the project identification phase. Indeed, the needs and concerns of the populations were identified through a participatory approach during field missions with the recipient agencies, local authorities and various local organizations. Members of local communities and authorities participated in the identification of the needs for the purpose of project development and the selection of the project implementation sites.
38. In this respect, all the stakeholders that were interviewed during the evaluation mission underlined the fact that the recipients favorably responded to the project and considered the project activities consistent with the priority demands formulated during the consultations. By way of illustration, the range of project outputs demonstrated the willingness to provide a holistic response to key problems that are generally related to insecurity, insufficient social cohesion, the prevalence of social conflicts of an ethnic or land-based nature, and insufficient livelihoods that particularly affect young people and women in the project intervention area.

To conclude on this point, the relevance of the "Cross-border cooperation project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia for sustainable peace and cohesion" was confirmed both by its alignment with national priorities as defined in the policy and strategy documents of these two countries, and by its coherence with the intervention priorities of the development partners (PPP/FCP-PBF, EU, JICA, GIZ, etc.) as well as the needs of the recipient communities. On this basis, the evaluation team considers the relevance of this project to be fully demonstrated, and therefore very satisfactory, and gives a score of 6/6.

3.3 PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS: GLOBALLY SATISFACTORY with a score of 5/6.

The evaluation focused on main areas that demonstrate (a) the progress made in achieving the results; (b) the project's contribution to improving security relations within targeted border communities, (c) the building of trust and social cohesion between border communities and security agencies; and (d) the recipient's opinion on the project's response to their needs. These analyses have also highlighted the project's major achievements and/or contributions as well as its benefit in supporting peacebuilding in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.

3.3.1. Actual and visible achievements that demonstrate the effective implementation of the programmed activities and the delivery of the expected outputs.

39. The material made available to the evaluation team, as well as exchanges with the implementing partners and direct recipients of the Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, provided experts with extensive information on the effectiveness of the Project's achievements.
40. For the most part, the fifteen (15) activities planned in PRODOC have all been initiated, but in some cases not fully completed. At the project closure date, the annual report produced for the period going from 1 January to 31 December 2018 showed an estimated 97% completion rate for the activities. According to the project's starting and completion dates indicated in PRODOC, the project was expected to close on 30 June 2018 (if it had actually started on 1 January 2017 as provided for in PRODOC). However, the project benefited from a maturity adjustment and was extended to October 3, 2018, because the disbursement of the first tranche did not occur until April 3, 2017. Notwithstanding the schedule adjustment, field visits indicated that some activities were still ongoing in January 2019, including the renovation of the Immigration Services offices in Duokodi, Kablaken and Nyaaken in Liberia. In all these localities, the main reason given to explain the pursuit of the activities beyond the project closure date was the late release of funds resulting from the irregular monitoring of the worksites by the contracting partner. On a completely different matter, the evaluation mission noted that immigration authorities took possession of the premises in the areas where the renovations were completed without waiting for their formal handover to the Liberian authorities. In this respect, it should be stressed that the occupancy of the premises on the fringes of a formal acceptance of the works raises the question of accountability for any damage that may be caused to these installations before their official transfer to the Liberian authorities.

Consequently, the evaluation mission recommends that recipient agencies organize the technical acceptance of the works as soon as possible and proceed with the official handover of the renovated buildings to the Liberian authorities, in order to minimize the risks of disputes that could result from any damage caused during the occupancy of the premises before the official handover.

Beyond this particular situation, the evaluation team considered that there is a strong correlation and a cause-and-effect relationship between the availability of resources and the ability to meet the deadlines related to the implementation of the activities.

41. **On the quality of the project's response to the needs of the beneficiaries:** in the absence of complaints from the beneficiaries about the intrinsic quality of the gains achieved through the project, the evaluation mission can conclude that they were of good quality. This being said, it is worth noting a few special cases that seem to require adjustments to facilitate an optimal use of the project's benefits. This is particularly the case for the motorized canoe the acquisition of which could have been supplemented by an initial set of life jackets corresponding to the number of passengers admitted for crossing. At the same time, the evaluation mission considers that the provision of IT equipment would have been more efficient if the training needs on the use of such equipment had been considered, and if the IT supplies matched the references of the IT equipment. At the Fish Town Immigration Office, which has four computers, only one officer was able to work on a computer.

The Harper Office has been equipped with computers and printers and received a large stock of printer ink boxes that did not match the references of the printers received, and therefore must be replaced. At the same time, the functioning of the communication system installed in Prolo and Tai (network amplifiers and solar panels) had significant deficiencies that prevented the efficient communication between the two border posts.

In addition, at Prolo, all formalities for crossing the border were carried out manually, which not only increased the crossing time at this border, but also increased the risk of errors as well as data retention difficulties.

42. *The mission noted significant limitations of immigration services in terms of record keeping, production and classification of statistical data. This situation is at the root of the difficulties encountered by the mission in collecting evidence that could inform on the evolution of cross-border trade and the mobility of cross-border communities.*

Based on these observations and with a view to scaling up this initiative, the mission recommends that the RUNOs: strengthen the effectiveness of the immigration services supported by the project through trainings on the materials received; ensure proper maintenance of the files as well as the regular production of statistics.

3.3.2. The monitoring of the indicators of progress was based on approximations due the absence of baseline and end-of-project surveys required to establish baselines, targets and the situation at project completion.

43. The consolidated annual report that was produced by the Liberia and the Côte d'Ivoire teams in November 2018 appeared to be the more comprehensive document as it provided the level of achievement related to the end of the project. The document therefore became the reference document to assess progress indicators and the completion of the outputs at project closure.

Table 3: Performance of the indicators and level of project's outputs at completion closure⁴⁴

Performance Areas	Indicators	Baseline Situation	Target planned at project closure	Progress at project closure	Progress rate of the indicator at project closure	Completion rate of output at project closure
OUTCOMES						
Result 1: Trust between security forces and border communities was increased through capacity building of joint local and cross-border mechanisms and increased cooperation	Performance indicator 1 a: % of community members in target areas indicating improved community protection and safety (data disaggregated by age, gender, target area and county)	Not Available	30%	Around 90%	The indicators are not objectively verifiable due to the absence of surveys at the beginning and end of the project on how the recipients perceive the project response to their needs and the impossibility of the evaluation mission to ensure the quality of the monitoring and evaluation system put in place for data collection and processing	Not determined due to lack of a survey at the beginning and end of the project on how the recipients perceive the project
	Performance indicator 1b: % of local authorities and traditional leaders who declare that they have contributed to the peaceful resolution of conflicts	Not Available	30%	Around 60%		
	Performance indicator 1c: % of community members in the target areas indicating an increase in confidence in security actors (data disaggregated by age, gender, target area and country)	Current public trust in security institutions is low due to harassment and their alleged involvement in illegal activities, according to evaluations that were conducted	10% increase in level of trust in 12 security agencies	More than 70%		
Result 2: Social cohesion and peaceful coexistence within cross-border communities was improved through frameworks for dialogue between cross-border communities and the strengthening of cooperation between local conflict resolution mechanisms and socio-economic and cultural exchanges	Performance indicator 2 a: % of community members in the target areas indicating the reduction of inter-community tensions and better conflict prevention	0	30%	Around 90%		
	Performance indicator 2 b: % of community members in target areas indicating an increase in trust and solidarity within and between communities	0	30%	Around 80%		
OUTPUTS						
	Output indicator 1.1.1.: Capacity-building of targeted actors following the findings of the evaluation on the recipients needs	Not available	The capacities of at least 12 POEs were strengthened in response to the findings of the initial evaluation on recipients needs	At least 50% of the operational capacities of 12 PoEs have been reinforced	100%	186.5%

