**SECRETARY-GENERAL’S PEACEBUILDING FUND**

**PBF PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT TEMPLATE**

# PBF PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT COUNTRY: Liberia

**TYPE OF REPORT: ANNUAL**

**DATE OF REPORT:** November 15, 2018

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| **Project Title:** Reel Peace  **Project Number from MPTF-O Gateway:** 109098 | |
| **PBF project modality:**  IRF  PRF | **If funding is disbursed into a national or regional trust fund:**  Country Trust Fund  Regional Trust Fund  **Name of Recipient Fund:**  Accountability Lab Liberia |
| **List all direct project recipient organizations (starting with Convening Agency), followed type of organization (UN, CSO etc):**  Accountability Lab Liberia  **List additional implementing partners, Governmental and non-Governmental:**  Visual Storytellers, Liberian TV, Liberia Film School, Leemah, Citizens’ Bureau | |
| **Project commencement date[[1]](#footnote-1):** 28 February 2018  **Project duration in months:[[2]](#footnote-2)** 15 Months | |
| **Does the project fall under one of the specific PBF priority windows below:**  Gender promotion initiative  Youth promotion initiative  Transition from UN or regional peacekeeping or special political missions  Cross-border or regional project | |
| **Total PBF approved project budget\* (by recipient organization):**  $ 433, 129.70      Other contributions: Accountability Lab Liberia ($10,075)  \*The overall approved budget and the release of the second and any subsequent tranche are conditional and subject to PBSO’s approval and subject to availability of funds in the PBF account  **How many tranches have been received so far:** ONE | |
| **Report preparation:**  Project report prepared by: Accountability Lab Liberia Project report approved by: Lawrence Yealue  Did PBF Secretariat clear the report: No  Any comments from PBF Secretariat on the report: Yes  Has the project undertaken any evaluation exercises? Please specify and attach: Only smaller, internal evaluations. | |

**NOTES FOR COMPLETING THE REPORT:**

* Avoid acronyms and UN jargon, use general / common language.
* Be as concrete as possible. Avoid theoretical, vague or conceptual discourse.
* Ensure the analysis and project progress assessment is gender and age sensitive.

**PART 1: RESULTS PROGRESS**

# 1.1 Overall project progress to date

Briefly explain the **status of the project** in terms of its implementation cycle, including whether all preliminary/preparatory activities have been completed (1500 character limit):

The project implementation commenced in mid-March 2018. Despite challenges, the project is on course to be completed by June 2019 (no-cost extension (1 month) application pending). Progress includes contracting a project team, as well as buying and distribution all equipment.   
  
By September, all 45 participants had been trained in filming, pre- and post-production by our team. Recently 3 participants withdrew from the project due to personal obligations, including a pregnancy and the opportunity to study abroad. The project team is in the process of reaching out to women who applied initially and showed promise during the selection process to add new participants to the teams who’ve lost members. In identifying new participants, it is important that this be a collaborative process as trust has already been established in existing teams. Therefore, we are giving teams the opportunity to co-create the process of onboarding new participants who will receive training to get them up to speed.

We’ve engaged skilled mentors to provide hands-on assistance to all county teams. Currently they’re working with teams in the following ways:

* Follow-up training where necessary;
* Reviewing storyboards and providing feedback and guidance;
* Providing feedback and guidance on content produced, including interviews B-roll footage; and
* Providing technical support with regards to equipment, filming and editing.

In terms of creating visibility for the project, we’ve set up social media accounts and are finalizing a website that will house the content produced. We are in contact with relevant government ministries, such as Ministry of Gender and Social Protection. They’re interested in partnering on the film festival.

Given the recent/current political/peacebuilding/ transition situation/ needs in the country, has the project been/ does it continue to be **relevant** and well placed to address potential conflict factors/ sources of tensions/ risks to country’s sustaining peace progress? Please illustrate. If project is still ongoing, are any adjustments required? (1500 character limit)

The project has become increasingly relevant as a result of ongoing growing pains experienced by the new government and the associated confusion amongst citizens and the bureaucracy, as many posts across the country are yet to be filled and the relative inexperience of the new government. This has created a leadership vacuum and lag in policy formulation and implementation, especially outside Monrovia. This vacuum presents an opportunity for the network of filmmakers to thoughtfully articulate issues of concern in their communities, and hopefully use their message to influence policy making even beyond the project time frame.   
  
