

The DRC Case Study

2024 PBF Thematic Review: Synergies between Human Rights and Peacebuilding in PBF-supported Programming

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This case study of programming supported by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is an excerpt from a larger 2024 PBF Thematic Review examining synergies between human rights and peacebuilding. It examined a select sample of PBF programming – 92 projects implemented in 45 countries and territories – that were supported between 2017 and 2022, with a view to collecting best practices and lessons learned, and contributing to better understanding of how human rights and peacebuilding tools and strategies may complement each other in advancing peace and preventing conflict. This case study appears on pages 36 to 46 of the full report.

The Peacebuilding Fund

The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) was established in 2006 by the Secretary-General at the request of the General Assembly as the primary financial instrument of the UN to sustain peace in countries at risk of or affected by violent conflict. The PBF provides funds to UN entities, governments, regional organizations, multilateral banks, national multi-donor trust funds, and civil society organizations. From 2006 to 2023, the PBF has allocated nearly \$2 billion to 72 recipient countries.

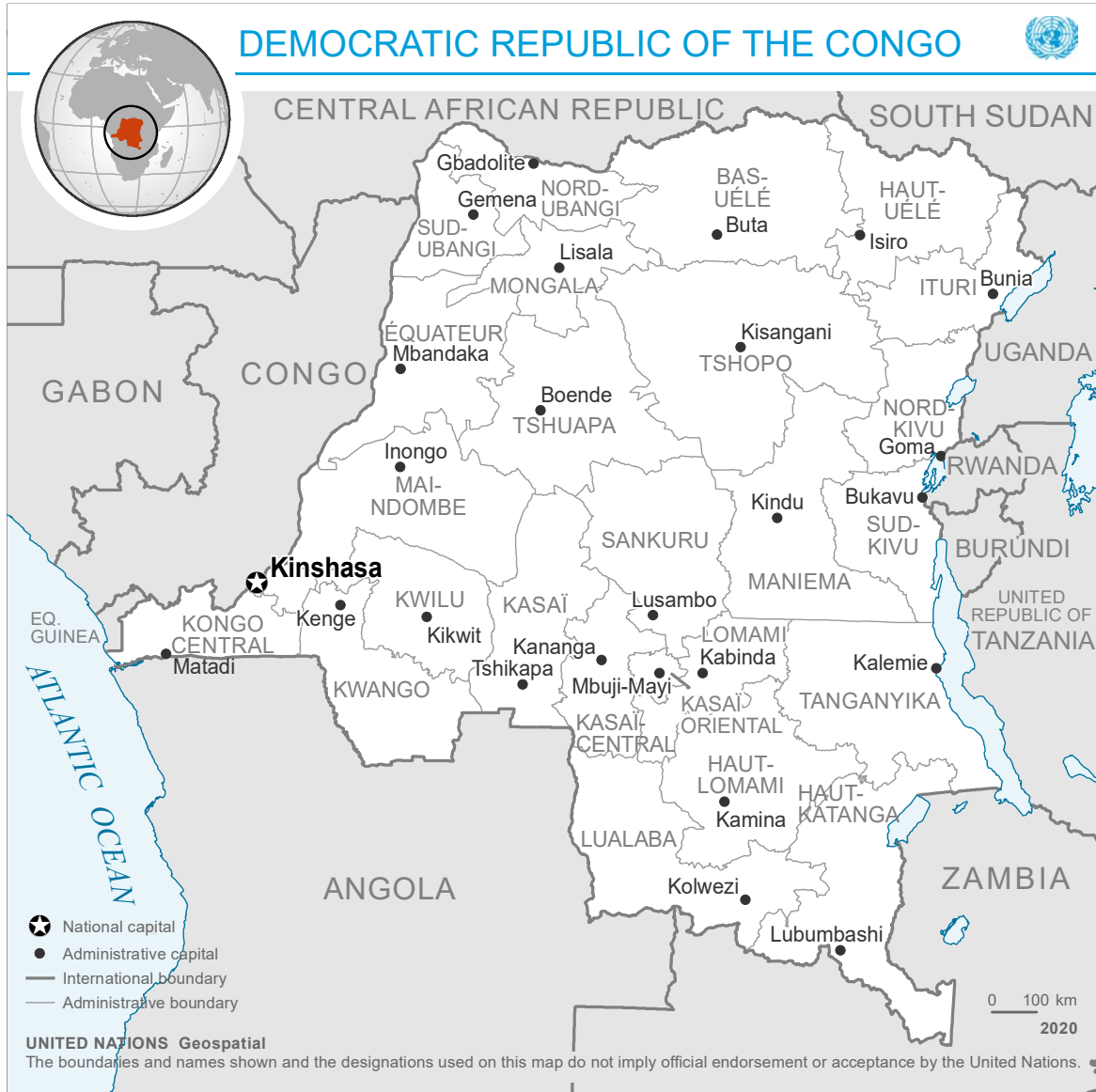
Since 2006, PBSO has commissioned Thematic Reviews to examine past practices and promising innovations in peacebuilding, and to reflect on the performance of the PBF in designated areas. The Review that this case study was part of was commissioned by PBSO in partnership with OHCHR and the Government of Switzerland. Research was led by United Nations University Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR), and conducted between January and October 2023. Field research was conducted in the DRC in March 2023. Full methodology details are provided in the full Thematic Review.

The DRC case study examines four PBF-funded projects, totalling \$13.5 million, that probe important issue sets within the human rights and peacebuilding nexus. These include testing new multidimensional approaches to transitional justice programming and promoting women's and youth empowerment and protection in remote and conflict-affected contexts. Additionally, three of the projects included activities related to non-UN security forces, in a context in which security sector abuses and human rights risks have been rife. This allows for observations on how peacebuilding projects, including those supported by the PBF, apply the UN Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP).

These projects were implemented during the drawdown of one of the longest running peacekeeping operations of the UN, which offers insights into possible synergies between human rights and peacebuilding actors during transition. PBF-supported projects have played an important role in the consolidation of human rights and peacebuilding gains in the midst of transition from a peacekeeping to a non-mission setting. The project results and challenges faced provide insights into how to adapt programming in other transition contexts, or in countries facing cyclical violence and impunity.

The full Thematic Review is available at: <https://unu.edu/cpr/report/2024-pbf-thematic-review-synergies-between-human-rights-and-peacebuilding-pbf-supported>.

Figure 4: Location of Projects in the DRC Case Study



The projects [PBF/COD/C-1](#) (PAJURR), [PBF/COD/B-7](#) (SSKAT), and [PBF/IRF-405](#) were all implemented in the greater Kasai region (including Kasai and Kasai-Central). SSKAT also had activities in Tanganyika. The project [PBF/IRF-405](#) took place in South Kivu (Sud-Kivu).