⁴⁴ Reference: Final Annual Cross Border Merged Report_PBF, November 2018

Output 1.1: Local authorities, security forces, border officials and key government actors are trained on human rights, gender, child protection, conflict prevention and management	Output indicator 1.1.2: Number of trained workers	0	At least 200 community leaders and security forces officers trained	560 security forces officers and community leaders trained	273%	
	Output indicator 1.1.3: Increase in the number of peacefully managed conflicts in target communities	0	At least 80% of conflicts in the project's target areas	<p>This indicator was not monitored throughout the duration of the project.</p> <p>The project team considered that "it was the responsibility of the evaluation to determine the number of conflicts resolved peacefully within the project"... Not only is this not the responsibility of the evaluation, but it does seriously reduce the ability of the mission to comment on the project's achievements in the area of peaceful coexistence</p>	<p>This being said, the mission identified five (5) cases of peaceful conflict resolution, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflict between the border communities of Bliéron and Kablaken, resulting from drowning cases and the death of three Ivorian children who were crossing the Cavally River The case of a motorcycle that was stolen in Liberia and was sold in Tabou Conflict of persons during the installation of a village chief in Ranouinke (24/12/2018) Attempted rape on the way to Ranouinke (24/12/2018) Land conflict in Taboloke village 	
	Output indicator 1.1.4: Number of institutions equipped and trained on the use of new equipment	Most border posts lack the necessary equipment to operate efficiently	16 institutions (local chiefs, local government offices, police and border security agencies) trained on the use of equipment	Indicator not provided	Not available	
Output 1.2: Relationships between security forces and communities, including women, youth and vulnerable groups, were improved through regular awareness-raising and mobilization campaigns on relevant issues, such as laws, human rights, conflict resolution, social cohesion, peaceful coexistence, etc.	Output indicator 1.2.1: Number of socio-cultural dialogues and activities, involving security forces and populations organized in the target areas	0	4 (2 per county)	6 (3 per county)	150%	153%
	Outputs 1.2.2: Number of advocacy and IEC activities, materials, as well as radio programs developed	0	6 radio broadcasts	14 radio broadcast programs	233%	
	Output indicator 1.2.3: Number of joint awareness initiatives developed	0	8 sports/cultural activities, including 2 cross-border, and 15 joint activities for peace and confidence building	10 sports and cultural activities organized (10/8); 4 other cross-border activities (4/15) organized	76%	

Output 1.3: Cross-border security strengthened through regular dialogue, information sharing and joint patrols.	Output indicator 1.3.1: Number of peace security meetings	0	6 peace security meetings	6 peace security meetings	100%	100%
	Output indicator 1.3.2: Number of joint patrols organized	0	4 joint patrols	4 organized patrols	100%	
	Output indicator 1.3.3: Number of regular meetings held by coordination platforms	0	3 joint coordination forums	3 meetings held	100%	
Output 2.1: Local and cross-border mechanisms for resolving and preventing cross-border conflicts strengthened.	Product indicator 2.1.1: Number of existing local Early Warning and Response (EWR) mechanisms (including peace committees) identified / established or reinforced in target areas	Not Available	Establish / strengthen APR mechanisms, including peace committees, in the 24 communities covered by the project	Capacities of 16 peace and village protection committees strengthened in Côte d'Ivoire Creation and strengthening of 6 peace committees in Liberia Creation and strengthening of 12 Peace Protection committees in Liberia and 6 seven-member cross border committees (three per county).	91,7%	91.7%
	Output indicator 2.1.2: Number of conflicts resolved peacefully by local peace committees	Not available	Not determined	In the absence of a pre-determined baseline and target, any data provided at the end of the project for this indicator does not allow a decision to be made on the performance achieved		
	Output indicator 2.1.3: Number of training sessions organized for field monitors and focal points on ARP mechanisms	0	28 participants in total (26 monitors and focal points) trained on ARP mechanisms	160 members of the 16 peace committees in Cote d'Ivoire and 122 members of the 18 committees in Liberia have been orientated on their roles and responsibilities.	The data presented at the end of the project are not comparable with the target due to inconsistency in formulation between the target and the end-of-project situation	
Output 2.2: The rapprochement of cross-border communities, stability and social cohesion strengthened through joint socio-cultural and economic activities.	Output indicator 2.2.1: Setting up of a functional Joint Committee to facilitate cross-border activities	Not available	1 joint functional committee set up	2 CMC (Civil-Military Committees) set up	200%	128.7%
	Output indicator 2.2.2.2: Number of cross-border trade fairs and cultural activities organized	0	4 cross-border trade fairs with cultural/sport activities organized	4 cross-border trade fairs with cultural/sport activities organized	100%	

	Output indicator 2.2.3: <i>Number of CSOs/CBOs involved in cross-border cultural exchanges and number of sports/cultural activities organized.</i>	0	20 CSO/CBOs have organized cross-border cultural / sporting activities	23 Peace Committees strengthened and involved in socio-cultural and sports activities to bring communities closer together	115%	
	Output indicator 2.2.4: <i>Conduct of joint biannual visits and number of review meetings (one in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire) to assess progress</i>	0	3 biannual visits organized	3 meetings held (April 2017, May 2018, September 2018)	100%	

44. Based on the data in Table 3 above, the completion rate of outputs at project closure is as follows:

- **Output 1.1: 186.5%** (completion rate based on the progress of 2 out of 4 indicators (indicators 1.1.1 and 1.1.2). Indicators 1.1.3 and 1.1.4 were not considered in this calculation because they were not properly filled in.
- **Output 1.2 : 153%**
- **Output 1.3 : 100%**
- **Output 2.1: 91.7%** (completion rate based on the progress of only one indicator out of 3 (indicator 2.1.1.) Poorly completed, indicators 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 were not included in this calculation)
- **Output 2.2 : 128.7%**

The overall completion rate of the project outputs at closure is therefore of 132.02%, which leads to the conclusion that the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia has performed beyond its targets in terms of completion of activities and outputs. According to this assumption, and despite the absence of beneficiaries' surveys on the project at the beginning and at the end of the project (which would have provided formal and irrefutable evidence on the level of achievement of the outputs), the evaluation mission considers that the project has achieved the expected results. This conclusion is based on : (i) the internal consistency of the project, as illustrated by the relevance review, (ii) the testimonies collected from recipients and implementing partners on the climate of security, peaceful coexistence and social cohesion within and between border communities, and (iii) the renewed trust between the populations and the security forces.

45. **On the security of people and property as well as the restoration of trust between the populations and the Defense and Security Forces (DSF)**, the joint patrols between the defense and security forces of both countries contributed to dispel the feeling of "being forgotten" that had long been held by the populations who live in the project's intervention area. The inter-community dialogues, and the sports and socio-cultural activities that preceded or accompanied the patrol, were significant opportunities that brought communities closer together and broke down the barriers of mistrust and misunderstanding between the populations and the security agencies.
46. Gradually, we witnessed exchanges of information that led to tangible results. We may mention the case of a information-sharing between a community and security agencies that made it possible to recover a motorcycle that was stolen in Harper and then sold in Tabou. The collaboration between the people and the security forces on the one hand, and between the judicial authorities of the two countries on the other hand, not simply allowed to recover the motorcycle and return it to its rightful owner in Harper, but also to bring the alleged thief before the Liberian courts for trial.

47. **On social cohesion:** the lack of statistical data to illustrate the project's contribution to strengthening social cohesion in the project area was compensated not only by testimonies collected from beneficiaries, but also by many examples already mentioned in the present document. These include: (i) the prospect of the joint management of the motorized canoe by a committee composed of nationals of the border communities of Daobly and Tembo, (ii) the sharing between the youth of Tai and those of Tembo of the tarpaulins, chairs and sound systems acquired from the project, (iii) the organization of joint training sessions and awareness meetings between the cross-border communities, and (iv) the organization of women's economic activities through an inclusive approach. In Daobly, about fifty participants from the mirror villages of Daobly and Tembo attended the focus group discussion organized at the border post. The same level of attendance was recorded in Prollo, Bliéron and Harper during the youth meeting. Even in remote areas such as Kablaken and Nyaaken, the meetings organized by the mission attracted an impressive number of participants, demonstrating the beneficiaries' commitment to the project's objectives and acknowledging its impact regarding social cohesion improvement.



Tembo Participants in the focus group of the cross-border communities of Daobly and Tembo



Participants' view in Daobly's focus group - the presence of women and traditional chiefs from Liberian border communities is notable

On conflict prevention and peaceful conflict resolution: the reports from the NGOs ASAPSU and PARTAGE indicated that the level of conflicts had consequently fallen in the villages where they had intervened with the combined action of the Conflict Prevention and Peace Committees and the Civil-Military Committees. These statements were largely confirmed by the project beneficiaries. They suggested that in order to consolidate progress made in terms of social cohesion and to scale up the intervention, the range of targets to be trained on conflict prevention should be expanded.

On the progress in cross-border trade: it is important to highlight the decisive contribution of the training provided by the project regarding the rights and obligations of travelers when crossing a border. Consequently, any traveler with a photo pass or a valid passport and an up-to-date international vaccination booklet can travel across the border without any difficulty, which was not the case before the project. The only action that remains to be taken to consolidate the achievements is to identify the formalities to be completed and post them at all entry points of the project's intervention area.

