

Peacebuilding Highlights

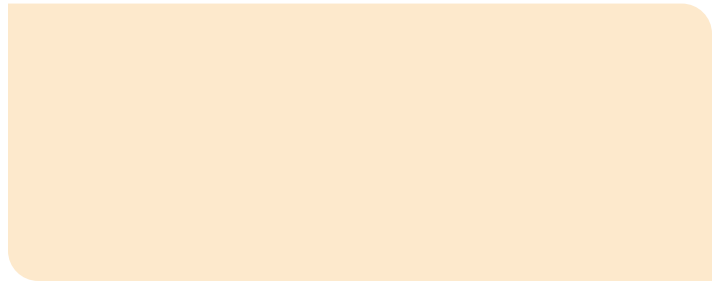


Editorial

Editorial by Roselyn Akombe
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In the Sahel region, droughts, floods, and changing transhumance corridors are reshaping the dynamics between communities. As these natural disasters become more frequent and intense, traditional agro-pastoral practices are under threat. Pastoral communities, once attuned to the rhythms of the land, now grapple with uncertain migration patterns and dwindling resources.

One of the most pressing issues in the border areas of



"The most significant conflicts we encounter are related to livestock and land. Last year, we had several incidents, including four major ones linked to transhumance. And we don't have any arrangements for dealing with problems when animals cross the border, as we don't have any counterparts at the border because of security problems. On the border, we must consider the urgent nature of things. We don't need a diagnostic, we need immediate reactions. Many problems were solved through village committees, which are the only ones left in certain areas on the Mali side when the state representatives have left. The village committees are a good thing, they play this role. And we've seen the problems decreased," said the village chief from in Mauritania.

6 É , President of the Melga/Aourou Committee, Mali said, "When the project started, we had a lot of difficulties, especially with transhumance between Mali and Mauritania. In the past, when a cattle farmer let his animals cross a farmer's field, people would get killed. But now, if there's a problem, they call. They call us and we go and see the damage and talk to the owner of the field and the farmer."

The project helped to strengthen cross-border cooperation among local authorities and communities through existing village committees and DIMITRA clubs. IO

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using solar-powered vertical aeroponic gardens. By doing so, they not only increase crop yields but also shield the community from climate risks that afflict conventional soil-based farming, such as erratic rainfall and saltwater inundation during environmental crises, hence reducing the potential for food-related conflict.

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In Kiribati, the fisheries and agriculture initiative included the upgrading of existing nurseries and fisheries centers on both Tamana and Marakei, as well as supporting two community milkfish ponds in Marakei. These interventions address issues such as the lack of fishing equipment, difficulties faced by local fishermen and farmers in accessing markets due to the island's remoteness, and the negative impact of coastal erosion and saltwater intrusion on local crops. Various stakeholders, led by the Island Council, collaborated closely with island elders and key local decision-makers to make this initiative possible.

The project also supported the government of Kiribati in finalizing the demarcation of unresolved maritime boundaries and protecting against illegal fishing. This support included providing specialized equipment and software, offering capacity building and partnering with the Pacific Community (SPC), a key regional organization in this domain.

On the Republic of the Marshall Islands' Mejjatto Island, the project introduced climate-resilient agricultural practices. The climate-smart agriculture technologies allow the community to cultivate short-term crops



The presidential and legislative elections planned for 10 October 2023, the first general elections following the closure of UNMIL in 2018, provide Liberia with the opportunity to further consolidate peace and democratic gains. While preparations for the elections are advanced, the risk of pre-electoral and post-electoral violence exist, and the full, equal, and meaningful political participation of women and youth remain an obstacle.

The Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) has provided long-term support to Liberia's peacebuilding efforts, including through the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). PBSO's support to the 2023 elections has focused on creating a conducive environment for peaceful elections and ensuring women's and youth political participation.