Background: Human Rights and Peacebuilding Context in the DRC

Human rights violations sit at the heart of conflict in the DRC. Since the 2018 presidential elections (the core period of review), thousands of human rights violations have been committed by both state actors and non-state armed groups. These have been documented nationwide, but the level of abuses was most acute in the eastern provinces, as well as in Kasai, Kasai-Oriental, and Kasai-Central provinces. Impunity, corruption, and weak governance structures have frequently contributed to cycles of violence and human rights violations. These conflict dynamics are compounded by ongoing humanitarian crises, which exacerbate tensions

and cause large-scale displacement, as well as widespread poverty and persistent socioeconomic inequalities. In addition, gender inequality and sexual and gender-based violence are perennial issues, particularly in the DRC's conflict-affected provinces.¹

Efforts have been made to improve the institutional architecture for human rights at a national level. A National Human Rights Observatory was established by the 2003 Constitution and later replaced by an independent National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) in 2013.² There is also a dedicated Ministry of Human Rights with responsibility for coordinating and implementing government policies related to human rights.³

Since the early 2000s, there have also been efforts to advance a transitional justice process, albeit with limited results. The DRC sought to establish truth-seeking mechanisms in the past, including a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, established in 2003 but never operationalized, and a Mapping Report, which documents serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed between 1993 and 2003.⁴ Steps have been taken to hold perpetrators of human rights violations accountable through the International Criminal Court and the DRC's national justice system.⁵ In addition, the DRC courts have ordered reparations payments in numerous cases.⁶ In December 2022, the DRC passed a new reparations law for victims of sexual violence, which includes the creation of a National Fund for the Compensation of Victims of Sexual Violence and Other Crimes Against Humanity.⁷

Military courts have come to play an outsized role in addressing human rights violations, as compared to a relatively weak and overloaded civilian justice system. While this has improved prospects of accountability for the military, military courts have received significant criticism for their lack of independence and impartiality.⁸ In recent years, the Government has appointed specialized military prosecutors with jurisdiction to investigate crimes committed in conflict zones, raising further fair trial concerns.⁹ Then, in May 2021, President Félix Tshisekedi announced a "state of siege" in the eastern provinces of Ituri and North Kivu in response to a surge in violence by armed groups in the region.¹⁰ This has effectively introduced martial law and placed criminal jurisdiction of civil courts under the military, deepening the erosion of the civilian justice system.¹¹

Despite these institutional developments, human rights violations and a prevailing sense of impunity continue to undercut the DRC's capacity to build and sustain peace nationwide. Although the Government and regional and international actors have continued efforts to implement their commitments under the 2013 Peace, Security, and Cooperation Framework, violence continues and regional tensions remain high.¹²

Conflict in eastern parts of the DRC has resurged, with fighting between government forces and armed groups, particularly in North and South Kivu and Ituri provinces, causing widespread displacement. In March 2022, the M23 rebel group relaunched offensives against government troops, plunging the region into a renewed cycle of violence.¹³ A peace process between the Government of the DRC, armed groups, and political and regional stakeholders was ongoing at the time of research, with two diplomatic tracks

– the Luanda Process and the Nairobi Process. However, the situation remained highly volatile and a negotiated solution elusive.

During the primary period of research, there were increasing reports of violence and repression leading up to the Congolese elections scheduled for December 2023.¹⁴ Many feared that poor voter turnout, cases of violence or insecurity during elections, or allegations and perceptions of voter fraud would undermine peacebuilding in the DRC.

Projects Examined in the DRC

The current UN mission in the DRC, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), was established in 2010, taking over from a previous UN peacekeeping mission. MONUSCO works alongside 21 other UN entities, along with many civil society and NGO partners.

In 2018, a decision was made to transition the mission and gradually withdraw MONUSCO resources from certain provinces, including withdrawal from the Kasaï in 2021, and a gradual phase out from Tanganyika between 2022 and 2024.¹⁵ Persistent political instability and resurgence of conflict in eastern parts of the DRC has impacted transition planning, which remained an ongoing point of discussion among senior UN staff at the time of research.¹⁶

In 2021, an initial joint Transition Plan focused on creating benchmarks for the minimum security conditions for drawdown was agreed between the Government of the DRC and the UN, in consultation with civil society,¹⁷ but political tensions and developments in 2023 at times suggested a more accelerated transition notwithstanding these benchmarks.¹⁸ In November 2023, the Government and MONUSCO agreed on a revised, phased Transition Plan with evaluation of withdrawal progress every three months.¹⁹

Between 2017 and 2022, PBF has approved 22 projects in the DRC with a total budget of \$46,555,583.²⁰ The four projects in this study represent those with the strongest human rights focus from the DRC portfolio.²¹ Although only four projects, the projects are relatively large in scope compared to the average size of projects examined in this study. The projects [PBF/COD/B-7](#) and [PBF/COD/C-1](#) were approved for \$7 million and \$3.5 million, respectively (as compared to the average of \$2.47 million in this sample). As will be discussed below, both involve multiple components across several key thematic issues and areas of practice within human rights and peacebuilding.

Table 3: Projects in the DRC Case Study

Project Code/ Duration	Title*	Implementing Agency
PBF/COD/B-7 (2019-2023)	Support for ex-combatants and communities in the context of spontaneous demobilizations through socioeconomic reintegration and transitional justice initiatives in Kasai and Tanganyika, DRC	OHCHR, IOM, UNDP
PBF/COD/C-1 (2018-2021)	Peace, Justice, Reconciliation, and Reconstruction in Kasai Central	UNDP, OHCHR, SFCG
PBF/IRF-317 (2019-2021)	Women’s Right to Protection and Participation for Equality and Peace around the artisanal mines of South Kivu	OHCHR, IOM, UNESCO
PBF/IRF-405 (2021-2022)	Strengthen justice, social cohesion and socioeconomic reintegration for and by young women and men in Grand Kasai	OHCHR, UNHCR, World Vision International

*Titles in French were translated by author.

The four projects are fairly representative of both the geographic focus and the key priorities established for PBF work in the DRC. Since 2018 (following the Secretary-General’s renewal of PBF eligibility for the DRC for a period of five years), there has been a greater focus on supporting the country’s transition from a peacekeeping to non-mission setting. MONUSCO’s gradual drawdown in certain provinces, together with an eruption of conflict in Kasais and Tanganyika in 2016, created a need for peacebuilding reinforcement in Kasai, Kasai-Central, and Tanganyika.²² This is reflected in the PBF portfolio, with 14 of the 22 projects overall in the DRC, and three of the four case study projects implemented in these three regions.²³ The four projects also align with the 2018 eligibility request,²⁴ and with the priority issues identified in the 2019 Common Country Analysis, and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.²⁵

There is a Strategic Results Framework for Tanganyika Province, but only for the period 2022–2024; thus, it did not directly inform the projects in this sample, which were approved between 2018 and 2020, mostly outside of Tanganyika.²⁶ Nonetheless, many of the themes and issues in the SRF align with those in this case study, particularly the one project in Tanganyika ([PBF/COD/B-7](#)).²⁷

Each of the four projects, and any available evidence of results, is summarized below, followed by a brief discussion of HRDDP application across these projects.

Multidimensional Transitional Justice (PAJURR and SSKAT Projects)

Two of the four projects, [PBF/COD/C-1](#) (henceforth PAJURR, Peace, Justice, Reconciliation and Reconstruction in Central Kasai) and [PBF/COD/B-7](#) (henceforth SSKAT, Spontaneous Surrender in Kasai), aimed to strengthen social cohesion in conflict-affected communities. They supported a transitional justice process at the provincial level, strengthening the justice system, and reviving the local economy through infrastructure rehabilitation and socioeconomic reintegration activities.