48. To conclude on the analysis of the level of effectiveness of the Project, it is important to underline the capacity of the coordination teams to address the difficulties they faced, in particular (i) the isolation of certain target localities, (ii) the linguistic barrier between border communities on the one hand and the project coordination teams on the other hand, (iii) the difficult synchronization of activities considering the specificities of the communities and the coordination teams in each country, and (iv) the long delays related to the availability of resources. The mitigation measures, for the first three issues, were respectively to:

- Carry out most of the activities during the dry season, and to carry out some activities simultaneously in order to reduce the frequency of trips;
- Recruit volunteers who could act as interpreters between stakeholders on both sides of the border;
- Strengthen collaboration between project teams in both countries for the simultaneous implementation or rescheduling of certain activities.

Despite the limitations observed in the project design, which resulted in the absence of a baseline study and imprecise targets for monitoring indicators, the information that was obtained in the field as well as the material highlighted that the outputs were delivered beyond expectations (132%). The activities, whose implementation rate is close to 100%, thus reflect a high level of performance by the coordination teams, which have shown flexibility in collaborating and adapting to field constraints. The rapprochement between the recipient communities on both sides of the border and the strengthening of cooperation with the defence and security forces are corroborated by the statements of the vast majority of the actors met. In view of all these elements, the evaluation mission recommends a score of 5/6 corresponding to "Overall Satisfactory" for the effectiveness criterion.

3.4 PROJECT EFFICIENCY: MODERATELY SATISFACTORY with a score of 4/6.

The evaluation mission identified factors to assess the efficiency of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, i.e.: (i) the compliance with the project implementation timeline; (ii) the availability and use of the resources required to deliver expected results; (iii) the efficiency of the steering and management mechanism adopted for the project; (iv) the efficient use of the resources; (v) the quality of project monitoring and evaluation, as well as communication and visibility; (vi) technical partnerships and synergies established to achieve outputs and results; and (vii) the project's ability to attract new partners and mobilize additional funds.

3.4.1. Compliance with the project implementation timeline

49. The adjustment of the project implementation schedule, which was planned in conjunction with the date of the first disbursement (3 April 2017), suggests that the project was implemented within the 18-month time frame provided for in PRODOC, since 3 October was used as the date for the administrative closure of the activities. Upon analysis, the evaluation mission was able to ascertain that four (4) months had elapsed between the date of the last signature on the PRODOC (9 December 2016) and the date of the first disbursement of funds (3 April 2017). Moreover, it was also noted that PBSO did not confirm the postponement of the project closure date until 4 July 2018, i.e. after 30 June 2018 (the initial project closure date), and that the amendment confirming the postponement was not signed until 30 October 2018. **However, the subsequent arrangements made to reduce the financial impact of delayed disbursements on the operational costs of the project indicate the cumbersome nature of the procedures. This was illustrated both by PBSO for the first disbursement of funds and later by UNDP that stretched the payment of subcontractors beyond reasonable deadlines.**

3.4.2. Efficiency of the Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia based on the resource absorption capacity of the RUNOs

50. The financial reports of the recipient agencies indicate that the funds allocated to the project were disbursed in two tranches representing 70% of the amount of funding for the first tranche and 30% for the second. *A priori*, the RUNOs had therefore sufficient funds available for the entire duration of the project. Their resource absorption capacity as of October 3, 2018, is summarized in the Table 4 below.

Table 4: Illustration of the resource absorption capacity of the RUNOs

Recipients	Budget	Expenditure	Absorption rate
LIBERIA			
UNDP	899 976.10	855 875.26	95%
IOM	600 023.90	600 023.90	100%
Subtotal Liberia	1 500 000.00	1 456 079.16	97.5%
COTE D'IVOIRE			
UNDP	896 873.10	889 663.05	99%
IOM	603 126.90	591 221.23	98%
Subtotal Côte d'Ivoire	1 500 000.00	1 480 884.38	98.5%
TOTAL	3 000 000	2 936 963.54	98%

51. Based on new financial commitments that came into force on 03 October 2018, the evaluation mission considers that the overall final resource absorption rate of the RUNOs is 98%. At the same time, there is a difference of 1 point in favor of Côte d'Ivoire. This gap could be justified by the imbalance regarding access conditions to the project intervention areas, particularly in Liberia, due to long travel times (normally about 3 days to reach Maryland and River Gee counties from Monrovia), and an almost complete disruption of traffic between these counties, and to Monrovia during the rainy season. The fact that the gap was more pronounced between UNDP offices (4 points in favor of UNDP Côte d'Ivoire) could result from the differentiated intervention approach from one country to another. These differentiated approaches seem to have been determined by the presence of a critical mass of technical capacity within the civil society in Côte d'Ivoire, which has enabled the UNDP Office in that country to rely on CSOs as intermediaries in the implementation of activities in cross-border communities.



Crossing point on the Ganta - Fish Town axis that illustrates the disruption of traffic between Monrovia and this part of the country during the rainy season

3.4.3. Project efficiency based on the use of resources

52. **The resources efficiency was determined through a comparison between the physical execution (completion rate of delivered outputs) and the resources used (resource absorption rate) at closing date.** The rate of physical outputs, calculated as the completion rate of all five outputs targeted by the Project, was compared to the total expenditure at closing date. The resource efficiency was classified as follows:

- ✧ **Very satisfactory:** if the median value of the physical achievement rate of project outputs compared to the commitment rate is ≥ 1 . This result indicates that the project has achieved all or more of its outputs within the available budget (**effective and efficient project**).
- ✧ **Satisfactory:** if the median value of the physical achievement rate of project outputs compared to the commitment rate is ≥ 0.80 and < 1 . This is the case where the project has generally achieved the expected outputs, within the limits of the available budget. (**Overall effective and moderately efficient project due to very high output delivery costs**).
- ✧ **Moderately satisfactory:** if the median value of the physical achievement rate of project outputs compared to the commitment rate is ≥ 0.60 and < 0.80 . This corresponds to the situation where the project has achieved at least half of the expected outputs according to the available budget (**project not very effective and not very efficient**).
- ✧ **Moderately Unsatisfactory:** if the median value of the physical achievement rate of project outputs compared to the commitment rate is ≥ 0.40 and < 0.60 . In this case, the project achieved at least one third of the expected outputs within the available budget (**moderately effective and moderately efficient project**).
- ✧ **Unsatisfactory:** if the median value of the physical achievement rate of project outputs compared to the commitment rate is < 0.40 . Here, the project achieved less than one third of the expected outputs according to the available budget (**unsatisfactory effectiveness and efficiency: in such cases the project is reoriented or restructured at mid-term with revised objectives**).
- ✧ **Very unsatisfactory:** if the median value of the physical achievement rate of project outputs compared to the commitment rate is < 0.20 . This is the case if the project has achieved less than a quarter of the expected outputs with the available budget (**very unsatisfactory effectiveness and efficiency: such situations lead to an early termination of the project**).

53. The physical achievement rate is obtained by calculating the median of the physical achievement rate of the project results. In this case, the median value of the progress level of the indicators that appeared in the results framework was 100% as of 30 September 2018. Considering the financial data, which indicated that the level of consumption of the project's financial resources at closure represented 98% of the available budget, the project's resource absorption ratio at closure is 0.9, which is equivalent to **the situation of a generally effective and moderately efficient project**.
54. Indeed, the limitations to the efficiency of the Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia were highlighted during the detailed analysis of the delivery costs. Out of a total expenditure of US\$ 2,936,963.54, staff costs amounted to US\$ 529,136.01, which represents 18.01% of the total expenditure incurred; direct expenditure for operations amounted to US\$ 1,478,071.20, which represents 50.32% of the total expenditure incurred. Subtracting this amount from the total expenditure results in a delivery cost (project operating cost) of US\$ 1,458,892.34. ***This means that each dollar invested in an activity cost 98 cents for RUNOs operating costs. This is above the conventional margins allowed by institutions such as the World Bank or the AfDB, where such costs cannot exceed 30% of the total cost of a project.***

The evaluation mission considers that the scarcity of resources should motivate the United Nations System Agencies to improve the efficiency of their interventions through economies of scale and align to the ratios adapted by other sister institutions.