Additionally, the project highlights the disproportionate representation of women in the media sector, and may have an impact on diversity in that arena.

The project is still ongoing, and well relatively on track, our team has applied for a 1-month no-cost extension to conclude the project in June 2019.

In a few sentences, summarize **what is unique/ innovative/ interesting** about what this project is trying/ has tried to achieve or its approach (rather than listing activity progress) (1500 character limit).

As mentioned previously, women are woefully under-represented in the media sector and rarely have chances to voice their views. As such, training women in film-making is an entirely unique approach and adds new voices to peacebuilding conversations in Liberia. Furthermore, reaching women outside Monrovia adds the stories of rural women, who are often excluded, to important national conversations.

This project is taking the unique approach of small intimate gatherings in order to get the most out of the participants. In the first phase of establishing the network of women filmmakers, the project has focused on grassroots meetings to explain the rationale for the project and recruit members. Many of the gatherings are smaller and more intimate, consisting of 5-8 individuals, and allowing for a safe space to engage on topics of interest to the women. This freedom of expression and boldness exhibited is being deliberately cultivated to enable the network members to continue in this vein when telling the stories of their communities and lives. This freedom and the creativity it fosters is visible in some of the subjects tackled by the women such as sexual assault and trial by ordeal. The project provided a platform for marginalized women to share their challenges in post-conflict Liberia with a broad audience, including powerholders.

Considering the project’s implementation cycle, please **rate this project’s overall progress towards results to date**:

On track, with minor delays.

In a few sentences summarize **major project peacebuilding progress/results** (with evidence), which PBSO can use in public communications to highlight the project (1500 character limit):

Although the project is still at a nascent stage, we already observed that trainings heightened the women’s ability to tell their communities’ stories in a confident manner. All participants have displayed enthusiasm and an eagerness to learn throughout the process, and they are making the most of the skills development opportunity by staying engaged and actively working towards creating a final product. Their interest in tackling challenging and sensitive subject matter is notable. They’ve taken it upon themselves to highlight the lives of women and marginalized communities in various ways, including focusing on people with disabilities, female breadwinners and challenges in the health sector to name a few.

Very direct examples include the River Gee team who focuses on trial by ordeal, an incredibly sensitive topic where community justice can often lead to both hardship, brutality and conflict. Similarly, the Gbarpolu’s investigation of challenges in mining communities where there are tensions are sensitivities around laborers from outside the community migrating there for employment. This situation could become volatile if not explored through thoughtful dialogue.

Outcomes 2 and 3 (to be implemented in 2019), which focus on dissemination of the film content as well as developing advocacy skills and policy docuements will enable us to: 1) ensure that a wide audience have access to these stories; and 2) that powerholders are made of aware of the challenges faced by women in post-conflict Liberia. Our ongoing efforts to sensitize powerholders to the importance of the project is expected to build relationships with a view to ensuring that the content, advocacy and policy tools created get to the right audience and have an impact beyond the parameters of this project.

In a few sentences, explain how the project has made **real human impact**, that is, how did it affect the lives of any people in the country – where possible, use direct quotes that PBSO can use in public communications to highlight the project (1500 character limit):

The women engaged in this project are experiencing a unique skills development opportunity. For many, especially those in rural parts of the country, this is an exceptional opportunity. Throughout the project we’ve observed very high levels of enthusiasm and engagement. Participants have really taken the lead on crafting their stories, identifying subjects and setting up interviews.

In addition to story development, the exposure to film-making software has given participants the opportunity to learn new computer skills. Many participants started with very little exposure to technology and had to make quite big leaps in learning to be able to work on their films. These skills have a broader impact on the women’s access to employment opportunities beyond the project.