The first of these, the PAJURR project, was implemented by OHCHR, UNDP, and Search for Common Ground over 24 months between November 2018 and May 2021. Programming began with public consultation on the need for justice, reparations, truth, reconciliation, peace, and prevention of new conflicts, held in communities across Kasai-Central and among key political figures from the Kasais in Kinshasa.²⁸

Community members praised the transitional justice consultation process as the first time they had been heard in generations. Those who staffed the popular consultation teams, including senior political and legal figures, prominent community members, and educated youth, were profoundly affected by the process and have become champions of responsive peacebuilding.²⁹ Through this participatory

process, the consultations generated provincial government recognition of the need for a locally-owned transitional justice process.³⁰ At the close of the project, local authorities had taken up the recommendations of the consultations to establish a provincial Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission (Commission Provinciale Vérité Justice et Réconciliation) (although it had not yet been operationalized with funding at the time of writing).³¹

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The flagship achievement of the project was to kick-start a transitional justice process in the Kasais. However, the project was designed to be multidimensional, advancing transitional justice in parallel with other efforts to strengthen the formal justice system (supporting civil and military justice institutions to pursue priority conflict-related cases) and address socioeconomic needs. The last was seen as important for supporting social cohesion and opening up the space for the transitional justice consultations to take effect. Among these socioeconomic inputs, support was provided to seven local NGOs to work on community infrastructure rehabilitation projects, providing both immediate short-term income opportunities and the potential for long-term economic recovery.

PAJURR was universally described by partners and local authorities as “truly catalytic” regarding transitional justice.³² In part, this was because of the project’s multidimensional approach. Interviewees also credited the early consultation process, as it elicited strong local buy-in, and enabled close collaboration with local governmental and community partners.

The second project, SSKAT, implemented by OHCHR, UNDP, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), began one year after PAJURR (December 2019) and closed in June 2023. Described by many as twin projects, PAJURR can be seen as the pilot project, testing out the multidimensional programming approach outlined above, while SSKAT worked to consolidate this approach and expanded it both thematically and geographically. SSKAT continued the work in the original province of Kasai-Central, but also expanded it to two other provinces in the Kasai region: Kasai and Tanganyika Provinces.³³

SSKAT continued the focus of the PAJURR project in terms of supporting transitional justice consultations and dialogue, strengthening the local civilian and military justice systems, and stimulating economic recovery as a way to encourage social cohesion and peace. While broadly adopting PAJURR’s multidimensional transitional justice model, there were some modifications, based both on changes in the surrounding situation (and in the new areas) and lessons learned from the first project. First, while both projects included short-term socioeconomic opportunities, SSKAT learned from PAJURR to focus on more sustainable interventions aimed at creating longer-term income generation.³⁴

Second, SSKAT took on an additional component in response to evolving community and conflict dynamics. Due to the spontaneous demobilization and return of Kamuina Nsapu ex-combatants in the area, as well as the return of refugees from Angola, the SSKAT project included a strong focus on reintegration programming. The transitional justice, social cohesion, and dialogue mechanisms, as well as the community-based socioeconomic components, were designed to facilitate a more harmonious return process, defusing tensions that might arise either among host communities or returnees.³⁵ This latter component proved extremely important in achieving some of the overall project goals of reinforcing social cohesion and sustaining peace in the region. The voluntary returns unfolded in a relatively peaceful way, which many interviewees said was surprising given the conflict history.³⁶ In assessing outcomes, it is difficult to attribute the relatively smooth return and reintegration of ex-combatants in the Kasais to the SSKAT interventions alone. There were many contextual factors at play, including the decentralized nature of the Kamuina Nsapu militia groups, which perhaps did not present the same demobilization difficulties as more cohesive or enduring armed groups. However, interviewees observed that these socioeconomic interventions provided space to build social cohesion, thus easing tensions that may have otherwise set the peace process back.

Youth Empowerment towards Peacebuilding

A third YPI project ([PBF/IRF-405](#)) sought to contribute to peacebuilding by working with young women and men, specifically, young lawyers, on human rights promotion and advancement of their socioeconomic opportunities.³⁷ It was implemented by OHCHR, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and World Vision International. This included socioeconomic and professional training for 300 young people, as well as support to some beneficiaries on income-generating activities and savings. In addition,



One of the strengths of the PAJURR project was that it took a multidimensional approach to transitional justice, not only engaging stakeholders on creating a subnational Truth Commission, but working with local Ministry of Justice officials (as depicted in this photo) to improve access to justice through regular judicial processes. Photo by Fiona Mangan.

UNHCR coordinated human rights training for young lawyers, who in turn could sensitize community leaders as well as others in the community (e.g. customary chiefs, and their female family members) on human rights, transitional justice, GBV, child marriage, women’s rights, and land rights.

The project was still ongoing at the time of field research, so results are still preliminary. However, some issues had already manifested in implementation. Beneficiaries highlighted that the professional training and socioeconomic activities were only available to a limited number of vulnerable young people, which did not sufficiently benefit the youth community in a province facing widespread unemployment.³⁸ Many of the supporting materials provided to beneficiaries appeared ill-suited to their needs or the situation.³⁹

The sensitization efforts with young lawyers were described as a component with significant potential, but which was unlikely to realize the intended objectives. The young lawyers in question appeared dedicated – describing themselves as “awareness-raisers” who wanted to advance knowledge of human rights.⁴⁰ However, these lawyers were already so overstretched given the size of the territory they

covered and their limited numbers, that it was difficult for them to play the norm sensitization role envisioned.⁴¹ This suggests a need for further reflection on the theory of change in this and similar projects in the future. **While a lack of knowledge or awareness of human rights among some individuals may contribute to a lack of full realization of rights, for young peacebuilders to change that, there must be consideration of the other obstacles – for example, what resources they might need to play such a role and catalyse change.**

Some of the challenges that manifested within [PBF/IRF-405](#) appeared due to issues within the project itself: interviewees observed that this project lacked structure and direction.⁴² This was also observable in the ProDoc. However, many of the youth empowerment projects in this sample shared similar deficits, in that the inputs or resources within the project were mismatched or insufficient to fully meet youth needs.

Strengthening Women’s Protection and Economic Agency in Mining Communities

The fourth project, [PBF/IRF-317](#), was a GPI project focused on promoting and increasing the protection of women and

girls working in the informal artisanal mining sector. The project aimed to counter women's marginalization and their physical and economic insecurity, while also increasing their participation in local dialogues and mechanisms for natural resource management. Implemented by OHCHR, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and IOM between November 2019 and 2021 in South Kivu province, this was the first project implemented in the remote Shabunda Territory of Kigulube and the first to centre women as agents of peace. Implementers noted that the project was the first of its kind to address GBV in the region, but the fact that it was so unprecedented was partly what made it so challenging and cast doubt on its sustainability. Achieving the project goals would require complex cultural transformation due to the entrenchment of GBV in traditional community customs and practices.⁴³

The theory of change argued that by protecting women and girls from exploitation in the informal mining sector and by ensuring their participation in decision-making bodies, they would be able to serve as agents of social cohesion and peacebuilding, contributing to better conflict management in mining areas and the consolidation of peace. The theory of change equally argued that supporting and regulating mining governance actors in the area (for example, mining police) via increased transparency measures and measures for the legal protection of women in the mining sector would lead to a sector that is more respectful of the rights of all. UNESCO established a community radio ("radio de la femme") to promote women's rights through sensitization programmes on female leadership, education for girls, GBV, and other topics (with support from OHCHR).⁴⁴ IOM supported the training of mining police and inspectors to oversee these areas and participate in established local security committees, which helped better connect mining authorities, police, and local communities.