55. **This being said, it should be noted that the resource efficiency has varied from one recipient agency to another.** Of the four RUNOs, UNDP Côte d'Ivoire was more efficient in the allocation and use of resources, followed by UNDP Liberia, IOM Côte d'Ivoire and IOM Liberia. The direct costs of the RUNOS activities represent respectively 63.12%; 53.72%; 41.29% and 35.41% of their respective total expenditures.
56. **Financial reports from IOM Côte d'Ivoire and IOM Liberia indicated that investments were made for the acquisition of vehicles. These acquisitions represented nearly 25% of the total expenses incurred by these two agencies, meaning US\$ 287,183.93 out of a total of US\$ 1,191,245.22. The evaluation mission considers that such investments was inadequate given the limited resources. Moreover, the allocation process of those vehicles should have been clarified prior the closure of the project. Finally, the evaluation mission also noted budget overruns by IOM Côte d'Ivoire, at a scale, which seems beyond what is authorized in PRODOC (151% for travel expenses and 155% for overheads).**

3.4.4. Efficiency of the Project steering and management mechanism

The efficiency of the steering and management mechanism adopted for the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia was examined through the prism of governance and management bodies. Their respective roles and responsibilities, and their benefit for achieving the project's expected results were assessed.

57. **The analysis** showed that the institutional mechanism set up for the governance and operational management of the cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia was **characterized by its unwieldiness, and a need to rationalize its structure and clarify the roles and responsibilities** assigned to the different stakeholders.
58. The data collected through the reports and the exchanges with respondents **revealed that the Cross-border Steering Committee met several times, alternately in Côte d'Ivoire (Great Basin) and Liberia (Monrovia)** to launch the project, review the progress at mid-term, and close the activities. The evaluation mission was also able to confirm **the functionality of the Joint Steering Committees of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia** during meetings held with their respective co-chairs.
59. **However, very little information exists on the activities of the Cross-border Technical Monitoring Committee.** In the opinion of the evaluation mission, the search for increased efficiency would have amply justified the alignment of the Cross-border Technical Monitoring Committee with the model of the Joint Steering Committees. Thus, instead of a single Cross-border Technical Monitoring Committee whose responsibilities overlapped with those of the Joint Steering Committees, the creation of a single Technical Monitoring Committee per country, as an advisory and monitoring body, would probably have guaranteed the quality assurance of project implementation. **As such, each Technical Monitoring Committee could have mobilized the technical expertise required to conduct the recipient surveys at the beginning and end of the project, which were not carried out as provided for in the results framework.**
60. **With regard to the community-based response strategy,** UN volunteers recruited were based in Tabou for Côte d'Ivoire, Harper in Maryland County and Fish Town in the River Gee County in Liberia. **The evaluation team wishes to highlight the synergy and complementary in the approach adopted by UNDP and IOM for the functioning of the Tabou team,** which shared the office space granted by ASAPSU, and organized joint missions for their field visits. In Fishtown and Harper, there were houses in the offices of the County Authorities where the UNV volunteers worked closely with the local partners to organize the various community and cross-border activities and kept the project alive on the ground.

However, given the size of the departments of Taï and Tabou (12 hours car travel from Taï to Tabou in the dry season), the mission considers that **the permanent presence of one of the two team members in each department would have provided more added value in the monitoring and coordination of the CSO project partners, as well as in the support of the recipients' border communities.**

61. **For the implementation of activities at the community level, UNDP Côte d'Ivoire mobilized two CSOs whose performance was confirmed by the evaluation team during visits to Tai and Tabou.** The NGO KOUADI was mobilized to cover six localities in the department of Taï, namely Daobly, Ponan-Taï, Diero-Oula, Ziriglo, CHC on the side of Zagné and Taï. At the same time, ASAPSU covered several localities in the Tabou department, including Olodio, Grabo, Ranouéké, Fatai, Yéouli, Bliéron, Prollo, etc. The presence of NGO representatives in the field during the visits of the evaluation team that was maintained beyond the contractual commitments with UNDP, as confirmed by the recipients' testimony, is an indicator of professionalism and commitment to be considered in case of a project extension into a second phase.
62. **IOM Côte d'Ivoire mobilized two NGOs**, namely: PARTAGE and CLIRA. The evaluation mission can confirm the effectiveness of the activities conducted by PARTAGE and its presence in the Tabou department. However, it was difficult for the evaluation team to identify the sites where CLIRA was involved and even less, the activities carried out within the framework of its mandate. However, this situation did not alter the overall visibility of IOM's action with regard to the project.

In order to ensure ownership and sustainability of the project achievements by national actors, the evaluation mission recommends that capacity building of national CSOs in Liberia be one of the priority areas of intervention in the scaling-up phase of the project. To this end, it is recommended that the Liberia RUNOs identify a sample of credible CSOs whose capacities will be strengthened as part of the project scaling-up along the entire border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

63. *The PBF Secretariats were supposed to maintain collaborative relationships with the various project bodies. However, this positioning, added the role of Cross-border Technical Monitoring Committee Co-Chairs assigned to their respective Coordinators, have placed the PBF Secretariats in an operational position where they are held accountable for the project's outcomes. The evaluation mission considers that this should not be the case. On the other hand, as PBSO field representatives, the PBF Secretariats should be part of the Cross-Border Project Steering Committee, and thus contribute to the strategic and political orientations of the project.*
64. ***Ultimately, and in the event of the continuation of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, the evaluation mission recommends that the institutional framework be streamlined, and therefore structured around:***
 - I. **A Cross-Border Project Steering Committee:** a political, strategic and decision-making body for the project that would be in charge of approving work plans, validating progress reports and formulating recommendations applicable by the country teams. The said Committee could thus be composed of: (i) a Representative of the Ivorian Ministry and a Representative of the Liberian Ministry in charge of economic and technical cooperation; (ii) a representative of the Ivorian Ministry and a representative of the Liberian Ministry in charge of security issues; (iii) a representative of the Ivorian Ministry and a representative of the Liberian Ministry in charge of social cohesion and poverty alleviation issues, (iv) the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in each of the two countries; (v) the Coordinator of the PBF Secretariat in each of the two countries, (vi) a representative of the local authority of the project area, (vii) a representative of the traditional authorities of the project area, (viii) a representative of the women's associations of the project area, and (ix) a representative of the youth associations of the project area;

- II. **Two Project Coordination Committees** (one Coordination Committee per country): project's coordination, control and monitoring and evaluation body at country level, in charge of ensuring the implementation of the recommendations formulated by the Cross-border Project Steering Committee, and responsible for: (i) the preparation and implementation of the project's monitoring and evaluation plan, and (ii) the submission of opinions and proposals to the CPTP for approval. The Country Coordination Committee would be composed of: Resident Representatives and/or the Heads of Mission of the partner RUNOs, representatives of the public administrations mentioned above (not members of the Cross-border Project Steering Committee), and the Head of the Project Management Unit;
 - III. **As Project Lead, UNDP should ensure that it mobilizes the required technical expertise in monitoring and evaluation for the elaboration of the project's monitoring and evaluation plan and implementation;**
 - IV. **Project Management Units** (one management unit per country), in charge of the daily management of the project, the development and implementation of work plans.
65. The evaluation mission considers the **promotion and communication** on the project interventions as one of the major components that should have been strengthened, with the objective to: (i) improve the coordination between the actors, (ii) ensure that the targeted populations subscribe to the project's objectives, and (ii) attract new partners with a view to scaling up the current interventions.
66. **The visit of the evaluation team to the field revealed that the results of the efforts made in terms of visibility and communication are somewhat mixed. Indeed, the existence of advertising signboards on project sites was not enough to raise awareness on the roles and responsibilities of the various partners involved in the project.**

Based on that, the evaluation mission considers that in the future, the RUNOs should enhance visibility of donor and key partners. For their part, PBF and PBSO should take all necessary measures to ensure that all the stakeholders comply with the obligations in terms of communication and visibility.



Example of a signboard at the Daobly border crossing that illustrates the low visibility of PBF/PBSO as project partners



The renovated immigration offices in Nyaaken and Kablaken (lack of project visibility)

67. **The monitoring and evaluation strategy recommended, among other things, that special attention be paid to:** (i) resource efficiency, (ii) the effectiveness of the actions undertaken and the quality of the annual and final results; (iii) the project capacity to manage sustainable outcomes and impacts, (iv) the annual planning, data updating, periodic reviews, joint field missions, and the documentation of good management practices used during project implementation, and (v) the constant search for synergy outcomes between the various components and partners of the project, and with other peacebuilding projects.
68. The absence of a baseline study was an obstacle to the monitoring of the Project's performance indicators. Through the periodic review meetings, the reports produced revealed the difficulty of quantifying the project

progress in achieving key results, such as a better sense of protection and security within communities, the restoration of trust in the defense and security forces and reduced inter-community tensions.

