

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

TRAVEL/MISSION REPORT SUMMARY

 <p>Empowered lives. Resilient nations.</p>	TRAVEL/MISSION REPORT SUMMARY	
REPORT TITLE: Back-to-Office report on monitoring mission to Bong, Nimba, Lofa, Maryland and Grand Gedeh Counties to monitor LMPTF-PBF projects.		
SUBMITTED BY: John R. Dennis, PBF Coordinator. Patrick Basysewala, designated driver, UNRCO/UNDP		DATE: 31 August 2022
TRAVEL DATE: 28 July– 12 August 2022	LOCATION: Nimba, Lofa, Bong, Grand Gedeh and Maryland Counties.	
PARTICIPANTS: 7 communities in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, Maryland and Grand Gedeh Counties including three capitals. 70% of the participants were females.		
<p>I. OBJECTIVE/PURPOSE OF TRAVEL:</p> <p>To follow up ongoing and ended projects to examine value for money, impact and sustainability for projects that have ended. The PBF has invested and continue to provide peacebuilding financing to sustain the gains of national and multilateral institutions following the departure of the UN Mission in March 2018. The assessment was intended to assess output and outcome/results achieved by project teams, with particular reference to the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the actions carried out in relation to key objectives as well as the sustainability of those results.</p> <p>II. <u>EXPECTED OUTCOMES</u></p> <p>The following was achieved by the mission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Captured key output and outcome results from projects assessed;b) Captured lessons learned and key recommendations for improved project implementation.		

Background

Liberia continues to benefit from PBF support to address major conflict triggers around land management and rights, voice and accountability, gender equality and women's empowerment, access to justice and security, regional cooperation, social cohesion, economic empowerment, national reconciliation among others. PBF has committed more than USD84 Million to sustain Liberia's peace during and after the drawdown of UNMIL and the transfer of responsibilities to the Liberian Government to assume full responsibility for national security in accordance with Security Council resolution 2239 (2015). UNMIL activities and the programs funded by the PBF have been particularly important in reducing tensions and incidents of violence in communities including border communities.

III. Summary of Findings of the Mission

Mission to the five counties confirmed the contribution PBF support is making in the lives of women many of whom were previously abused, marginalized and denied their rights to decision making and access to properties.

Land Governance Project

Maryland

In Gedetarbot Community, Maryland County, the level of violence against women has reduced since the



intervention of the PBF, where awareness and trainings against SGBV and capacity building on Land Rights have been conducted. The women spoken to during our assessment demonstrated increased knowledge on their rights and skills acquired to resolve disputes between communities as well as between concession companies and themselves.

“I never knew that me and my husband can own land together. I also never knew that I have right to my inherit property. Our people used to say only boy child can inherit property. But the project supported by PBF taught us that girl children have the right to ownership too”. Teeta Wilson, a resident of Gedetarbo. Teeta continued “Before my husband used

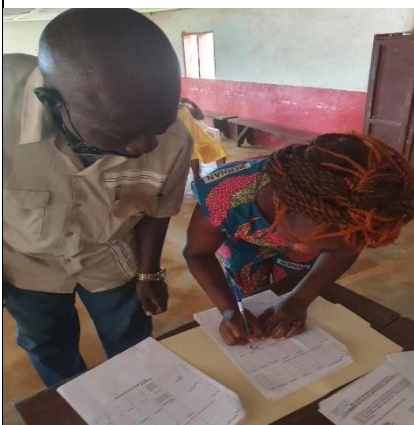
to beat me as soon as we made confusion. Since the training, he can't beat me again”.

These experiences were echoed by Ida Kopeh, a resident, and Mr. Messiah Wesseh, Youth Chair of Gedetarbo.

The PBF is also providing support to reduce tensions between communities through the conduct of surveys that would lead to the provision of deeds to communities once divided due to land conflict. Surveys have conducted and communities are waiting for the planting of cornerstones which will be followed by the issuance of deeds. PBF support benefits three clans: Gedetarbo, Twencebo and Gedetarbo.

Nimba County

This project is also engaging communities in Nimba County where it has identified boundaries between two



clans, Vayee and Gbehyye, once polarized due to boundary dispute. These clans early in 2022 signed an MOU to resolve the conflict, allowing surveyors hired by the project through the Liberia Land Authority (LLA) to conduct confirmatory surveys. The monitoring mission uncovered that since the survey was carried out, cornerstones hadn't been planted as procurement under UNDP who is responsible for this delivery had delayed.

As part of this project, county land offices are being empowered to work closely with community structures such as the Community Land Development Management Committees (CLDMCs), which are part of the Land Rights Act (LRA), serve as first point of contact to resolve community land conflicts. These structures comprise community leaders, local government offices, CSOs and elders. To ensure the operationalization of the county land office in

Sanniquellie, the provincial capital of Nimba, the project provided Solar lighting not only for the county land office located in the county administration building but the entire edifice to support the overall functionality of local government in its administrative oversight. Local officials appreciated PBF support which they said is greatly strengthening existing efforts and filling government's peacebuilding gaps to address conflict issues not only around land but border security as well as promoting social cohesion in many communities including border communities. Korman Bortuah, County Security Coordinator, indicated that the PBF support has and continued to significantly contribute to sustaining the peace.