The final evaluation deemed the project's relevance to be "undeniable". It found evidence that **the project had helped shift the perceived role of women in the community (particularly among miners), offered greater economic opportunities for women, including higher salary rates for the women involved in the mining sector, and also contributed to a "remarkable social mobilization within the community to better integrate women and for social cohesion and consolidation of peace"**.⁴⁵ However, the evaluation also enumerated many obstacles, including the extremely remote location, limited state presence and justice and security officials, and general insecurity.⁴⁶ These conditions made implementation extremely challenging. Access was largely enabled by MONUSCO's presence and logistical support, including access to transport helicopters, and the security cover provided by the mission's presence. Even given this, certain components could not be completed and maintained.⁴⁷

Overall, the project was highly innovative in its approach and location selection. The substantial gains made even under these extremely difficult conditions suggest some validity for the theory of change and approach. However, both the final evaluation and those interviewed for this Thematic Review cast doubt on whether any gains would be sustainable given these conditions.⁴⁸ **Implementers pointed out the inconsistency of aiming to inspire sustained cultural change, which requires a long time-horizon, using PBF funds, which are short-term by design.**

These examples are not presented to suggest that future programming should avoid addressing deep-rooted cultural inequities or engaging in areas with accessibility challenges, as the need for intervention was clear in both cases. However, in this case, there was a direct tension between innovative action – taking programming to such a remote area – and the feasibility and sustainability of the initiative. Particularly given the drawdown in MONUSCO resources, this tension may merit more reflection in the DRC.

HRDDP within the DRC Projects

MONUSCO has served as a pioneering UN mission on HRDDP. It has a dedicated HRDDP unit which has allocated significant resources to developing national-level understanding of the importance of human rights due diligence processes. In fact, MONUSCO is considering extending HRDDP's application beyond programming with a security sector focus to be included as part of the decision-making process for all support to government actors. This goes beyond current HRDDP policy parameters, and remained an open debate as of the time of research.

HRDDP was applied in SSKAT, as the project involved ex-combatant returnees as one of its key beneficiary groups. Screenings of ex-combatants were carried out by the HRDDP unit (in coordination with IOM), which resulted in the exclusion of several ex-combatants who had committed human rights abuses.⁴⁹

For two other projects – PAJURR and the project related to women's empowerment in the mining communities ([PBF/IRF-317](#)) – HRDDP consideration and application was less clear. These projects involved some subactivities related to engaging with non-UN security forces (police in the Kasai region in the PAJURR project and mining police in the latter project). Given the nature of the engagement (mostly raising awareness on rights and reporting practices), these may have constituted training on international law and thus have fallen under the HRDDP exceptions.⁵⁰ This was difficult to conclusively determine given a lack of details on whether and how HRDDP had been taken into consideration. For the project related to mining police, [PBF/IRF-317](#), the IOM staff interviewed indicated that some HRDDP sensitization efforts were carried out but were unable to provide further details.⁵¹ In the older (2018–2021) PAJURR project, [PBF/COD/C-1](#), those interviewed either did not know whether HRDDP had been applied or said they assumed it had been at an early implementation stage.⁵²

While the available information makes it difficult to make any determinative judgments, the lack of clarity on these two projects illustrates some of the outstanding challenges in terms of seeing HRDDP fully integrated in peacebuilding projects. In the broader interviews for this Thematic, implementing partners frequently expressed lack of clarity on whether certain types of training fall under the exception to HRDDP, and also whether certain types of security forces fell under its remit. Even where HRDDP has been taken into consideration, the lack of systematic application and reporting on these issues can make it difficult to trace back how it has been applied, or whether it was deemed inapplicable. It is particularly notable that these issues surfaced even in an environment like the DRC, where there is a high level of awareness of HRDDP and established processes and capacities for supporting it.

Findings: What Did We Learn?

In many ways, the topline findings from the DRC case study mirror those of the Colombia case study: human rights objectives and strategies were well integrated and interwoven throughout the programming examined. Human rights also figured centrally within the key strategic documents and priorities for the DRC, including in the eligibility request, the CCA, and the PBF Strategic Results Framework for Tanganyika.

Among both UN partners and civil society interlocutors interviewed, addressing human rights, strengthening justice, and ensuring accountability were considered central to building sustainable peace in the DRC. Stakeholders pointed to incomplete national-level transitional justice processes, combined with widespread impunity for human rights violations and a failure to tackle the root causes of

conflict, as evidence of why peacebuilding gains have struggled across much of the DRC.

However, while both case studies illustrated strong integrated approaches to human rights and peacebuilding, the dramatically different context in the DRC is important to bear in mind. The two country case studies were not designed to present a structured comparison. Nonetheless, the contrast between conditions in Colombia and the DRC are important to consider in identifying lessons for human rights and peacebuilding. On measures of overall stability, levels of conflict, and of respect for human rights and civil liberties, the DRC ranks among the most challenging environments. During the period examined (2017–2022) the DRC ranked the sixth most fragile on the Fragile States Index and was third from the bottom in The Economist *Democracy Index*, a measure of civil liberties, based on evaluation of certain metrics in 168 states. Colombia, by

contrast, ranks much more positively – 52 out of 168 states on the Democracy Index, and in the top third (66 out of 179) on the Fragile States Index, indicating less fragility.

The differing stages of peacebuilding and relationship between UN entities and the governments in question also present a marked contrast. Whereas the 2016 peace agreement in Colombia provided a strong anchor for human rights-focused peacebuilding, in the DRC, the peace process flagged, disrupted by new outbreaks of conflict and associated rights violations. In addition, the projects in the DRC were implemented during a period of mission transition, which has resulted in declining resources and a more tenuous political position for peacebuilders in the country. Both have created limits on the degree to which sensitive subjects, such as human rights and accountability, can be promoted.

As a result, despite significant efforts to strengthen human rights in the DRC, a casual observer would be forgiven for seeing it as a context less attentive to the respect for human rights than many other peacebuilding environments. This is not to suggest that human rights strategies and objectives will fail to have positive effects in such an environment; nor that they should be elided from peacebuilding strategies in such a context. In fact, the findings from the DRC projects suggested the opposite. **The power of integrating human rights approaches into peacebuilding practice was particularly evident in the Kasai region, where peacebuilding, reconciliation, and reintegration goals appeared to be better advanced by having a rights-based transitional justice and accountability approach at their core.** Interviewees expressed hope that this holistic approach would ensure violence in the region is contained, rather than marking the beginning of a recurrent conflict cycle. While this remains to be seen, it is clear that the region has demonstrated impressive peacebuilding gains in a relatively short period of time with human rights at the centre of project design and implementation.