69. Regular monitoring of the Project by the steering bodies has compensated the absence of a baseline. The periodic reviews, including a programming workshop held in April 2017, a mid-term review (May 2018) and a final workshop (September 2018), resulted in an evaluation of the Project's achievements by stakeholders in both countries, the sharing of good practices, the evaluation of the strategies used, and in recommendations aimed at strengthening the effectiveness and sustainability of the actions undertaken by the project.
70. The existence of annual and quarterly work plans highlights a rigorous planning of activities as well as a constant search for flexibility within the coordination teams in both countries. The regular production of progress reports, including the Project's semi-annual and annual reports, financial reports, and activity reports of NGO partners on the project's implementation in the field, also contributed to the development of a significant amount of information to monitor the project's progress.

Against the high delivery costs of the activities, the project's performance was supported by the high completion rate of outputs achieved with the available resources, and by the regular progress. The financial resources needed to carry out the activities were regularly available. The contracting of local NGOs, the mobilization of a project team in each country and the recruitment of volunteers contributed to a satisfactory coverage of the target area. However, the close monitoring of the intervention contrasts with the ineffective functioning of the technical supervision bodies. All the analytical elements examined converge towards a "Moderately Satisfactory" classification for the efficiency criterion, which corresponds to a score of 4/6.

3.5 PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY: Overall SATISFACTORY with a score of 5/6.

In order to assess the project's sustainability, the evaluation mission sought to answer questions that would allow to formulate an opinion on: (i) the decisions and measures taken by the project implementing partners to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes; (ii) the availability of technical and financial capacities, as well as a certain level of leadership that would enable partner institutions to continue collaborating on the project, ensure the project can be scaled-up or that the project's achievements are sustained; (iii) the level of ownership by institutional partners and political and administrative authorities to monitor and consolidate the achieved results; (iv) the success factors, good practices, lessons learned and challenges to be addressed over time.

3.5.1. Consolidation of the achievements of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire-Liberia: a long-term priority

In order to answer the enquiry of whether the implementing partners of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia had taken the necessary decisions and measures to ensure long term sustainability and impact, and whether they had sufficient technical and financial capacity to sustain the benefits acquired beyond its term, the evaluation mission based its response on several facts.

71. **Conceptually**, the first element in answering this question is the alignment of the project's objectives to the national priorities of the two recipient countries, as defined in their development strategies. In this regard, it is worth highlighting the positioning of the International Community, and in particular the United Nations System, which has been working alongside these two countries since the early 2000s through several initiatives and with substantial resources. The United Nations System has contributed to the emergency measures for a gradual return to stability and security, and the restoration of State authority and national reconciliation.
72. **The decision to respond to the priority needs of targeted cross-border communities** through an initiative aimed at developing peaceful coexistence and social cohesion articulated around : (i) trust-building between security forces and border communities; (ii) the organization of inter-community dialogue; (iii) the creation and strengthening of joint local and cross-border peace and conflict prevention mechanisms; (iv) the capacity building of the of immigration services at border posts with a view to improve the quality of services provided to users, and trust between migration and immigration services managers and the population; (iv) the recognition of the differentiated needs of men, women and the youth ; and (v) support for anti-racketeering and anti-corruption. The initiative was welcomed by **the communities and supported by all stakeholders**.
73. ***In this regard, it is worth noting the persisting demand of the stakeholders that the mission advocates with technical and financial partners for the renewal and scaling up the initiative to cover the entire border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.***
74. **In relation to the sustainability of the project's achievements**, the evaluation team notes that the participatory approach adopted at the design phase through broad consultations of all stakeholders illustrates the willingness to align the initiative with the priorities and the needs of the recipients. This alignment was reflected by the fact that the project's institutional structure was organized with steering committees, decision-making, coordination and implementation bodies that included representatives of technical and financial partners, the Government, and civil society. **These instances were set up to (i) maintain the inter-community dialogue for peace-building, security, conflict prevention and peaceful conflict resolution and to (ii) strengthen the capacities of the local and cross-border mechanisms set up to ensure the project continuity in the concerned various areas. This explains the creation of Conflict Prevention and Peace Committees (CPPCs) and Civilian-Military Committees (CMCs).**

75. **With regard to CPPs**, the evaluation mission wishes to highlight the complementarity and synergies of the actions carried out by the NGOs ASAPSU and PARTAGE. ASAPSU has set up ten CPPCs in the Project's intervention area and strengthened the capacities of its members through appropriate training on social cohesion, conflict prevention and peaceful resolution. PARTAGE was able to extend the creation of such committees beyond the villages targeted by ASAPSU and, above all, undertook a process of systematizing the cross-border dimension in its interventions. Thus, each time ASAPSU scheduled a training or an awareness session for CPPC members; it has made a point of ensuring that the border communities of both countries' representatives attended.

Most importantly, the integrated approach adopted by ASAPSU has led to the restructuring of each committee's governance system through the reconfiguration of its executive office, which must now be composed of an equal number of representatives from the targeted mirror villages on both sides of the border.

76. *On this specific point, it should be pointed out that this strategic orientation is a long-term objective. Indeed, the evaluation mission noted during its visit at Bliéron that the five positions reserved for the Kablaken mirror community within the Prevention and Peace Committee remained vacant more than five months after the setting up of the Committee. This situation confirms the importance of continuing awareness-raising and capacity-building activities, whose impacts are slow in terms of consolidating the structure of the mechanisms put in place. This results from the top-down approach and the expectations of stakeholders that the project should cover the operating costs of the mechanisms. Moreover, the evaluation mission considers that the low level of standardization in the RUNOs practices and approaches are a limitation to accelerating the appropriation and consolidation of the achievements by project recipients.*

The strategy of Côte d'Ivoire which was to rely on intermediary bodies to implement activities at community level appears to be a good practice that should be systematized with a view to transferring the required skills for the beneficiaries to take ownership of the challenges and objectives of the project and sustain its impacts after the partners' disengagement.

77. **According to the evaluation mission, the setting up of the Civil-Military Committees, which are found exclusively in Côte d'Ivoire, belongs to the broad range of measures planned for the Reform of the Security Sector.** The special attention that the Government of this country pays to this mechanism, through the direct involvement of the Secretariat of the National Security Council, which is housed in the Office of the President of the Republic, reflects the level of commitment and priority given by the country's highest authorities. The process adopted for their implementation and structuring provides answers to various questions relating to the sustainability of the project's achievements, in particular:
- i. the availability of technical and financial capacities, at the level of leadership that can enable partner institutions to continue to work with the Project, to ensure its empowerment or the sustainability of its achievements;
 - ii. the level of ownership of institutional partners and political-administrative authorities to ensure the monitoring and consolidation of the achieved results; and finally,
 - iii. success factors, good practices, lessons learned and challenges to be addressed over time.
78. **With regard to the availability of technical capacities**, the evaluation mission believes that the appointment of a Senior Officer of the Army of Côte d'Ivoire (Colonel, assuming the functions of Defense Advisor to the Presidency of the Republic) for the supervision of the structuring of the CMCs is an indicator of the Government's willingness to provide technical supervision to the process, as well as its leadership in the implementation of the Reform of the Security Sector.

79. **Based on the evidence obtained in the field, the evaluation mission confirms the effective appropriation of the process by the political and administrative authorities of Côte d'Ivoire.** This is demonstrated by the provision of experts from technical ministries responsible for security, solidarity, social cohesion and poverty alleviation, as well as the financial participation in the organization of inter-community dialogues.

Although the following example is outside the project area, it is mainly intended to illustrate the Government's commitment and leadership in relation to peaceful coexistence and social cohesion that are built through intercommunity dialogue. Indeed, the participation of the Ivorian Government in the organization of the socio-security dialogue workshop held in Ferkessédougou from 19 to 22 December 2018 resulted in a financial contribution of CFAF 4,065,000 corresponding to one third of the budget allocated for this activity, which represents 50% of the share invested by the project for the same activity. In addition to this financial contribution, Côte d'Ivoire also covered the costs of mission of four senior officials deployed on that occasion. The same was done for all the other socio-security dialogue workshops. A reliable source indicates that the Ivorian Government intends to include support for the setting up of CMCs as public expenditure under the next finance laws.

