

Sudan Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF)

Final report

Project Title: Training of the members of the Permanent Ceasefire Committee and its structures

Project ID: 00131835

Geographical area: Sudan, Darfur

Implementing partners: N/A

Project Start Date, End Date, and Duration: 13 May 2022 – 31 December 2023

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Gender Marker: Gem 1

Risk Marker: N/A

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1. Project summary & context development

The Juba Agreement for Peace in Sudan between the Transitional Government of Sudan and the Parties to Peace Process (JPA) of October 2020 foresees the establishment of a permanent ceasefire in the Darfur region to be overseen by a Permanent Ceasefire Committee (PCC) chaired by UNITAMS, the Government of Sudan and five Darfuri Armed Struggle Movements. UN Security Council resolution 2579 (2021) further mandated ceasefire monitoring in Darfur as a UNITAMS priority for the period 2021-2022. Following the military takeover in October 2021 and the deterioration of the security situation in Darfur, the SRSF reiterated that the implementation of security arrangements was a much-needed priority to prevent further escalation of conflict.

Against this backdrop, the project aimed to support the operationalization of the PCC in line with its intended mandate and functions, by supporting the development of institutional and subsidiary structures of the PCC and provision of capacity building to PCC members to harmonize and strengthen their knowledge, skillset, and trust amongst each other to carry out their mandated functions. Following the 2021 military coup, the political context in the country changed resulting in a multidimensional political, economic and security crisis in Sudan. Although the PCC continued to meet and function to some extent, the new political context resulted in an increase of conflicts in Darfur while hampering the implementation of the JPA. As a result, the project implementation faced significant delays during 2022 due to challenges with timely deployment of PCC staff and logistical obstacles such as lack of access to transportation, accommodation, office structures to facilitate the work of the PCC. Despite these challenges, efforts to operationalise the PCC continued in 2022, resulting in the establishment of PCC headquarters in El-Fasher (North Darfur), as well as five Sector Committees in North, South, West, East and Central Darfur. Moreover, the project initiated its activities as per the project workplan, including the development of key SOPs to guide the PCCs work and the roll-out of training activities. Due to the significant delays in the implementation of project activities, a no-cost extension of the project was requested in December 2022 extending the project period to 31 December 2023.

During the first quarter of 2023, the project continued its capacity building activities with PCC members as per the project workplan. However, the outbreak of the conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on 15 April 2023 had a significant impact on PCC operations in Darfur and all project activities were put on hold. The conflict led to widespread instability and insecurity in Darfur which made it challenging for the PCC to carry out its functions on the ground. Despite the challenging circumstances, PCC remained partially operational in Darfur with UNITAMS continuing its chairmanship role and support to PCC members from remote. Following the outbreak of the conflict, the PCC played a pivotal role in ensuring the neutrality of armed groups signatories of the JPA, and supporting mediation efforts to deescalate tension, negotiate local ceasefires, and facilitate the protection of civilians. After the evacuation of UN international staff from Sudan, UNITAMS continued to remotely support the national PCC members on the ground in Darfur in their efforts to monitor the security situation on the ground, document ceasefire violations, engage and mediate with national stakeholders to de-escalate tensions and negotiate local

ceasefire agreements. UNITAMS also continued its operational support to PCC national offices in an effort maintain the PCC operational capacity.

2. Project results

2.1 Summary of results & achievements

During the project's implementation period, activities were finalised under outcome 1 and project activities initiated under outcomes 2 and 3. This included developing SOPs and the training modules and materials for the capacity building activities, as well as initiating trainings with PCC members. The training activities were conducted as joint to build trust among PCC members in the Secretariat and the Sectoral Committees.

The project activities implemented in 2022 contributed to establishing the full structure of the PCC, including the Secretariat, Sector Committees, and their respective field offices in Darfur. The development of SOPs and the trainings conducted also contributed to increasing the knowledge, skillsets, and trust among PCC members to implement its mandate and functions as reflected in the JPA. For instance, the training conducted with PCC members increased their knowledge and understanding of the PCCs structure, mandate, roles and responsibilities and internal reporting mechanisms while fostering trust and cooperation among PCC members. Moreover, it also reinforced common understanding of the developed SOPs, as well as strengthened their capacities and skills in ceasefire monitoring techniques. As a result, PCC increased its operational capacity to carry out its functions and responsibilities in line with its mandate and made progress towards strengthen the capacity of estimated 122 members of the PCC and its Secretariat of 55 staff.

Despite the progress made, the implementation of project activities in 2022 was delayed due to the new political reality which followed the military coup of October 2021. For instance, the PCC faced significant operational challenges such as visa delays for international personnel which hindered their deployment to Sector Committees and resulted in having two of the five Sectoral Committees (East and Central Darfur) not fully staffed until end of 2022. In addition, logistical challenges for PCC members continued, including lack of access to transportation, accommodation, office infrastructure resulting in further difficulties and delays in the implementation of project activities. As a result, UNITAMS requested a no-cost extension of the project which was approved extending the project until 31 December 2023. The project team reviewed and adjusted the project workplan, and towards the end of 2022 some of the key operational and logistical challenges were resolved. Moreover, the final deployment of PCC members at the end of 2022 resulted in the full staffing of all five Sector Committees and their field offices.