Moreover, **the transitional justice projects in the Kasai region produced a “demonstration effect” – a notable achievement given the challenges that other national-level transitional justice initiatives in the DRC have faced.** A “demonstration effect” is a form of catalytic action that “demonstrates a novel way of addressing a problem, which then catches on and is replicated widely”.⁵³ Senior UN staff confirmed that the seeming success of the PAJURR and SSKAT transitional justice initiatives spurred popular consultations to assess transitional justice needs in other provinces. Supported by the Ministry of Human Rights and the Joint Human Rights Office (JHRO), discussions are

ongoing as to the feasibility and methodology of doing such consultations in conflict-affected provinces such as North Kivu (launched in March 2022) and South Kivu.⁵⁴

Such findings suggest that while the overall environment in the DRC is one that makes human rights and peacebuilding progress more challenging, it is nonetheless possible to gain traction at a subnational level. Doing so may even catalyse positive change in other areas, as conditions allow. The learning from this case study also suggests that exploring synergies and complementarity with human rights and peacebuilding can be particularly useful in transition contexts. As noted, since the last 2018 eligibility request, PBF-supported projects have had a strategic focus of supporting the country’s transition from a peacekeeping to non-mission setting, both thematically and in terms of geographic areas of engagement. The projects in this sample illustrated this, with three of the four case study projects implemented in regions identified for transition.

Moreover, as illustrated by the SSKAT and PAJURR projects, PBF funds helped support the transition of mission capacities to local authorities, while also helping international and local NGOs to advance the peacebuilding agenda. The model of multidimensional, community-driven transitional justice developed in PAJURR was adjusted to incorporate community-based reintegration and ex-combatant support in the SSKAT project. In doing so, it helped to transition a function that had previously been more the preserve of MONUSCO to local actors, but with a more rights-centred and sustainable approach.

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However, on the issue of navigating mission transition, some of the other findings from this case study offered a note of caution for future programming. While the PAJURR and SSKAT projects worked within the existing transition strategy and showed promising signs of continuing effects, the other two projects raised more significant sustainability issues. The GPI project in the remote Shabunda mining community ([PBF/IRF-317](#)) appeared very unlikely to be sustained once mission logistics and other supporting resources are unavailable. This reflects a larger issue: UN

entities and peacebuilding NGOs, including those implementing PBF-supported projects, will soon lack the operational and security backbone that the mission provides.⁵⁵ With no replacement for this operational support on the horizon, **programming in challenging or inaccessible areas in the DRC will not be feasible or sustainable unless significant funding for transport, security, and logistics are factored into future planning.**

In addition, although further research might be needed to support this reflection, it was notable that the two GYPI projects appeared less grounded within the overall country and transition strategy compared to the non-GYPI projects. This would make sense given the different approval routes for GYPI projects. However, it may suggest a need to ensure some strategic linkage vis-à-vis the country objectives and situation, especially in transition contexts. The DRC case study also provided important insights for key programming areas and suggested other institutional avenues for supporting human rights within peacebuilding:

- **Transitional justice gains may need to incubate at subnational level before scaling up nationwide**

Despite significant investment by national authorities and the international community in nationwide transitional justice mechanisms, very little progress has been made in the past 15–20 years. Yet, in a comparatively short period of four years, two PBF-funded projects in the Kasai region have helped to reignite transitional justice conversations both at the provincial and national level.⁵⁶ Given the vast size of the DRC and the varied nature and intensity of its conflicts, a top-down, national approach has proved unwieldy and not fit for purpose. Conversely, instead of waiting for a national-level process, PAJURR (continued under SSKAT) supported a locally administered popular consultation process which identified the need for a subnational Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Commission to meet transitional justice needs in the Kasai region.

The success of the popular consultation process and the decision to institute a Truth Commission in the Kasai region has inspired a re-thinking of the approach to transitional justice in the DRC. This local transitional justice project is being discussed as a potential model for replication in other provinces, as part of a national transitional justice scheme. This localized approach to transitional justice in the DRC, enabled by PBF funds, may provide the necessary impetus for renewed nationwide transitional justice efforts. Similar localized approaches to transitional justice may also be relevant in other country contexts where national-level responses are not yet ripe.

- **Multidimensional programming combining human rights, peacebuilding, and socioeconomic components demonstrated tangible gains**

PAJURR and SSKAT, implemented in the Kasai and Tanganyika, were complex, multi-partner programmes with separate but interlinking components. In practice, workstreams related to transitional justice, justice, and socioeconomic reintegration appeared to be implemented relatively independently of one another. There were nonetheless productive knock-on effects: providing livelihood opportunities and offering means of retribution that contributed to fostering space for dialogue, social cohesion, and a sense of stability within the community. In addition, interviews suggested that grouping such a wide array of activities forced implementing organizations to coordinate closely, resulting in important gap identification, responsive programming, and midstream course correction.

In addition, the combination of these different activities and interventions helped to address the diverse sources of tensions (both economic and sociopolitical) linked to the 2016 Kamuina Nsapu conflict,⁵⁷ and allowed transitional justice steps to be advanced. The results from these two projects suggest that in some situations, **multidimensional programming may be needed to address interlocking root causes and to win community buy-in, which is essential for sustainability.**

- **Further focus on the rights dimensions of socioeconomic components is needed**

While all four projects in the case study included socioeconomic components, these tended to be framed as a tool to build social cohesion and prevent conflict rather than to help realize socioeconomic rights per se. For example, although infrastructure (road) rehabilitation initiatives under PAJURR and SSKAT were successful in opening dialogue and economic exchange between conflict-affected communities, these were designed to be short-term interventions, rather than to enable greater social and economic rights of beneficiaries overall. Similarly, project activities for [PBF/IRF-405](#) included youth professional training but these were not conceptualized as a realization of the young professionals' rights. By contrast, interviews with beneficiaries suggested that they viewed their ability to realize socioeconomic rights as among their top priorities in terms of human rights. **Such reflections suggest that focusing on socioeconomic needs can indeed provide important leverage for peacebuilding goals, but that there must be greater attention given to how these components contribute to the long-term realization of ESCR.**

One way to strengthen the rights focus of these socioeconomic components would be to encourage an equal focus on the role of the Government as a duty-bearer with regard to these rights. Although the PAJURR and SSKAT programmes worked to strengthen officials' roles as duty-bearers on the legal reform components of the project, they did not do so with regard to the socioeconomic components; nor did the youth-focused programming. The Shabunda mining project did do this to a large degree, including on issues of equal pay and other ESCR invoked by the project. The joint focus on enabling rights-holders and encouraging duty-bearers to uphold obligations in the Shabunda project was credited with facilitating both immediate gains for women (salary increases) and contributing to some of the observed normative change in the community.⁵⁸

- **Building capacities for catalytic change is a crucial project component**

An important part of the catalytic change that PBF funding seeks to create,⁵⁹ is “building capacity for critical change within a system” and the notion that “catalytic efforts must leave behind some enhanced capacity to address later problems or issues”.⁶⁰ The PAJURR and SSKAT projects were particularly notable in this regard. At every phase of programming, local actors received practical and conceptual support to ensure their ability to carry the project forward. For example, provincial authorities in Kasai-Central coordinated the popular consultations, with UNDP only assisting logistically. Similarly, socioeconomic reintegration and social cohesion activities were delivered by local NGOs, with UNDP helping to coordinate and support a best-practice sharing network between the local organizations selected. Local organizations, in turn, were supported to develop linkages with engineers from the local Agricultural Service Roads Office, who provided technical guidance and certification for local infrastructure rehabilitation projects. In this way, local actors and institutions were in the lead, with the UN entities involved providing support as needed to encourage local ownership. This proved to be an effective model for generating local buy-in, and also created the necessary ingredients to make the projects as sustainable as possible.