80. ***According to the evaluation mission, stakeholder engagement and ownership could also take forms other than financial contributions, such as contributing to the provision of data of progress achieved with project support. On this specific point, the evaluation mission wishes to draw the attention of the authorities concerned on the difficulties encountered with the security, immigration and customs sectors regarding: (i) the obtaining of data on the project's contribution to crime reduction, and (ii) the assessment of cross-border mobility and trade. The reservations from services that were supposed to share strategic information appear to be a limit to the climate of trust that should prevail between partners who pursue the same objectives.***
81. **On the actual setting up of CMCs**, it is important to highlight the representativeness of all social categories in the environment where this mechanism was implemented. This inclusive approach reflects the intention of its designers to ensure its integration, while at the same time facilitating the rapprochement of populations with the defense and security forces. However, this favorable factor of institutionalization of the CMCs could be counterbalanced by the structuring approach that was adopted (top-down approach), and by the low level of synergy between the CMCs and existing comparable mechanisms. Indeed, since the same causes produce the same effects, the inherent apprehensions related to the top-down approach are identical for both CPPCs and CMCs. So far, the conceptualization and modeling of CMCs seems to have suffered from the distance with decision-making centers, often located far from the local realities. This assessment is based on the discussions that the mission had with CMC members in Taï and Tabou.
82. Indeed, the extent of the expectations expressed on various occasions by CMC members raises reasonable doubts about their level of understanding of the challenges, and their continued engagement over time. The discussions revealed that CMC members perceive these mechanisms as parallel structures that are responsible for ensuring security and social peace in their respective communities, and that as such, their operating expenses could be covered by the State, as well as specific allocations related to equipment and infrastructure.
- Regardless of the decision that will be taken in this respect, the evaluation mission considers that CMCs: (i) first and foremost need a legal status to clarify their mission, mandate, roles and responsibilities, (i) should keep the necessary flexibility to avoid confusion with the official structures that fall within the sovereign remit of a State as the primary responsible entity to guarantee the security of persons and property, and (iii) should finally be placed under the supervision of Regional perfects to ensure the collection and production of security information from official bodies mandated for this purpose.**

83. **With regard to collaboration with existing mechanisms such as the Consultative Ethics Committees (CECs)**, it seems the CMCs have not sufficiently benefited from an experience that has demonstrated the limits of a structuring approach based on a top-down approach. Nevertheless, the evaluation mission believes that there is still time to conduct a diagnosis of all the CEC and CMC-type mechanisms that were put in place as part of the Security Sector Reform in order to build on good practices and share lessons learned, including with stakeholders from Liberia.
84. The joint patrol that mobilized 37 members of the security forces of Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire appears like a promise to strengthen a lasting collaboration between the defense and security forces around both countries. The sustainability of the initiative, a catalyst for information exchange and collaboration in maintaining security on both sides of the border, depends on its normative framework and institutionalization by both countries. Institutions that are responsible for security in both countries would therefore benefit from ensuring that the identified good practices are documented and capitalized on, developing corresponding procedures and their dissemination to stakeholders in the field, as well as securing the resources necessary for its replication.
85. Thanks to the strengthening of their operational capacities provided within the project, border and security forces appear more capable of facilitating the rapid and secure border crossing of the various communities. However, the insufficient attention given to the maintenance and renewal system of the equipment obtained from the Project leads the evaluation team to express reservations about the capacity of the national institutions that were trained to preserve the assets acquired. Thus, the solar panel made available at the Pedebo border will undoubtedly allow activities to be carried out without fear of a disruption in the supply of electricity, but the project does not highlight any measures taken to meet the training and maintenance requirements inherent in the use of photovoltaic technology.
86. The involvement of beneficiary communities, local authorities and targeted defense and security forces is also an essential lever to sustain the achievements. The commitment of the security forces members, reinforced by the construction of border posts and the equipping of security institutions, is likely to reinforce their ownership of the ideals promoted by the project in terms of improving the quality of service to the population and consolidating the security climate. The ownership of the Project by the target communities is corroborated by the financial contribution of the Ivorian Government to the Project's activities.
87. The funding and implementation of IGAs has also helped strengthen community engagement, particularly among youth and women groups. The strengthening of the economic capacities of these vulnerable social groups is part of the Project's contribution to the consolidation of social cohesion within the target communities.

In conclusion, the evaluation team notes that significant progress has been made in terms of ownership of the challenges by the project's partners and final beneficiaries and their commitment to the objectives. However, objectivity requires recognition that Côte d'Ivoire seems much more advanced in this area and that significant efforts should be made by Liberia to ensure the sustainability of the project's achievements. The evaluation team is particularly drawing the attention of the Liberian authorities on the need to put in place measures to protect and secure the equipment acquired and the infrastructure rehabilitated, as well as mechanisms for preventive maintenance and servicing of rolling stock.

In any case, the intervention strategy to expand in the field through mirror communities and maintain regular exchanges at the institutional and community level, appears to be a powerful vector in terms of sharing experience and mutual capacity building. This strategy could guarantee the achievement of the objectives of the Project in both countries and preserve the achievements obtained in that respect. It is this assumption of a positive evolution (that considers that the innovative nature of the Project makes it possible to anticipate the progressive reversal of the challenges to be met on both sides) which leads the evaluation team to conclude this section with a positive note, i.e. "Overall Satisfactory" for the sustainability criterion with a score of 5/6.

3.6 PROJECT IMPACT: GLOBALLY SATISFACTORY with a score of 5/6.

Measuring the impact of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia consists in assessing the positive or negative impacts, expected or unexpected, resulting from the implementation of the activities that enabled delivery of the expected outputs. The evaluation mission approach aimed at confirming the *ex-ante* relevance of the recommended theory of change (alignment of its statement with the anticipated changes) and *ex-post* (comparison of the results obtained with the recommendations defined in the theory of change). To this end, the mission carried out an exegesis, which enabled to group the content of the theory of change into three categories:

- i. **anticipated changes to be implemented at the end of the intervention:** sustainability of cross-border peacekeeping, security, stability, social cohesion
 - ii. **the prerequisites for achieving the expected changes:** capacity building for security officials
 - iii. **the stakeholders' responsibility in producing the desired changes:** restoration of state authority, provision of services to the population, conflict prevention, etc.
88. Situations of insecurity and instability more or less comparable to those prevailing on the border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, particularly those that persist in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), have inspired in-depth reflection on the basic principles to be considered in supporting security and stabilization in conflict areas. The matching of these principles with the context of the implementation of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia resulted in the formulation of some assumptions drawn from the International Security and Stabilization Support Strategy for Eastern DRC (ISSSS).
89. **The ISSSS believes that individuals could become agents of peaceful change, capable to plan and invest in peace and means of subsistence:** the evaluation mission relies on three hypotheses in this regard to illustrate changes observed within the cross-border communities of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia:
- a. **Assumption 1:** *It is assumed that if individuals increasingly feel that the state ensures their security, that of their property and livelihoods, as well as institutional security, in a transparent, equitable, non-discriminatory manner, and if they acquire the capacity to analyze conflicts and formulate solutions that are supported by the state, therefore they will gradually feel able to become agents of peaceful change and will begin to plan for the long term and invest in peace and livelihoods.*
90. In the case of the Cross-border project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia project, two key facts served as determinants for the verification of this assumption, as well as for the realization of the changes advocated by the theory behind it. These are the joint patrol conducted by the defense and security forces of these two countries and the setting up, by the project, of the local mechanisms for the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts.
91. Because the populations of the border communities in the project area felt protected and valued through the organization of the joint patrol and were convinced that the two governments had decided to assume their responsibility in protecting them and ensuring their security, they decided to take their share of responsibility through their involvement in the CPPC and CMC. In this regard, material consulted and the exchanges with key informants reveal that:

- Ivorian forces stopped 40 individuals at the border who were trying to cross the border at the Prolo checkpoint and reach Liberia via Tiboto seeking to illegally extract gold.
- An individual who opened fire on a young man from Prolo was brought before the courts in Liberia.
- There has been a significant decrease in abuses and acts of violence against border populations because of training provided to local authorities, security forces, border officers and key government actors on human rights, gender, child protection, conflict prevention and management.
- Abusive controls and illegal taxation ended in all checkpoints due to the involvement of CPPCs and the training provided by the project.
- The response times of the security forces have been significantly reduced for emergencies thanks to the rolling stock provided by the project.

*b. **Assumption 2:** It is assumed that if communities and the State constantly negotiate and their respective responsibilities are established and if public institutions are able to provide the services requested by communities in a transparent, equitable, and non-discriminatory manner, then trust will gradually be built, and the population will rely less on armed groups to protect them, thus reducing the mobilizing and instrumentalizing capacity of armed groups.*

92. In the absence of evidence from the recipient's surveys, the changes that support this assumption in the present project are drawn from the Duokodi Police Services and Harper's Immigration and Emigration Office reports. Table 5 below, based on data collected at the Duokodi police station in Liberia, illustrates the restoration of public trust in the security forces through the evolution of denunciations of criminal acts made to the police by the population since the launching of the project.

