





September 2023



PBF Investments in



 **TOTAL
APPROVED** \$35 M
(SINCE 2015):

 **CURRENTLY
ACTIVE:** \$4.25 M
(with another \$10 million
under final approval in 2023)

Focusing on

More accountable governance

Community social cohesion

Improved local security and
access to justice

Promotion of youth and
women participation and
leadership

Partners



PEACEBUILDING CHALLENGES

Durable peace is elusive in Madagascar despite the end of the longstanding political crisis and the subsequent presidential elections in 2018 and the legislative elections in 2019. Progress in democratic and economic governance is incomplete, while the country continues to face multidimensional and daunting challenges. Social cohesion is increasingly weak and economic disparities are exacerbated by enduring corruption resulting in a widening divide between the Government and the people. New threats such as climate change, the COVID-19 health crisis compounded the challenging socio-economic hardship, urban and rural criminality, the disregard of economic, social and cultural rights, and erosion of community fabrics present additional risks to social stability and contribute to further marginalization in parts of Madagascar.

PEACEBUILDING FUND IN ACTION

The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) commenced its engagement in Madagascar in 2015 with the objective of helping the country to avoid political instability linked to electoral processes and deep social exclusion. The first phase of PBF support focused on (i) initiating reforms in the security sector; (ii) strengthening accountability and anti-corruption institutions, and (iii) supporting the security, access to services and inclusive dialogue of marginalized communities of the Deep South zone in the country. In addition, the Fund supported various initiatives to empower women as well as young people as positive agents of peace in their communities.

In November 2022, the UN Secretary-General, at the request of the Government, declared Madagascar eligible for a new five year phase of PBF support, which is expected to focus on (i) greater social, civic and political participation of young people and women at local and national levels; (ii) improved inclusivity and quality of traditional justice and efforts to bring traditional and formal justice closer together; (iii) addressing multi-faceted insecurity in the remote regions of the Great South zone focusing on the isolated communities of the Andriy mountain chain; and (iv) trialling responses to climate security related tensions.

■ PEACEBUILDING FUND IMPACT

1. More Accountable governance: The Fund's support has strengthened trust between the people and the state through targeted measures aimed at improving the checks and balances on the pillars of the state with a focus on promoting anti-corruption and human rights. One of the key institutions supported, BIANCO, the Independent Anti-Corruption Office, had its competence recognized internationally by the African Union by being selected as a member of the AU's Consultative Anti-Corruption Committee.

The first integrated Anti-Corruption Hub was established in 2018 with the Fund's support and is empowered to investigate and prosecute corruption cases in an integrated manner. This Hub has handled 645 cases over 3 years, compared with 165 over 10 years for the previous mechanism. Moreover, the Fund has enabled the operation of an investigative journal, Trandraka, which provides in-depth investigations to fight against corruption and is the first of its kind in Madagascar. In 2021 the magazine merged with the Malina investigative network to become Trandraka By Malina and launched a complaint unit, allowing citizens to alert journalists about potential cases of corruption. The magazine published its 10th edition in 2022 and has secured catalytic funding enabling it to continue without PBF financial support.

2. Community social cohesion and security support in the Deep South: With PBF support, the first integrated UN office was established in this remote region in 2018, thus allowing the UN to have a permanent presence in the red zones of the Deep South through its regional office of Betroka. The Fund investment helped to improve access of communities to local tribunals and legal clinics, enabling them to deal peacefully with over 5,000 cases of disputes. 52 community dialogue platforms were established in the project zones to support local peace messengers, resolve disputes, make informed and inclusive community decisions, and agree on joint priorities through developing municipality peace plans. The same platforms were used to direct PBF livelihoods support for the at-risk populations which improved the dire condition of 8,000 households. PBF support also facilitated regular meetings and activities between the security forces and communities as well as within the communities as a means of reducing local mistrust and conflict. Eleven strategic gendarmerie outposts were built and equipped in partnership with the Government in areas of high insecurity. These gendarmerie outposts are now operational and staffed by the Government and around 500 officers were trained in human rights. Around 83 per cent of the population in the project zones, interviewed by the project, reported feeling safe when going to the market, compared to only 54 per cent before the most recent PBF project began in the zone.

3. Youth and women participation: PBF support helped to operationalise a youth-led observatory of conflicts, which is now active in all 23 regions, with more than 500 active youth observers (of which 40% young women). The observatory is an early warning tool which signals conflicts to a monitoring cell and accelerates preventive responses by groups consisting of local authorities and civil society representatives. Young observers testified of the increased value and role that their communities have given them through this engagement. In another attempt to increase youth social empowerment, PBF support trained over 600 young people in selected regions on tools of citizen review of public services and supported them to review over 300 local public services for various indicators of quality and responsiveness during 2022. About 70% of young people's recommendations from these reviews were agreed for implementation with the local services with the aim of improving standards of service and transparency. Moreover, young people are actively contributing to the promotion of human rights through the operationalization of nine regional human rights observatories coordinated by young people, as well as through 8 regional peace committees that institute collaboration between security forces, local authorities and young people to proactively address human rights violations. In addition, PBF pilot investment in the region of Atsimo-Andrefana helped to promote women's participation in political and community decision-making processes by opening up inclusive dialogue spaces, training 78 mayors, councilors and ministry representatives in gender-sensitive municipal management, and supporting 13 women in local government positions to have more confidence and impact in their work.

■ ABOUT THE PEACEBUILDING FUND

The UN Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund is the organization's financial instrument of first resort to sustain peace in countries or situations at risk or affected by violent conflict. The Fund may invest with UN entities, governments, regional organizations, multilateral banks, national multi-donor trust funds or civil society organizations.