Peace Dividends Project

Grand Gedeh

Under the Peace Dividends Project, it was confirmed that an awareness on conflict prevention and mitigation was conducted by Platform for Dialogue (P4DP). Mr. William Quiwea, Focal Point for P4DP, informed the secretariat mission that training was conducted for 15 participants, 7 of which were women. The participants included security officers, cross border women, elders and community leaders from Tchien and Gbarzon communities in Grand Gedeh County. The training focused on peacebuilding using various methodologies including ADR to prevent and resolve conflict. here was no further action taken since the awareness.

Lofa and Nimba Counties

The CSO called NAYMOTE engaged communities in Voinjamine, Lofa County; and communities in Ganta and Sanniquellie Nimba County, where it raised awareness on conflict mitigation, social cohesion and conversations around livelihood opportunities as dividends for peace. NAYMOTE established county Steering Committee in each county to provide oversight of the project to demonstrate local ownership. The county superintendent of each county chairs the committee, which comprises key sectors in the county. Intensive community engagements are yet to be undertaken.

Sustaining peace and improving social cohesion through the promotion of rural employment opportunities for youth in conflict-prone areas

Lofa and Bong Counties

This project which is led by FAO ended in August 2021 with residual committed activities continued post implementation. Key among these activities is support to capacitating and operationalizing poultry facilities as

well as post-harvest facilities constructed during project implementation. The secretariat's mission determined that FAO provided over 700 birds (layers) this year to Ganglota Community, Lofa County, to boost economic empowerment of locals as a way of keeping them engaged to prevent conflicts including those that are land related. These beneficiaries have been committed undertaking the project, providing care for the birds to mature for commercial value until their hopes were diminished by the inability of FAO and the service provider to supply feed for the birds that led to more than 300 fatalities at the time aside from the ones that due to natural causes, leaving little to care for under challenging conditions including 2 hours of light at night from a feeble solar system (one panel and two little bulbs) empowered by one small battery just enough for the resilient members to see and prepare for the rest of the night. This has inhibited the courage of some to continue with the project, leaving few with the hope that the situation may change. George Zaza, General Secretary for the community project, expressed disappointment in FAO who delays in responding to their calls to ensure that the service provider supplies the feed in time. "The last feed was supplied on 6 August almost 3 weeks of delay", said George.

The situation in Lofa is no different from what was being experienced by Totota beneficiaries in Bong County, where Yassah Monibah, head of project, expressed frustration after fruitless efforts to get FAO to do the needful to save their birds. When the project initially begun, women in this community were enthusiastic about the future of the project. They turned out in their numbers to undertake activities that would lead to their economic empowerment, something now that is far from achieving under this output.

Zolowee Community, Nimba-Concession Project

The team visited Zolowee to conduct post monitoring of the Concession Project after it ended more than two years ago. In this community, FAO constructed a poultry facility and did not supply birds until the end of the project in 2019. After consistent follow up missions conducted by the Secretariat, birds were supplied early in 2022, and the community was abandoned by FAO leading to 80% of the birds dead, leaving the community with no option but to sell the few remaining survivors. "We had to sell the remaining chickens so that we cannot lose completely", said a beneficiary.

Strengthening the Agency of Young Women in Peacebuilding processes and land Tenure in Liberia Project

This project which is implemented by ActionAid Liberia has begun rolling out its activities in accordance with its approved work plan. The monitoring mission visited one of the project activities in Gbarnga, Bong County, where it engaged CBOs/CSOs who are conducting awareness and training in several project communities. This project was approved by PBF under its GYPI 2021 Call.

IV. General Project Implementation Issues:

- Agencies do not adequately follow up with implementing partners (IPs)/service providers to do what they are or were hired/required to do in time, which has led to delayed implementation or project failure, sometimes both. For example, FAO's failure to follow its IP hired to supply feed to poultry farmers/community beneficiaries led to huge mortalities of birds in three communities, one each in Lofa, Bong and Nimba Counties. The project failed in one of the communities while the other two communities are at the brink of failure due to negligence on the part of FAO. An other example is UNDP under the Land Governance Project where it delayed to plant cornerstones after months of supporting the conduct of confirmatory surveys in four counties. Two of the counties, Maryland and Nimba, visited, communities complained of delays in planting the cornerstones after agreed surveys by the communities involved. This could lead to renewed tensions if UNDP does not act fast.

- Limited monitoring by agencies has contributed to inadequate engagement between communities and agencies, leading to late response in addressing concerns raised by the communities.

V. Challenges

- Bad road condition continues to remain a challenge for monitoring during the rainy season. Under such harsh condition, it makes it difficult for agencies to conduct proper monitoring of projects located in Lofa and the southeastern region of Liberia.

VI. Lessons Learned

- Continued awareness on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE), Land rights Act (LRA), Local Government Act (LGA) as well as strengthening community-based peace infrastructures prove to be effective in mitigating conflict and increasing confidence.
- Failed promises by an agency can lead to diminished trust and wrecked confidence by communities which has the potential to affect future implementation in these affected locations.
- Agencies often blame implementing partners and communities for their failures and refuse to take any responsibility. This has repercussions to perpetuate poor performance and undermine development.

VII. Recommendations

- That the senior management of FAO acts immediately to remedy the situation at the various poultry facilities where fatalities of birds/chickens have occurred due to negligence on the part of FAO management to follow up on the timely supply of feed by the vender, Obasanjo Farm, who intermittently supplied feed weeks after requests were made by communities.
- That FAO should be made to replenish losses incurred at these sites.
- That UNDP hastens the procurement process to have cornerstones planted in communities where surveys have taken place in the project counties under the Land Governance Project.

VIII.

Some Photos from the Mission