- **Greater efforts are needed to ensure that HRDDP is fully integrated within peacebuilding projects**

The application of HRDDP is perhaps more advanced in the DRC than in any other country. Clear standard operating procedures have been put in place by the UN Country Team. The necessary databases and processes have been developed to allow MONUSCO to conduct detailed risk assessments and vetting before pursuing programming of

any kind that directly or indirectly provides support to security forces. **However, despite the mainstreaming of HRDDP at mission level, the policy and its requirements are less well metabolized by staff in some UN entities and at the implementation level.**⁶¹ While the projects examined by this case study included only minor components involving security actors, implementers and even senior UN staff struggled to clearly articulate the HRDDP considerations involved. Most agencies involved assumed that HRDDP had been applied to the programme at an early implementation stage, if at all, but demonstrated no particular knowledge of vetting processes or how they had been applied.

Going forward, HRDDP should be more systematically considered during the implementation of peacebuilding work in the DRC, including that supported by the PBF. This is particularly important given MONUSCO's transition, since **much of the understanding of HRDDP lies within the mission, so there is a risk of some of the institutional support to HRDDP being lost with the mission's closure.**

Specific to PBF programming, UN staff in the DRC suggested that PBSO could contribute to improved application of HRDDP (in the DRC and other locales) through provision of guidance on HRDDP and/or by ensuring that there are specific inquiries during the project proposal and early implementation phases. Doing so might strengthen agency buy-in on the policy and ensure that HRDDP considerations are fully integrated in the project design and implementation strategy. Several interviewees also suggested making sure that implementing partners have the resources needed to develop and apply HRDDP fully, including contact with human rights focal points who have capacity to advise on HRDDP and/or financial resources to allow them to carry out a risk assessment or other supporting tasks. While some of this might come from the investment of UN entities themselves, one direct way that PBF might facilitate this in its work is to allow resourcing for HRDDP-related tasks to be explicitly included in the project budget. On this, there has already been some recent progress – PBSO staff who work on these issues globally (i.e. not specifically in the DRC) said that this had not been standard in the past but has been included in recent proposals and is something they are more actively supporting.⁶²

- **Support for institutional capacity for human rights and peacebuilding, especially in transition contexts, is needed**

A final important lesson to draw from the DRC case study is that **producing well integrated and supported human**

rights and peacebuilding work can depend strongly on the institutional and human capacity within a given country context. The JHRO in the DRC – a MONUSCO and OHCHR collaborative unit – was involved in the design and served as an implementing agency for all four PBF-funded projects in this case study. This is a large part of why human rights was so centrally integrated within the projects’ conception and implementation. Further, the human rights component provided an important vehicle for working with PBF by enabling the coordination of mission assets, while leveraging OHCHR’s programmatic capacity.

In addition, the legacy of this unit, and continuance of its work, was viewed as an important component for assuring successful mission transition. Because this unit has housed OHCHR’s programmatic capacity, while also supporting the broader mission objectives, it was viewed as a key node for

facilitating the transition of certain activities or objectives from the mission to human rights and peacebuilding work.⁶³ In addition, JHRO has been extensively involved in HRDDP implementation in the DRC, and offers the best hope for sustaining institutional knowledge of HRDDP after the mission’s departure.⁶⁴

This suggests a larger lesson for those wishing to enhance human rights during periods of transition (whether PBF or other institutional actors): doing so will require investing in the institutional capacities and structures of those taking on this work. In addition, OHCHR staff and the UN Country Team suggested that, as a planning matter, it could be useful to think about how prioritization and sequencing of certain human rights activities or goals might interact with the larger mission transition.⁶⁵