Looking beyond direct beneficiaries, in this case participants, this project also has an impact on others who are engaged, eg. Women who are interviewed who have never had an opportunity to share their successes or challenges with a broader audience, and this is empowering in and of itself.

In one of the interviews with a woman who has built an unorthodox career in construction in Bong County, the inspiring subject shares the following advice with the women of Liberia:

“Let me use this time to encourage my fellow women to be serious and do something positive for living so that without man, you will be able to do something for yourselves.” We believe that courageously sharing their communities’ stories will ultimately add these women’s voices to the peacebuilding process in Liberia.

If the project progress assessment is **on-track**, please explain what the key **challenges** (if any) have been and which measures were taken to address them (1500 character limit).

The project is on track, but we have experienced the following challenges:

* In her spare time, our film-making expert (Kathleen Flynn) created a documentary film ([Unprotected](https://features.propublica.org/liberia/unprotected-more-than-me-katie-meyler-liberia-sexual-exploitation/)) which came with a number of security risks and made it impossible for her to return to Liberia before January 2019. In the meantime, she continues to work remotely from the US with hands-on support provided by mentors on the ground;
* Engaging with participants in rural counties was challenging during a heavy rainy season
* Limited cellphone/data connectivity in some counties presented challenges in terms of timely, regular outreach.
* A fair amount of participants had very limited exposure to hardware and computer software prior to the program, and experienced technical difficulties and delays in production due to this.

The conclusion of rainy season mitigates some of these challenges, and the Kathleen’s return to Liberia in January is already in place. We’ve been able to mitigate further delays by finding ways for mentors to have more in-person contact with team, especially where connectivity is a problem. Mentors are also regularly meeting and sharing learning around overcoming the technical challenges women are facing with each out.

If the assessment is **off-track**, please list main reasons/ **challenges** and explain what impact this has had/will have on project duration or strategy and what **measures** have been taken/ will be taken to address the challenges/ rectify project progress (1500 character limit):

We have applied for a 1-month no-cost extension. If approved, this should allow us to complete the project without any further delay.

Please attach as a separate document(s) any materials highlighting or providing more evidence for project progress (for example: publications, photos, videos, monitoring reports, evaluation reports etc.). List below what has been attached to the report, including purpose and audience.

Photographs: We have attached some photos of the recruitment and training processes in the different counties in which they were carried out. These were submitted with the first draft of the report.

# 1.2 Result progress by project outcome

The space in the template allows for up to four project outcomes. If your project has more approved outcomes, contact PBSO for template modification.

**Outcome 1:** A network of trained Liberian female peace film makers who can work over time to tell critical stories about the importance of peacebuilding in Liberia.

# Rate the current status of the outcome progress: On track

**Progress summary:** Describe main progress under this Outcome made during the reporting period (for June reports: January-June; for November reports: January-November; for final reports: full project duration), including major output progress (not all individual activities). If the project is starting to make/ has made a difference at the outcome level, provide specific evidence for the progress (quantitative and qualitative) and explain how it impacts the broader political and peacebuilding context. Where possible, provide specific examples of change the project has supported/ contributed to as well as, where available and relevant, quotes from partners or beneficiaries about the project and their experience. (3000 character limit)?

The network of 45 women have participated in comprehensive film-making and software, and are in the process of producing film content and 15 ideas have been turned in to storyboards, or are well on their way to the production phase.

The stories currently in production include the following themes:

* Highlighting women in non-traditional jobs, eg. Engineering, construction and the security sector;
* Young women’s lack of access to sanitary ware;
* Women in the media;
* Trial by ordeal in rural communities;
* The connection between small-scale mining and teenage pregnancy rates;
* The challenges faced by youth with disabilities; and
* Access to clean drinking water and sanitation.