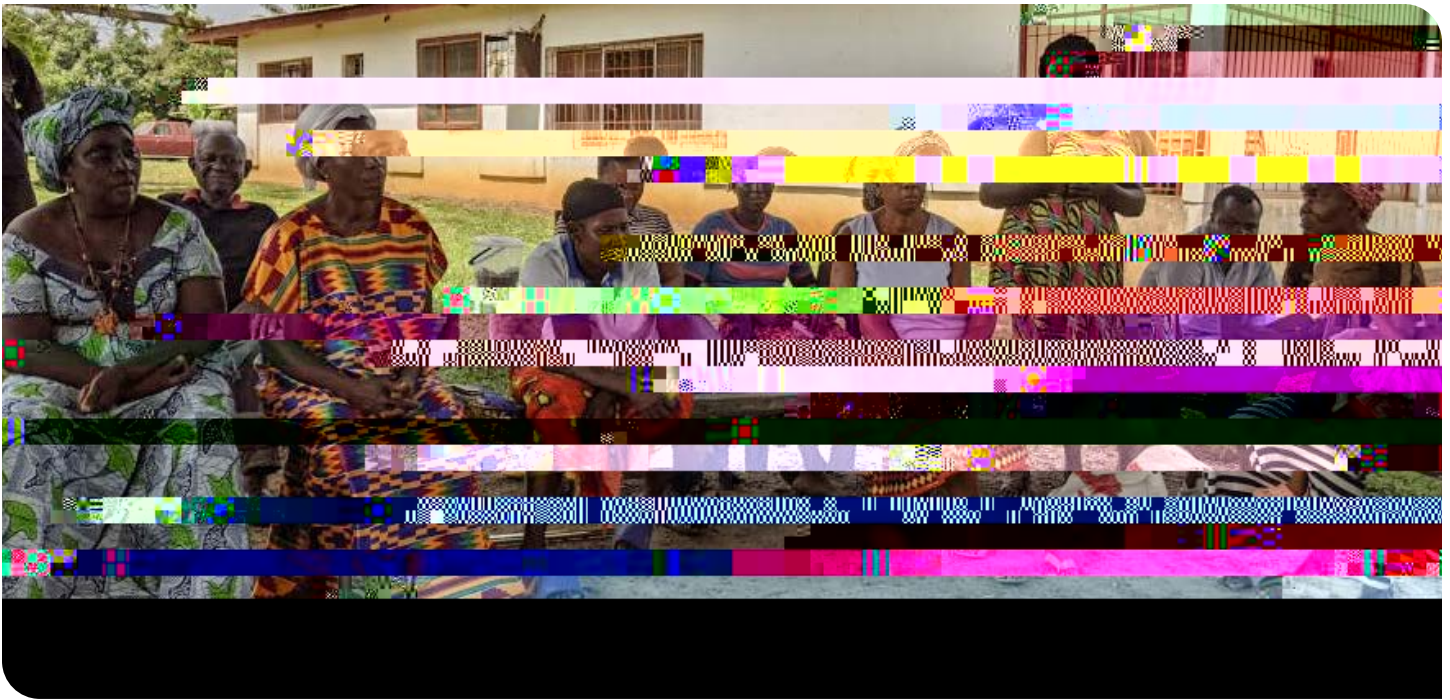
The PBC Liberia Configuration has provided essential political accompaniment in support of Liberia's peacebuilding efforts since 2010. During the past year, the engagement has focused on support to free, fair, peaceful, inclusive, transparent, and credible elections as well as women's and youth empowerment. As a result, the PBC has brought national and international stakeholders and partners, including the Government, electoral stakeholders, and civil society together to discuss the progress and key issues of the electoral preparations. The PBC has advocated for the Government's timely and adequate funding for the National Elections Commission (NEC), the endorsement of the 30 per cent gender quota for senior political party leadership and candidate listings in elections, the need to eliminate sexual and gender-

based violence (SGBV) and to fully implement the Protocol on Violence against Women in Elections and Politics (VAWiE), as well as the constructive inclusion of youth in electoral processes and decision-making at all levels.

In parallel, the PBF is supporting several initiatives contributing to a more peaceful electoral environment before, during, and after the 2023 elections, focusing on early warning and prevention of potential triggers of conflict to mitigate possible electoral violence and on fostering greater participation of women and youth in the electoral process.

Through a \$2 million UN Women and UNDP initiative, the PBF has supported women's equal participation in at least 100 Tip-Off Events.

Through the PBF, the Government has received \$1 million in support for the PBC.