Endnotes

- 1 Sara Meger, "Rape of the Congo: Understanding sexual violence in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* Vol. 28 No. 2 (2010): 119–135, DOI: [10.1080/02589001003736728](https://doi.org/10.1080/02589001003736728). UN News, "UNICEF alert over 'sickening' levels of sexual violence in eastern DR Congo", 18 May 2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/05/1136777>; Human Rights Watch, "DR Congo: Killings, rapes by Rwanda-backed M23 rebels," 13 June 2023. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/06/13/dr-congo-killings-rapes-rwanda-backed-m23-rebels>.
- 2 The CNDH was mandated to investigate human rights violations, provide legal assistance to victims, and make recommendations to the Government on human rights issues. Balingene Kahombo, "Chapter 6: The Democratic Republic of the Congo's National Commission on Human Rights," *Compendium of documents on National Human Rights Institutions in eastern and southern Africa* ed. Charles M Fombad (Pretoria University Law Press, 2019).
- 3 "Ministère des Droits Humains, République Démocratique du Congo," <http://droits-humains.gouv.cd/index.html>.
- 4 The Comprehensive Peace Agreement, December 2002, created the framework for a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which ran from 2003–2007. Articles 154–160 of the 2003 Transitional Constitution tasked the Commission to establish the truth among conflicting versions of history and to promote peace, reparation, and reconciliation. Its mandate is set out in Law No. 04/018 (2004). See; "Democratic Republic of the Congo: Timeline of Significant Events", ICTJ, last accessed 29 November 2023, <https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/subsites/challenging-conventional-truth-commissions-peace/congo.html>; "Truth Commission: Democratic Republic of Congo", USIP, last accessed 29 November 2023, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2003/07/truth-commission-democratic-republic-congo>.
- 5 See; "Trying individuals for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and aggression," *International Criminal Court*, last accessed 29 November 2023, https://www.icc-cpi.int/cases?f%5B0%5D=situation_name_colloquial_cases%3A670.
- 6 Despite the numerous rulings, a 2020 study indicated that although \$28 million in damages had been ordered to be paid to over 3,300 victims, only one reparations order had ever been implemented. Trial International, Avocats Sans Frontières and Justice et Démocratie, "L'urgence pour la RDC de solder sa dette envers les victimes de crime de masse et revoir sa politique de réparation," *Policy Brief*, October 2020, <https://trialinternational.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Policy-Brief-Lurgence-pour-la-RDC-de-solder-sa-dette-envers-les-victimes-de-crime-de-masse-et-rev-oir-sa-politique-de-re%CC%81paration.pdf>.
- 7 Implementation, however, remains nascent. Law No. 22/065 of December 26, 2022; also see, "RDC: une loi pour des réparations en faveur des victimes de viol," *RFI*, 26 April 2023. Additionally, at international level, the ICC-affiliated Trust Fund for Victims has issued reparations payments and some restorative programming in the DRC, see Trust Fund for Victims, "Democratic Republic of Congo", 2022, <https://www.trustfundforvictims.org/en/updated-information-democratic-republic-congo-drc-programme-activities-2022>.
- 8 Additionally, the jurisdiction of military courts does not extend to include thousands of violations conducted by over 100 armed groups active in the DRC, which fall under the jurisdiction of civilian courts. Maria Elena Vignoli, "The ICC's work in Congo isn't done," *Human Rights Watch*, 11 August 2020, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/08/11/icc-work-congo-isnt-done>.
- 9 Adam Day, "Case Study 6: Rule of law support to conflict prevention and sustaining peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo," *Rule of Law and Sustaining Peace: Towards More Impactful, Effective Conflict Prevention* eds. Adam Day and Jessica Caus, (New York: United Nations University, 2021), p 161.
- 10 Ordinance 21/016 of 3 May 2021.
- 11 Articles 3 and 6 of ordinance 21/016 of 3 May 2021. Although the state of siege is intended to be a temporary measure, with a limited maximum duration of 30 days, it has now been continuously extended for over two years. For analysis, see: Amnesty International, "DRC: Justice and freedoms under siege in North-Kivu and Ituri," May 2022, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/AFR6254952022ENGLISH.pdf>.
- 12 United Nations Security Council [S/2023/730](https://www.un.org/press/docs/2023/S/2023/730), (2023). See also; Remadji Hoinathy, "Eastern DRC peace processes miss the mark," *Institute for Security Studies*, 8 February 2023, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/eastern-drc-peace-processes-miss-the-mark>.
- 13 "DR Congo: Resurgent M23 rebels target civilians," *Human Rights Watch*, 25 July 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/07/25/dr-congo-resurgent-m23-rebels-target-civilians>.
- 14 Carine Dikiefu Banona, "Ethnic targeting mars DR Congo's electoral process", *Human Rights Watch*, 9 May 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/05/09/ethnic-targeting-mars-dr-congos-electoral-process>; Richard Moncrieff and Onesphore Semaumba, "Massacre in Goma clouds DR Congo's elections and UN mission's future," *International Crisis Group*, 15 September 2023, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/great-lakes/democratic-republic-congo/massacre-goma-clouds-dr-congos-elections-and-un>.
- 15 MONUSCO closed its office in Tanganyika in 2022, as per the transition timetable, but the mission still had some remaining activities at the time of research. UN officials said there were plans to complete full withdrawal from the province over the course of 2024. It is worth noting that prior to the formal closing of MONUSCO's office in Tanganyika in June 2022, the mission transferred the provincial office of the National Human Rights Commission in Kalemie in August 2021 to help strengthen the monitoring, reporting, and advocacy capacities of the National Human Rights Commission and human rights defenders ahead of the Mission's withdrawal from the province. The Commission was progressively involved in the creation and implementation of monitoring and advocacy capacities in provinces where MONUSCO is reducing its presence. See: United Nations Security Council [S/2021/807](https://www.un.org/press/docs/2021/S/2021/807); UNHRC [A/HRC/51/61](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees/51/61), (2022). Interview with UN officials, MS Teams, 5 July 2023 (Interview #115).
- 16 United Nations Security Council [S/2022/709](https://www.un.org/press/docs/2022/S/2022/709), ¶ 68.
- 17 Ange A. Kasongo, "Congo president asks UN peacekeepers to start packing up this year," *Reuters*, 21 September 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/congo-president-asks-un-peacekeepers-start-packing-up-this-year-2023-09-21/>.
- 18 United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, [CP/OSMR/2023](https://www.un.org/press/docs/2023/CP/OSMR/2023), November 2023.
- 19 This amounts to 4.1 per cent of PBF's worldwide approvals during this timeframe.
- 20 UNU-CPR briefly examined the key components of the other 22 projects to make this determination. Outside of the four in the case study, three projects in this time period had components related to women's access to human rights institutions, and justice mechanisms. However, they are overall not as strong in terms of a human rights focus as the four that make up the DRC case study. These projects are: [PBF/COD/A-8](https://www.unu.edu/press/docs/2023/PBF/COD/A-8), [PBF/COD/B-10](https://www.unu.edu/press/docs/2023/PBF/COD/B-10), [PBF/IRF-404](https://www.unu.edu/press/docs/2023/PBF/IRF-404).
- 21 Early PBF investments (before 2018) centred on rule of law and security, governance, recovery, and reintegration in Eastern DRC.
- 22 The fourth project was implemented in South Kivu, Eastern DRC, where the remoteness of the location selected and ongoing conflict in the province has made peacebuilding efforts particularly difficult.
- 23 For example, the projects' key components align with the four