The project impacts the broader political and peacebuilding context by equipping women with the skills to share their communities’ stories, and specifically include the voices of the most marginalized. Added a variety of voices, including women from rural areas, to political and peacebuilding conversations by providing a safe space for conversation that allows women to grow more confident in their ability to express themselves. Film and visual storytelling are universal tools that enable women to share experiences, challenges and provide input around the country they wish to see in a non-violent, inviting manner. It also lends itself to mass dissemination allowing us to reach communities across Liberia, as well as powerholders in Monrovia who have the ability to address these challenges.

Furthermore, the project has had an impact on participants in the following ways:

* Access to a network of like-minded participants, and ongoing support from mentors;
* Skills development that impact their ability to find sustainable employment;
* Access to hardware that enable them to share their communities’ stories.

One of our participants, Patience Baye Koromah from Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County expressed the value of the program as follows:

“I embrace the idea of Reel Peace coming to identify women’s problems, to find solution to bring out the voice of the voiceless making women’s voices to be heard. I want to be a part, to be trained in any way so I can help in the process. My main reason for joining the journalism field is to bring out issues that concern the public that is being done behind closed doors."

**Outcome 2:** Liberian women have greater impact and influence on policy-making processes as it relates to gender, peace and stability in Liberia.

Rate the current status of the outcome progress: On track, to be implanted following activities under Outcome 1.

**Progress summary:** (see guiding questions under Outcome 1)

Activities for Outcome 2 have been planned and will be implemented upon receipt of the 2nd conditional funding tranche.

**Outcome 3:** Increased awareness and support among the Liberian and global populations of the critical role of women in peacebuilding in Liberia.

# Rate the current status of the outcome progress: On track, to be implemented following activities under Outcome 1.

**Progress summary:** (see guiding questions under Outcome 1)

Activities for Outcome 3 have been planned and will be implemented upon receipt of the 2nd conditional funding tranche.

**Outcome 4: N/A**

**Rate the current status of the outcome progress:**

**Progress summary:** (see guiding questions under Outcome 1)

# 1.3 Cross-cutting issues

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| **National ownership:** How has the national government demonstrated ownership/ commitment to the project results and activities? Give specific  examples. (1500 character limit) | We have engaged with the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection and her county coordinators through series of meetings and information sharing. These meetings centered on securing government support on both the national and county level. The minister has promised to support the program |

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| **Monitoring:** Is the project M&E plan on track? What monitoring methods and sources of evidence are being/ have been used? Please attach any monitoring related reports for the reporting period.  (1500 character limit)? | An M&E plan was developed at the beginning of the project and is implemented on an ongoing basis. To date we have tracked the participants training experience through surveys, and measure county teams’ progress based on mentor reports and content created in the field.  Examples of content include used to assess teams progress include:   * Story boards; * Interview questions and transcripts; and * Draft video footage |
| **Evaluation:** Provide an update on the preparations for the external evaluation for the project, especially if within last 6 months of implementation or final report. Confirm available budget for evaluation.  (1500 character limit) | We have not yet planned an external evaluation, but funds have been allocated for this purpose in the budget and we are committed to ensuring that this takes place by the end of the project. |
| **Catalytic effects (financial):** Did the project lead to any specific non-PBF funding commitments? If yes, from whom and how much? If not, have any specific attempts been made to attract additional financial contributions to the project and beyond? (1500 character limit) | So far, this project has not led to any external funding commitments. |
| **Catalytic effects (non-financial):** Did the project create favorable conditions for additional peacebuilding activities by  Government/ other donors? If yes, please  Specify. (1500 character limit) | Our engagement with the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection has based on outreach for this project in particular. We hope that this will lead to further opportunities and collaboration.  While the ultimately catalytic effect of this project are not entirely clear at the moment, by the end we envision having the following tools that can be used to reach and influence Liberian powerholders:  (1) Strong visual representations of the challenges women face in post-conflict Liberia, as well as the ways in which they are working to uplift their communities and country;  (2) A coalition of women (also plugged into national media network) who are able to act as advocates for their communities, and through this program have the networks to reach powerholders;  (3) A set of policy documents / inputs that can be shared with powerholders by women, with the support of the Accountability Lab and other civil society organizations within our network. |
| **Exit strategy/ sustainability:** What steps have been taken to prepare for end of project and help ensure sustainability of the project results beyond PBF support for this project? (1500 character limit) | While the project is still ongoing, we are trying to build sustainability first and foremost through fostering relationships between small groups of participants and their assigned mentors. These relationships can stretch beyond the end of the project, and creates space for longer term engagement with the women. Cultivated group cohesion in the participant network is also a priority, as we’d ideally like to see this network of women film-makers sustain itself and grow.  Additionally, the hardware linked to this project plays a role in sustainability. While the direct incentive for content creation as it relates to the project will end, there are ways in which our enthusiastic participants can continue telling stories. |
| **Risk taking:** Describe how the project has responded to risks that threatened the achievement of results. Identify any new risks that have emerged since the last  report. (1500 character limit) | The project’s biggest risk thus far can be attributed to safety concerns regarding Kathleen Flynn, our expert film-maker, who is unable to return to Liberia before January due to her involvement a documentary film. We have managed the risk associate with her absence from Liberia by having mentors on the ground working with participants. At the same time, Kathleen has remained in contact with mentors and participants and is providing technical support from the US. |
| **Gender equality:** In the reporting period, which activities have taken place with a specific focus on addressing issues of gender equality or women’s empowerment? (1500 character limit) | The project is exclusively aimed at supporting women film-makers. To date, the training provided to participants has had an impact on gender equality, as 45 women have learned new skills and find themselves in a better position to seek employment. |
| **Other:** Are there any other issues concerning project implementation that you want to share, including any capacity needs of the recipient organizations?  (1500 character limit) | We believe that the project will be complete on time should our application for a 1-month no-cost extension be granted. |