In 2023, the project continued to implement activities under outcomes 2 and 3 during the first quarter. This included training activities with PCC members in the Sector Committees strengthening their skills in ceasefire monitoring, verification, and investigations, as well as conflict resolution techniques and methods. However, following the outbreak of the conflict between SAF and RSF on 15 April 2023, the project activities were suspended. As the conflict continued to worsen during the rest of 2023, the project was not resumed and consequently the training programme of PCC members could not be carried out as planned. Despite this, the developed SOPs and the capacity building support provided under this project contributed to the project's set objective and outcomes, namely, increasing understanding of the Permanent Ceasefire Committee, its mandate and its functioning; increasing the skillsets of PCC members enabling them to undertake their functions as per JPA; as well as creating an environment to facilitate trust between the parties. This also enabled PCC to maintain intact following the outbreak of the conflict and to continue carry out vital functions in a challenging environment.

2.2 Project outcomes and activities

Project Outcome	Activities undertaken	Results summary
<p><u>Outcome 1:</u> PCC personnel at all levels have an increased understanding of the Permanent Ceasefire Committee, its mandate and its functioning.</p>	<p>In 2022, UNITAMS supported the PCC in developing and finalising key standard operating procedures (SOPs) to guide the PCC's work, including ground rules, reporting, information management, preventive monitoring, registration and investigation of alleged ceasefire violations and complaint resolution.</p> <p>UNITAMS also developed and finalised the training curricula, including modules and materials to be used for capacity building of current and future PCC members.</p> <p>In June 2022, UNITAMS conducted a pilot workshop on the developed SOP in El Fasher for 25 participants from the PCC Secretariat and Sector Committees.</p> <p>UNITAMS conducted technical consultative meetings with PCC members at El Fasher in July 2022 (125 participants), Nyala (75 participants) and El Geneina (87 participants) in November and December 2022. The objective of these meetings was to operationalize public outreach and communication programs to reach out to different stakeholders and communities to raise awareness on the JPA and PCC mandate and develop public information material on the PCC in support of the capacity building programme for the PCC under this project.</p>	<p>Key standard operating procedures (SOPs) were finalised to guide the PCCs members in their functions. The SOPs were officially approved by PCC representatives from the Sudan Government, the Armed Struggle Movements (ASMs) and UNITAMS in June 2022. They were also shared with the Joint High Military Committee for Security Arrangements (JHMC).</p> <p>The training curricula for the capacity building process was finalised to provide the PCC with a vetted training programme and training tools that could be used when the PCC structures expand and for onboarding of new PCC personnel. The training programme includes workshops, meetings and conferences in support of PCC operational activities in HQ, Sectoral Committees and field teams, as well as seminars to reach out to different stakeholders and communities to raise awareness on the JPA and PCC mandate and develop public information material on the PCC in all five Darfur States. The training curricula main objective is to strengthen the knowledge and skills of PCC members required to undertake their mandated activities in accordance with the developed SOPs, including an understanding of the PCC structures, mandate and functioning.</p>

<p><u>Outcome 2:</u> The PCC is able to undertake functions given to it in the JPA by having well trained personnel.</p>	<p>UNITAMS conducted 3 trainings on PCC mandate, responsibilities and roles in accordance to JPA, in El Fasher, Nyala and El Geneina for a total of 75 participants from PCC Sector Committees and Secretariat. The trainings took place in June, August and October 2022 and focused on the developments of the Tripartite Mechanism, as per the mandate given to it under the JPA, the SOPs, and experiences from other such monitoring mechanisms.</p> <p>UNITAMS conducted 3 trainings on the developed SOPs, in El Fasher, Nyala and El Geneina for a total of 48 PCC members. The trainings took place in May, November and December 2022.</p> <p>In East Darfur, a workshop was conducted on 14-16 February 2023 to strengthen capacity on ceasefire monitoring, verification, investigation and conflict resolution for 24 PCC members. In addition, a workshop was held on 1-2 March on conflict resolution, with a focus on negotiations and best practices with 15 PCC members.</p> <p>In Central Darfur, a workshop was held from 28 February to 2 March 2023 on ceasefire, monitoring, verification, investigation and conflict resolution with 27 PCC members, which was followed by a workshop on conflict resolution on 20-21 March 2023 with 14 PCC members.</p>	<p>As a result of the capacity building activities conducted, PCC members increased their capacity of knowledge and understanding of PCC mandate, roles and responsibilities, including on the SOPs, role of the PCC in relation to PoC efforts, humanitarian issues and gender inclusions as well as monitoring, reporting and verification of CFV mechanism in Darfur. The trainings also briefed participants on international standards and best practices in areas of monitoring, reporting and investigations of CFV and how it relates to the Darfur context. As a result, members of the PCC were provided with the knowledge and skills required to perform their duties and functions as outlined in the JPA.</p> <p>The activities conducted with the five PCC sectors in 2023, provided a forum to facilitate a cordial interaction between signatories to the JPA and other stakeholders which plays a crucial role for future conflict resolution efforts. They also contributed to building the capacity of the PCC by strengthening PCC members' skill sets and knowledge necessary to carry out their mandated tasks as enshrined in the JPA. As a result, PCC members were able to perform their duties as members of the monitoring mechanism during conflict situations as well as undertake other functions as per the JPA. The project activities were part of the training curricula developed in 2022 which aims to strengthen the PCC capacity to undertake functions given by the JPA by having well trained personnel.</p>
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	1-day activity was organized during the course of April 2023 in all five PCC sector offices (Ed Daein, El Fasher, Nyala, El Geneina and Zalingei) to discuss the PCC mandate and operations with 22 PCC members as participants.	
<u>Outcome 3:</u> Through the joint training, an environment is created that facilitates trust building between parties.	See Outcome 2 conducted training activities in 2022.	The capacity building activities conducted with PCC members included trust-building activities such as information sharing, team exercises and brainstorming sessions which contributed to an environment facilitating trust building among PCC members.