Table 5: Evolution of denunciations of criminal acts by the population from 2016 to 2018

Year	Number of denunciations	Monthly average
2016	3	
2017	22	1,83
2018	18	1,5

Table 5 above shows that in 2016, the population's trust deficit in the security forces resulted in a lack of collaboration and the retention of security information. The fact that the project's action has helped to restore this trust is reflected in the flow of information delivered to the police from year to year.

*c. **Assumption 3:** It is assumed that if the relationship of trust is restored between institutions and communities, and if the capacities to peacefully manage conflicts are established, then community stakeholders will be able to take over the stabilization and longer-term peacebuilding and development.*

93. The relevance of this theory is confirmed by the change observed in conflict resolution within the border communities in the project area, thanks to the action of the Conflict Prevention and Peace Committees (CPPCs), namely:

- The resolution of the conflict between the village of Bliéron (CI) and Kablaken (Lib) despite the heavy loss of human lives. Indeed, an accident involving a canoe occurred during a crossing led by a man from Kablaken. Having lost control of the canoe in the middle of the river, the man abandoned the boat with its occupants: a woman and her three children. The woman survived, and the children drowned. This incident triggered strong tensions between both localities. Nevertheless, the CPPC's reinforced capacities in conflict resolution allowed them to resolve the conflict peacefully.
- The resolution of the land dispute between Kablake (Taboo) and Boke (Tabou): the two villages in Tabou commune were fighting over a portion of land. This situation has led to serious tensions between the nationals of these localities. Kablake even banned the inhabitants of Boke from passing through, preventing them from easily reaching the city of Tabou. Following the conflict resolution negotiations, the leaders of these localities have begun talks that have led to a lull pending final resolution of the case by the competent authorities who have been seized.
- Internal conflicts (generation conflict) were identified in the localities of Prolo, Ranouinké. The CPPCs located in these communities are working to bring about positive change.
- Interpersonal conflicts have decreased in frequency thanks to the continuous awareness-raising activities organized in localities by the CPPCs.
- Peaceful settlement of an incident in Grabo: an outsider murdered the brother of the Chief of Grabo with a machete. With the support of the CPPC, which was able to bring together the various Heads of Communities and the involvement of the administrative authorities, an inter-community war was avoided in August 2018.
- Peaceful settlement of a conflict in Olodio: a girl was burned in the first degree by a non-indigenous. Thanks to the intervention of the CPPC of Olodio and ASAPSU, an inter-community conflict was avoided.

The ISSSS also considers that the establishment of protection as a natural safety standard for populations brings other types of changes: if protection becomes a natural norm in the field and if a certain degree of supervision by civilians is accepted by both parties and exercised in practice, then local lessons learned would be formalized at the central level and new standards would be established across the country, thus improving DSF participation in the process of Strengthening the Security Sector.

94. Such a change can be expected in Côte d'Ivoire when CMCs are established throughout the country and have succeeded in attracting all similar mechanisms (e.g. CECs) to a synergistic and inclusive platform for actions in support of peaceful coexistence and social cohesion.

It is also recognized that the ability of people to support their families can lead to better prospects for social cohesion: it is assumed that if people can and feel increasingly able to provide for the basic needs of their families, and if they can recognize the benefits of joint actions, overcoming divisions to improve the well-being of their communities, then this will reduce competition for scarce resources and strengthen social cohesion at the community level, thus making people less likely to mobilize against their neighbors.

95. On the socio-economic level, although statistical data is not available on the improvement of the living standards of the populations in the various localities covered by the project, the reports and interviews with key informants suggest that the living conditions of the populations will improve. This is reflected first in the resumption of socio-economic activities in the project area and the development of new Income Generating Activities (IGAs).

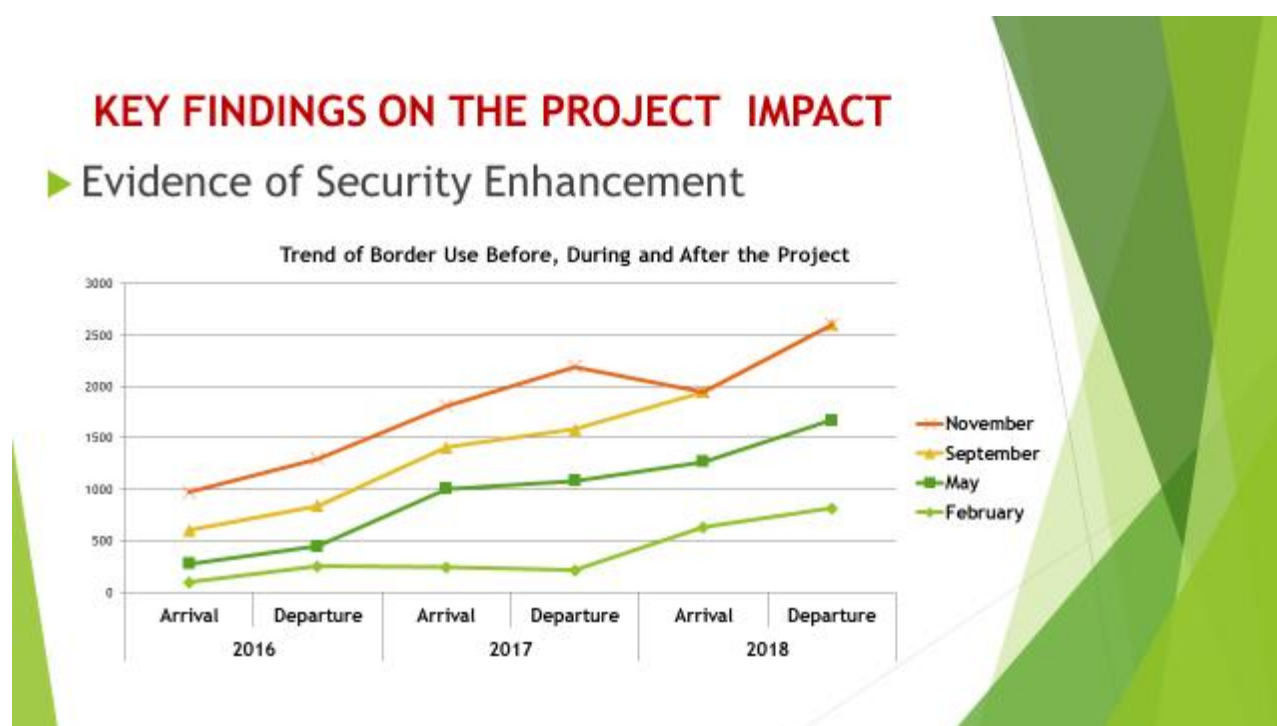
Evidence suggests that the positive trend observed is correlated with the reduction of criminal activity and the peaceful atmosphere between communities. **We can quote the statements of the Deputy Prefect of Grabo who said, in an interview in May 2018, that the "situation of tranquility means that... agriculture was again on the rise".**

As for the new IGAs, the project supported several women's and youth associations with a view to improve their incomes. **Support for the "cassava and shredder project in Prollo" and the "market gardening and tricycle project in Bliéron" are in line with these interventions.** Further, in order to ensure the success of the IGAs, the recipients' capacities (youth and women) were built through basic training in entrepreneurship and business management, thus ensuring the sustainability of their activities.

In addition to the above approaches that aim at raising people's living standards, one of the strategies that has undoubtedly boosted local economy has been the simultaneous organization of trade fairs and socio-cultural and sporting activities. The fairs have attracted many people. The large crowds that came to take part in these activities represented an important market for traders (especially women) whose sales probably increased.

The economic benefits can also be seen through the progression of cross-border trade during the implementation of the project. The significant increase in the flow of people crossing the border reflects this renewed economic dynamism. Food supplies have increased on both sides of the border. These flows are made easier thanks to the knowledge gained by border officers during the various training sessions, as well as by raising awareness activities among the population on the various subjects related to their mobility.

The graph presented below illustrates the evolution of cross-border trade, which is driven by trends in terms of border crossing.(



96. The trends presented in this graph are based on the use of randomly selected four-month data from 2016 to 2018: February, May, September and November. The graph shows a rising trend in 2017 and 2018, irrespective of the month, for border crossing (arrivals and departures). These trends are justified by the fact that the training provided to border officials and members of border communities has enabled both sides to know their rights and

obligations. Now anyone who comes to a checkpoint knows that with a valid passport or photo pass and an up-to-date vaccination record, they will cross the border without any difficulty. In this regard, the testimonies of Mrs. MUSU Johnson, President of the Maryland County Women's Association and Mrs. Josephine ALLISON, Head of the Association of Cross-Border Women Traders met during the mission's visit to Harper are summarized as follows:

The difficulties experienced before the launching of the project in relation to cross-border trade between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia were considerably reduced thanks to the training provided by the project. The numerous meetings organized with the Ivorian sisters testify to the cordial understanding and climate of peace restored between our respective communities. The quarterly meetings established through the project provide opportunities to discuss issues of common interest between communities in both countries. Everyone seems to have become aware of the need to maintain this momentum in the long term. The peaceful coexistence and social cohesion restored with the support of the project have fostered the development of cross-border marriages. Finally, the two ladies strongly supported the continuation of the Project, with a view to consolidating the gains they consider still fragile and exposed to evident erosion in the event of an immediate withdrawal of the partner's support.