**1.3 INDICATOR BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT:** Using the **Project Results Framework as per the approved project document or any amendments**- provide an update on the achievement of **key indicators** at both the outcome and output level in the table below (if your project has more indicators than provided in the table, select the most relevant ones with most relevant progress to highlight). Where it has not been possible to collect data on indicators, state this and provide any explanation. Provide gender and age disaggregated data. (300 characters max per entry)

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|  | **Performance Indicators** | **Indicator Baseline** | **End of project**  **Indicator Target** | **Current indicator progress** | **Reasons for Variance/ Delay**  **(if any)** | **Adjustment of target (if any)** |
| **Outcome 1** A network of trained Liberian  Female Peace film makers able to tel1 critical stories about the importance of peace building in  Liberia | Indicator 1.1 45 women trained in film-making | Baseline: (0) | 45 | 100% | Project commenced in March 2018, slightly later than initially planned. |  |
| Indicator 1.2  The number of women who indicate, and can demonstrate that the network has been beneficial to their individual projects | Baseline (0) | 45 | 100% |  |  |
| Indicator 1.3  The number of women who indicate an  increased understanding of peacebuilding | Baseline( 0) | 85% | 85% |  |  |
| Output 1.1 | Indicator 1.1.1 | Baseline: (0) | 45 | 45 |  |  |

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|  | **Performance Indicators** | **Indicator Baseline** | **End of project**  **Indicator Target** | **Current indicator progress** | **Reasons for Variance/ Delay**  **(if any)** | **Adjustment of target (if any)** |
| 45 women  trained in  film-making | Number of women trained in film making | (0) | 45 | 100% |  |  |
| Indicator 1.1.2 Number of women trained in editing | (0) | 45 | 100% |  |  |
| Output 1.2 Ongoing mentorship, support and feedback to the filmmakers | Indicator 1.2.1  Women Supported to developed films | (0) | 45 | 100% |  |  |
| Indicator 1.2.2  Number of women who indicate that the mentorship has  improved their  skills level | (0) | 45 | 100% |  |  |