2.3 Gender Equality Marker and other cross-cutting effects

In line with GEM 1, the project contributed to gender equality and women's empowerment in a limited way through the development of a SOP on the management of ceasefire violations linked to sexual violence for the PCC and inclusion of gender elements in the trainings and capacity building activities conducted under the project. The JPA outlines the prohibited and permissible acts by the signatories, including sexual violence which is stipulated as a prohibited act under Title 2 chapter 18.4 of the JPA. As such and as part of the capacity building activities of the project, a SOP on the management of ceasefire violations linked to sexual violence was developed to guide the effective handling of alleged sexual violence cases involving members of signatories to the JPA which may be reported to the PCC at different levels. During the project implementation, the SOP had been finalized but not yet validated by the PCC leadership and disseminated to the PCC sectors.

In addition, the training curriculum developed for PCC members included training on gender-inclusive and gender-responsive ceasefire monitoring, and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). The training activities conducted with PCC members also included sessions on gender-based violence and consultation meetings were conducted with PCC members to discuss the role gender plays in conflict prevention and permanent ceasefire monitoring. The topic of gender was also included in various activities with the PCC members to ensure that women were included in the Permanent Ceasefire Monitoring Process.

2.4 Conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm

The project ensured that the capacity building support provided included due consideration to cross-cutting issues such as gender-sensitive approaches, protection of civilians, children in armed conflict, human rights, trustworthy communication with the Parties and stakeholders and building integrity in a manner that is tailored to the Darfur context and the work of the PCC. Furthermore, the project conducted conflict analysis continuously during the project implementation in order to re-adjust project activities as needed in line with the findings of the conflict analysis and do-no harm principle. The project also made sure to apply an inclusive and participatory, conflict-sensitive approach to its interactions with national counterparts at local level. Following the outbreak of the conflict between SAF and RSF on 15 April 2023, project activities were suspended after considering the risks associated with continuing activities in the new context.

2.5 Monitoring and evaluation

The project monitored activities on a continuous and ongoing basis as per the workplan. The project also maintained a record of all project workshops and trainings conducted. With regards to evaluation, the project conducted evaluation of each training activities, through an evaluation questionnaire/form shared with participants as well as field exercises as part of the training programme in order to ensure that the knowledge was received and implemented in practice.

2.6 Lessons learned

Following the project implementation delays, the project team took stock of the challenges and lessons learned and managed to resolve some of the logistical challenges and revised the workplan for 2023 in order to expedite the implementation rate of the project.

3. Finance and Management

3.1 Finance

See separate financial report.

3.2 Project management

There were no significant changes to the organizational structures of the project during the project implementation period. The project was implemented under the leadership of UNITAMS and jointly with the signatories of the JPA Darfur Track, including the members of the Permanent Ceasefire Committee (PCC), the Sectoral Committees and Field Teams (FTs).

3.3 Sustainability and exit strategy

The project aimed to promote sustainability of its results by ensuring that project activities are implemented in close coordination with all PCC members, including the development of SOPs and training curriculum. The project activities further aimed to establish PCC capacity to sustain and monitor ceasefire and support the effective implementation of the JPA long-term.

4. Human impact

4.1 Key stakeholders

The Permanent Ceasefire Committee (PCC) members were the key stakeholder, consisting of representatives from the Government of Sudan and one representative from each of the five-armed struggle movements that signed the Juba Peace Agreement (JPA) Darfur Track, as well as one representative from South Sudan and one representative from Chad. Although the JPA establishes the PCC and outlines its aim and functions, there is a need to build the capacity of PCC member to ensure a common approach to monitoring and verifying the ceasefire and for reporting on violations as well pro-actively engage in de-escalation and conflict prevention. This project will therefore engage PCC members in a capacity building process to strengthen their capacity in key areas necessary for them to fulfil their tasks as envisioned in the JPA mandate successfully. The immediate beneficiaries of this project were the estimated 130 members of the PCC and its Secretariat.

4.2 Additional human impact

N/A