- priorities as follows: community-based reintegration, in alignment with priority 1; local reconciliation and social cohesion with priority 2; improved governance and legal reform with priority 3; economic revitalization and women’s empowerment, both denoted as “cross-cutting themes”. See; Secretary General’s Peacebuilding Fund “Demande d’éligibilité/de renouvellement d’éligibilité au financement du PBF, République démocratique du Congo,” UN Peacebuilding, 2020.
- 25 United Nations, “Common country analysis: Democratic Republic of the Congo”, 2019; United Nations, “Plan cadre de Coopération des Nations Unies pour le Développement Durable (UNSDCF) 2020–2024,” 2019.
- 26 The one project set to end in 2023 is not located in Tanganyika.
- 27 Specifically, the following two targets for the SRF for Tanganyika align strongly with core themes in [PBF/COD/B-7](#): (ii), strengthening social cohesion in communities with ex-combatants, and (iv) more equitable access to justice (formal and informal), including vulnerable groups. The SRF also highlights the protection and promotion of human rights as a “cross-cutting outcome” that all projects and programmes should pursue. “Cadre de Résultats Stratégiques de Consolidation de la Paix de la Province du Tanganyika 2022–2024”, PBF.
- 28 This initial phase of the project was coordinated by the provincial government in Kasai-Central, with support from JHRO and expertise provided by the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH). The CNDH specifically highlighted this consultation process as key for the successful and rapid development of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission: Interview with a representative of the CNDH, Kananga, 8 March 2023 (Interview #131).
- 29 Interview with a representative of the National Council of Bars and Law Societies, Kananga, 9 March 2023 (Interview #146); interview with a representative of the CNDH, Kananga, 8 March 2023 (Interview #131).
- 30 Interview with a representative of the National Council of Bars and Law Societies, Kananga, 9 March 2023 (Interview #148).
- 31 With project assistance, the edict creating the CPVR was drafted in the course of the project, and in June 2021, it was adopted by the Provincial Assembly of Kasai Central. “Évaluation finale du projet “Paix, Justice, Réconciliation et Reconstruction au Kasai Central (PAJURR-KC),” p. 29.
- 32 Interview with a representative of an implementing agency, Kananga, 7 March 2023 (Interview #126); interview with UN officials, 6 March 2023, Kinshasa (Interview #118).
- 33 Interview with a representative of an implementing agency, Kananga, 7 March 2023 (Interview #126).
- 34 These interventions included the provision of income generation kits and the creation of village savings and credit associations (Associations Villageoises d’Épargne et de Crédit). Interview with a representative of an implementing agency, Kananga, 7 March 2023 (Interview #126); interview with a representative of a local NGO, Kananga, 9 March 2023 (Interview #144).
- 35 Interview with UN official, MS Teams, 19 April 2023 (Interview #116). The biggest drawback of this approach was that the resources were insufficient to meet demand, in particular for the socioeconomic support. With not enough to go around, some individuals within the target communities and in neighbouring communities felt left out. Interviews with representatives of local NGOs, Kananga, 9 March 2023 (Interviews #141, 142, 143, 144, 145).
- 36 Interviews with representatives of local NGOs, Kananga, 9 March 2023 (Interview #141, 142, 143, 144, 145).
- 37 Project Document (ProDoc) [PBF/IRF-405](#) (DRC). The ProDoc also highlighted young women and men victims at risk of violence or discrimination, specifically those who identify as LGBTQI+, as the main project beneficiaries. However, in interviews with implementing partners and recipients, the focus on LGBTQI+ issues was never mentioned. This project was originally categorized as related to protection of human rights defenders by PBSO based on the language in the ProDoc. However, in practice, the activities and methodology were more focused on broader youth empowerment and community social cohesion goals.
- 38 Interview with young beneficiaries of the project, Kananga, 8 March 2023 (Interview #135).
- 39 Although the programme ensured inclusion of persons with disabilities, recipients expressed concern that programming did not consider accommodation to their needs, such as assistance with transport to and from the training location for persons with physical disabilities or adapting training and kits to ensure their full inclusion. Interview with young beneficiaries of the project, Kananga, 8 March 2023 (Interview #135). Another example of how the project activities may have been inappropriate related to provision of computer training: Many youths opted to receive computer training and equipment but found that limited access to electricity meant that kits would have required a portable solar panel in addition to the laptops and printers provided. Ibid.
- 40 Interview with representatives of implementing agencies, Kananga, 7 March 2023 (Interview #125); interview with project beneficiaries, Kananga, 8 March 2023 (Interview #137).
- 41 While the ProDoc [PBF/IRF-405](#) had targeted 60 young lawyers for training, interviewees indicated that only 30 had received training for the whole of Grand-Kasai. Interview with project beneficiaries, Kananga, 8 March 2023 (Interview #137).
- 42 Interview with representatives of implementing agencies, Kananga, 7 March 2023 (Interview #125).
- 43 Interview with representatives of an implementing agency, Kinshasa, 6 March 2023 (Interview #121). See also ProDoc [PBF/IRF-317](#) (DRC).
- 44 The community radio in Kigulube experienced significant damage due to lightning in December 2022 and has since not been able to operate. Interview with representatives of an implementing agency, Kinshasa, 6 March 2023 (Interview #121).
- 45 Independent evaluation [PBF/IRF-317](#) (DRC), pp 12–17. The evaluation also noted progress in provision of legal assistance and operationalization of the legal clinic, including the incarceration of four warlords, which the evaluation said helped deter other war crimes. Ibid, p. 12.
- 46 It noted the extremely remote location, non-existence of local roads, lack of commercial flights, absence of judicial authorities, insufficient number of police forces, redeployment of trained police officers, and presence of armed groups. Ibid, p. 23.
- 47 For example, although the community radio station was spearheaded by local actors, it has not been operational since a storm destroyed radio equipment in December 2022. UNESCO could not fully restore it due to access issues.
- 48 Ibid, p. 23; interview with implementing agency representatives, Kinshasa, 6 March 2023 (Interview #121); interview with implementing agencies representatives, MS teams, 13 March 2023 (Interview #150).
- 49 The use of screening databases in this way illustrates the importance of improving the collection of information on members of armed groups, who are generally excluded from such databases. Typically, these databases only track formal security sector actors.
- 50 In the PAJURR project, ([PBF/COD/C-1](#)), the ProDoc notes activities including strengthening the technical and operational capacities of the police force, but then only mentions provision of training, including on human rights. In the project in mining communities ([PBF/IRF-317](#)) mining police were provided with training on “incident reporting” and sensitization on international humanitarian law, human rights, GBV, and other related topics. It was not clear whether this training (in particular that on “incident reporting”) also involved other components that would not fall into the HRDDP exception. Independent evaluation of project [PBF/IRF-317](#), pp. 10–11.
- 51 There was some implication that IOM had provided sensitization on

- HRDDP and on human rights practices to the mining police, rather than that a risk analysis and risk mitigation process was applied to the project itself. Interview with a representative of an implementing agency, Kinshasa, 6 March 2023 (Interview #122).
- 52 Interview with PAJURR project coordinator and representative of an implementing agency, Kananga, 7 March 2023 (Interview #126). The PAJURR project was the oldest project in the case study, approved in 2018, and having closed in May 2021.
- 53 Cheyanne Scharbatke-Church, Susanna Campbell, Julia Doehrn, Philip Thomas and Peter Woodrow, “Catalytic programming and the Peacebuilding Fund,” PeaceNexus Foundation, 2 September 2010, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/catalytic_programming_thematic_review_2010_0.pdf, p. 7.
- 54 Interview with UN official, Kinshasa, 11 March 2023 (Interview #148). These are as yet in the discussion stages; no concrete plans for replication of the PAJURR and SSKAT models currently exist.
- 55 Interview with UN Integrated Operational Team and OHCHR, 5 July 2023 (Interview #151); interview with UN officials, MS Teams, 5 July 2023 (Interview number #115).
- 56 Interview with PBSO representatives, Kinshasa, 6 March 2023 (Interview #117).
- 57 Interview with a representative of an implementing agency, Kananga, 7 March 2023 (Interview #126).
- 58 Independent evaluation of [PBF/IRF-317](#), pp 12-17.
- 59 Peacebuilding Fund, “PBF Performance Framework”, last updated 26 July 2022, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/strategic_performance_framework_theory_of_change_and_risk_matrix.pdf.
- 60 Cheyanne Scharbatke-Church, Susanna Campbell, Julia Doehrn, Philip Thomas and Peter Woodrow, “Catalytic programming and the Peacebuilding Fund,” PeaceNexus Foundation, 2 September 2010, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/catalytic_programming_thematic_review_2010_0.pdf, p. 7.
- 61 Similar findings have been observed by other reporting on human rights work in the DRC. See, e.g., Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC), “Integrated United Nations approaches to protection during peacekeeping transitions: MONUSCO,” CIVIC, November 2023, p. 23.
- 62 Interview with PBSO staff, New York, 24 October 2023 (Interview #112).
- 63 OHCHR, “Going further together: The contribution of human rights components to the implementation of mandates of United Nations field missions”, October 2020, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Press/WebStories/Going_Further_Together_advance_unedited_version.pdf, p.19.
- 64 For similar concerns about loss of institutional knowledge on JHRO, see CIVIC, Approaches to protection during peacekeeping transitions, November 2023, p. 23.
- 65 For additional suggestions on prioritization of field mission capacities, see OHCHR, “Going further together: The contribution of human rights components to the implementation of mandates of United Nations field missions,” p. 28.