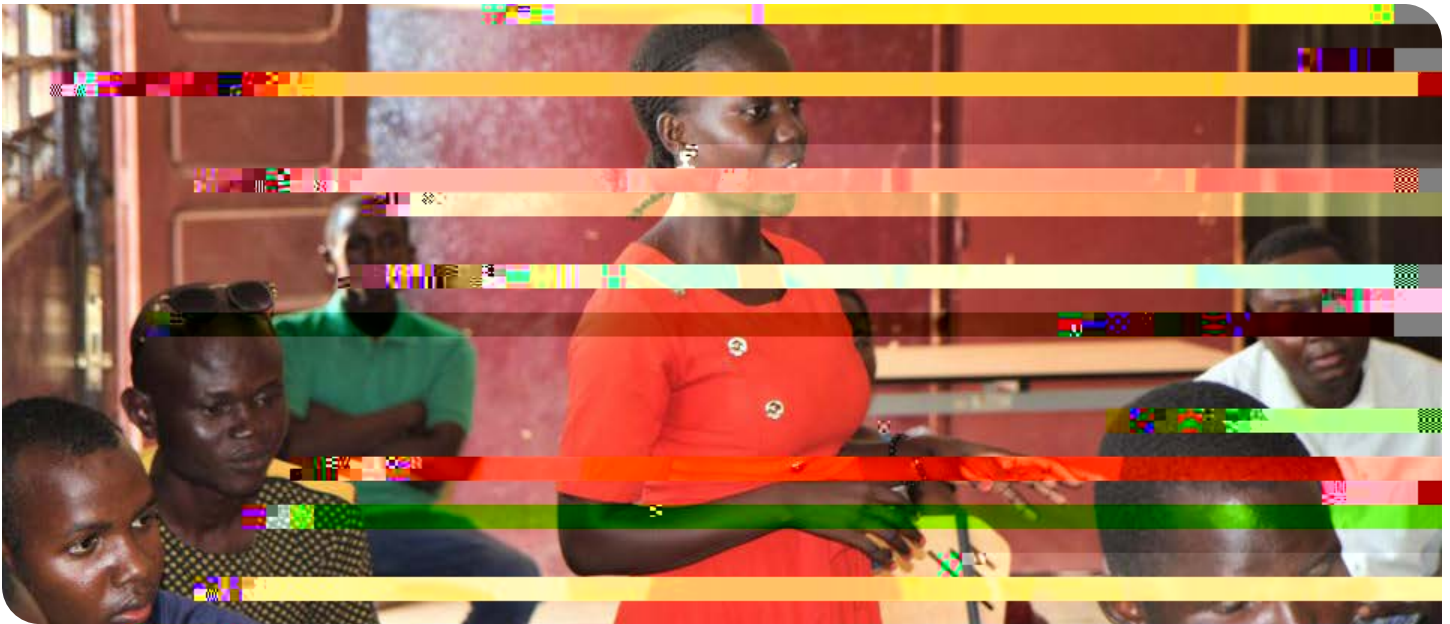
"When I decided to run as a youth leader in my community, I did not get the support of everyone. It was difficult for me especially contesting as a female candidate amongst three men. However, with my efforts and presence in the community, I won the elections. Today is my first time learning about the VAWIE protocol and some of the barriers preventing women from participating in elections. I can ensure this gathering today that I will use my power to increase women's political participation in my community," said a woman from Bong County.

Watch Teams' (CWT) in 50 communities across the country on mediation skills and EWER systems management. In addition to mitigating and resolving conflicts, the CWT work towards sensitizing communities on peace and conflict factors. Further, the project has contributed to improve community-police relationship to minimize community-level violence as well as reinforce the competencies of stakeholders, such as women groups, traditional leaders, and community-based organizations, to apply human rights standards and to address human rights issues in communities more effectively.

In addition, through a \$3 million UNDP, OHCHR and IOM project, the PBF has contributed to strengthen electoral violence prevention initiatives and a more inclusive, coordinated, and effective Early Warning and Response (EWR) mechanism. The project has advanced community involvement in maintaining peace by establishing and training 50 Community

"As a member of the traditional council, I am committing my full support to appoint women in key positions at the traditional level and will ensure that during electoral processes, the [country] devil won't come outside while women are campaigning," said an official in Bong County.



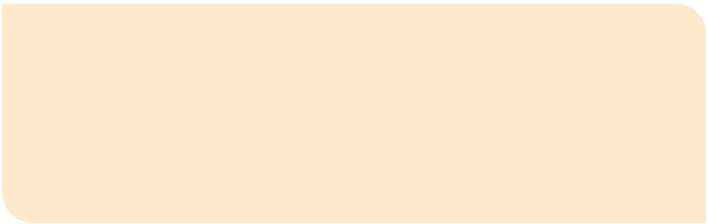


The UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) has invested \$51 million to support the implementation of the APPR, notably focusing on strengthening women and youth engagement in the process at the community level. For instance, between 2019 and 2021, the PBF provided funding for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), and Search for Common Ground to collaborate with the government and communities to promote a deeper understanding of the Peace Agreement's implementation and oversight process and revive community bonds that had been severed during the conflict.

The project provided training to women and youth in Bangui, Bambari, Bangassou, and Paoua, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to elevate their roles as peace agents and community leaders.

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To help create the conditions for lasting peace in
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As the project enters its next phase, it will continue to invest in the link between community security, social cohesion and sustainable economic development from initiatives that strengthen conservation and sustainable exploitation of the forest's resources. \$2.25 million in additional funding have already been secured from the UN's new Nature Finance Facility, thanks to funding from Cartier for Nature – a philanthropic initiative for biodiversity by the Maison Cartier. This

contribution will scale up grassroots conservation efforts carried out by the Kibira Foundation. It will facilitate the recruitment of 100 eco-guards, the protection of 500 endangered chimpanzees, the creation of sustainable livelihoods for 3,000 Batwa households and the provision of diverse economic prospects such as agroforestry, restoration, artisan production for at least 20,000 people.

Featured Partners

Ambassador James Larsen, Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations said, "Australia



Ambassador Elina Kalkku, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations said, "The