Madame MUSU Johnson to the right and Joséphine ALLISON to the left

97. The impact of the implementation of the project was also felt in terms of health. To see Ivorians crossing the border to access health services at the Nyaaken Clinic in Liberia, which happens to be the closest clinic, is an excellent example. Data received by the evaluation team, shows there was an increase in the use of the services of this Clinic by the Ivorian population over the period of project implementation. In May, the number of Ivorians who accessed this health infrastructure rose from 68 in 2016 to 131 in 2017, an increase of 93%. The improvement in security, the restored trust of the population in their DSF and the reinforced social cohesion, resulting from the project's intervention, explain this change in the attendance of the Liberian clinic by Ivorians.

The ISSS establishes a close link between gender-based violence and conflict: in this regard, it is recognized that if individuals are not directly affected by sexual violence or can use a functioning system to seek redress, they will not use violent conflict as a means of revenge or protection, and they will be more open to conflict resolution processes and will accept more conflict resolution processes based on law primacy. If individuals are not directly affected by sexual violence (or have a real recourse) then they will be physically, psychologically and socially capable of advancing society through citizen action.

98. The project has had a significant impact in improving the status of women with a view to their full development in the target communities. The project teams ensured the effective involvement of women in all organized activities, particularly those related to safety. Thus, in the bodies bringing together civilians and the defense forces to discuss security issues, the project ensured that there were at least 3 representatives of women's associations. In the end, at least 25% of women attended the exchanges held on security issues. Through their active involvement, women have positioned themselves as key actors in the promotion of security and peacebuilding on the border between the two countries.
99. With regard to their participation in many other project activities, it is noted that, like men, they took part in football matches that were organized also with a view to promoting gender approach. In terms of economic activities, women because of their strong involvement in small cross-border trade activities dominated trade fairs. The training courses were mainly aimed at improving their capacities to identify business opportunities and manage them in order to increase their incomes and improve household living conditions.
100. In terms of improving knowledge on violence against women, the evaluation team observed that all participants in the focus group of Bliéron's, underlined that trainings in human rights and gender, had enabled them to know that sexual abuse is a human rights violation and is punishable by law. With regard to physical and verbal violence, it was noted in the same focus group that 17 out of 21 women reported that they had not experienced these forms of violence since the beginning of the project.

It is clear, upon project completion that: (i) people have adopted new attitudes and behaviours towards their defense and security forces in the sense of renewed confidence, (ii) the authority and legitimacy of these DSFs have been restored, and (iii) numerous socio-economic gains have been achieved in the areas covered by the project. Moreover, it was noted, on gender issues, that the project has enabled women to position themselves as actors in promoting safety in an area mainly reserved for men. Similarly, the reduction of violence against women in the localities covered is a direct benefit resulting from the project. All these findings reinforce the theory of change initially used, which envisaged capacity building for all stakeholders along the Côte d'Ivoire-Liberia border as a mechanism to reduce the risk of conflict, promote peace and consolidate social cohesion. Although not all causes of conflict appear to have been contained, the evaluation team considers the impact of the project as GLOBALLY SATISFACTORY project and assigns a score of 5/6.

IV. THE WAY FORWARD

4.1 Lessons learned

101. *The joint approach adopted for the planning and implementation of Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia appears to be the main success factor that has driven the positive changes observed at project completion.*
102. *The evaluation team recommends continuing the project in a second phase, maintaining this approach, and the cross-border dimension. The evaluation team also recommends that the RUNOs ensure perfect symmetry in the selection of mirror localities and a real harmonization in the implementation strategies of the two countries.*
103. *The mobility of members of cross-border communities living on either side of the Cavally River will remain a challenge to socio-cultural integration and to the expansion of cross-border trade, as long as people living on both sides of the border do not benefit from identical facilities to cross the border.*
104. *Attempts of illegal or clandestine smuggling, illegal acts of violence and taxation against persons caught in the act will continue as long as the imbalance in the number of entry points opened in both countries remains.*
105. *The good practices developed in the communities benefiting from this project and the capacities for the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts within these communities risk to decline or even reverse if identical initiatives are not carried out along the entire border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.*
106. *An initiative that is not able to produce clear and precise evidence on the level of achievement becomes unattractive for mobilizing new partners and diversifying its funding sources.*
107. *The commitment of national partners is a guarantee of sustainability that reassures technical and financial partners of a significant return on investment of the support they provide as part of their contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.*

4.2 Main recommendations

►► To the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia

- *Maintain the joint and cross-border approach in the framework of the request to be submitted to technical and financial partners for scaling-up the intervention initiated with the financial support of PBSO.*
- *Codify, disseminate and popularize the regulations on crossing formalities at entry points between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.*
- *Strengthen the partnership with technical and financial partners by providing easy access to information related to the project progress indicators.*
- *Take the necessary measures for the optimal operation and maintenance of the equipment and rolling stock acquired with the support of the project.*

►► To the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire

- *Consider the possibility of increasing the number of crossing points on the border with Liberia.*

►► To the Government of Liberia and UNDP Liberia

- *Organize the formal acceptance of migration office buildings in Duokodi, Nyaaken, Kablaken and Fish Town that were renovated with the financial support of the project.*

►► To the RUNOs and the PBF

- *Organize a media event to present the results achieved by the Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia as well as the prospects envisaged for the capitalization of the project achievements.*

►► To the RUNOs

- *Update the data of the joint evaluations conducted on border security and social cohesion in 2015 in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire as baseline studies for the formulation of the request for funding for a subsequent phase of the project.*
- *Adopt identical approaches and intervention strategies for the implementation of the project in both countries.*
- *Respect the commitments made to ensure the visibility, among recipients, of the financial partner.*
- *Streamline the governance and operational management structure of the project with a view to enhancing its efficiency.*

►► To PBSO

- *Favourably review the funding request that could be submitted with a view to capitalizing on the project's achievements, and to scaling-up the project to a subsequent phase of a minimum duration of thirty-six (thirty-six) months*
- *Document and disseminate the knowledge acquired through an innovative experience in support of a Cross-border project for peaceful coexistence, peacebuilding and social cohesion in West Africa in post-conflict areas.*

CONCLUSION

The "Cross-border Cooperation project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia for Sustainable Peace and Social Cohesion" implemented between April 2017 and October 2018 with PBSO funding of US\$3 million, was an initiative to **strengthen domestic and cross-border security as well as social cohesion and cooperation between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.**

Innovative in its cross-border dimension and aligned with the policies of both countries and the needs of recipient communities in terms of security, peacebuilding, social cohesion and peaceful coexistence, the Cross-border Project between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia performed beyond its target, achieving an overall completion rate of 132.02% at project completion. The expected outputs were divided as follows:

- **Output 1.1 : 186.5%**
- **Output 1.2 : 153%**
- **Output 1.3 : 100%**
- **Output 2.1 : 91.7%**
- **Output 2.2 : 128.7%**

Obstacles to its implementation include: (i) the lack of baseline studies and lack of final recipient surveys to determine target values and monitoring performance indicators, (ii) poor functionality of the coordination and monitoring and evaluation bodies, (iii) cumbersome disbursement procedures and the low level of standardization of RUNO practices and intervention approaches in both countries. The Project has led to many real and potentially lasting positive changes in terms of protecting and securing targeted border communities, restoring people's trust in the security forces, increasing the volume of economic exchanges and improving the status of women and youth.

Based of those findings and following an objective review of each of the criteria used for the exercise, the evaluation mission rates the entire project as Overall Satisfactory and assigns an average score of 5/6. The evaluation team also recommends that, subject to the continued commitment of the two Governments and the rationalization of implementation, coordination and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (mainly through the reduction of institutional arrangements and the cost of delivering activities, as well as the harmonization of intervention strategies in both countries), the technical and financial partners of this initiative renew the project into a subsequent phase extended to the entire border between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia for a minimum period of thirty-six (36) months.