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|  | **Performance Indicators** | **Indicator Baseline** | **End of project**  **Indicator Target** | **Current indicator progress** | **Reasons for Variance/ Delay**  **(if any)** | **Adjustment of target (if any)** |
| Output 1.3 15 films on issues of peace and gender | Indicator 1.3.1  Number of films, storyboards | (0) | 15 | 40% | This portion of the project is ongoing |  |
| Indicator 1.3.2  Number of first  draft of films | (0) | 45 | 0 % | While a number of county teams have already started filming portions of their stories, there are no complete drafts at this stage. |  |
| **Outcome 2**    Liberian women have greater impact and influence on policy-making processes as it relates to gender, peace and stability in Liberia. | Indicator 2.1.1  Training of 45 women on policy advocacy techniques | (0) | 45 | - | As outlined above, work on Outcome 2 will form part of the next phase of the project’s implementation. |  |
| Indicator 2.2  **90 film showings and community conversations about the films nationally including at least 60 local power-holders** | (0) | 90 | - |  |  |
| Indicator 2.3  **1**5 Reel Stories Policy Agenda Documents to be used as inputs for decision-making | (0) | 15 | - |  |  |
| Output 2.1 | Indicator 2.1.1 Women trained on advocacy techniques | (0) | 45 | **-** |  |  |
| Indicator 2.1.2 Provincial advocacy campaign on an issue chosen by the women | (0) | - |  |  |  |
| Output 2.2 | Indicator 2.2.1 90 film showings in target communities | (0) | - |  |  |  |
| Indicator 2.2.2 90 community dialogues with power-holders | (0) | **-** |  |  |  |
| Output 2.3 | Indicator 2.3.1 Reel Stories policy agenda resource documents produced on key issues | (0) | - |  |  |  |
| Indicator 2.3.2 Agenda documents used as a resource for decision-making | 10 | **-** |  |  |  |

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|  | **Performance Indicators** | **Indicator Baseline** | **End of project**  **Indicator Target** | **Current indicator progress** | **Reasons for Variance/ Delay**  **(if any)** | **Adjustment of target (if any)** |
| Outcome 3  Increased awareness and support among the Liberian and global populations of the critical role of women in peacebuilding in Liberia. | Indicator 3.1  Film CDs distributed and played in 300 video clubs around the country, with conversations around the issues | (0) | 300 | - | As outlined above, work on Outcome 3 will form part of the next phase of the project’s implementation. |  |
| Indicator 3.2  A national 2 day women’s film festival with 1000+ attendees | (0) | 1000 | - |  |  |
| Indicator 3.3  A dedicated project website with all films | (0) | 1 | - |  |  |
| Output 3.1 | Indicator 3.1.1 CDs produced with the films | (0) | 300 | **-** |  |  |
| Indicator 3.1.2 Films played in video clubs | (0) | 300 | **-** |  |  |
| Output 3.2 | Indicator 3.2.1 National film festival takes place | (0) | 1 | - |  |  |
| Indicator 3.2.2 Attendees over 2 days | (0) | 1000+ | **-** |  |  |
|  | Indicator 3.2.3 High-level engagement in the film festival | (0) | 3 | **-** |  |  |

**PART 2: INDICATIVE PROJECT FINANCIAL PROGRESS**

**2.1 Comments on the overall state of financial expenditures**

Please rate whether project financial expenditures are on track, delayed, or off track, vis-à-vis project plans and by recipient organization: on track

How many project budget tranches have been received to date and what is the overall level of expenditure against the total budget and against the tranche(s) received so far (500 characters limit): One tranche has been received to date and 98% of that tranche has been utilized to date. Against the total budget 20% has been utilized to date

When do you expect to seek the next tranche, if any tranches are outstanding: A request has been submitted and we hope to receive feedback at your earliest convenience to continue the project.

If expenditure is delayed or off track, please provide a brief explanation (500 characters limit): On track

Please state what $ amount was planned (in the project document) to be allocated to activities focussed on gender equality or women’s empowerment and how much has been actually allocated to date: 50%

Please fill out and attach Annex A on project financial progress **with detail on expenditures/ commitments to date using the original project budget table in Excel**, even though the $ amounts are indicative only.

1. Note: commencement date will be the date of first funds transfer. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Maximum project duration for IRF projects is 18 months, for PRF projects – 36 months. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)