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GLOSSARY

ACPP (UK)	Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (United Kingdom)
ASDR	African Security Dialogue and Research
CDF	Civil Defence Force (Sierra Leone)
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DDRR	Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (UNMIL)
EU	European Union
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
MONUC	United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
NCDDR	National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
NODEFIC	Norwegian Defence Force International Centre
NRA	National Resistance Army (Uganda)
ONUB	United Nations Mission in Burundi
ONUSAL	United Nations Mission in El Salvador
PCASED	Programme of Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development
RUF	Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)
SRSG	Special Representative of the [UN] Secretary-General
SSS	State Security Service (Liberia)
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UN DPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations

UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOCI	United Nations Mission in Côte d' Ivoire
UNTAG	United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (Namibia)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the past few years we have witnessed an evolution in the conceptualization and implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes by the wide range of actors who are drawn into such activities: broadly speaking the United Nations (UN) and its agencies, donors, technical assistance organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Africa in the past thirteen years has been a testing ground for new planning and implementation of UN-led DDR programmes. From Mozambique in the early 1990s to Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire today, the learning from each mission has influenced the outcome of the next. Some countries, such as Liberia, bear witness to earlier failures of DDR, as its current DDR programme attempts to not repeat the mistakes of the earlier ECOWAS and UN efforts at DDR ahead of the August 1997 elections. The commitment of the UN to learn from its implementation successes and failures was restated in the Brahimi Report of 2000. This thorough review of UN peace and security activities since the end of the Cold War questioned whether or not “traditional” peacekeeping had a future. While challenging, many of the report's recommendations have been adopted in peace mission planning at the UN. At the same time, a review of UN DDR operations was undertaken and issued as a report of the UN Secretary-General in 2000. This report argues for a targeted approach to DDR, with the former combatants the primary focus for interventions. The report suggests that DDR should be developed in concert with larger programmes for national recovery, but DDR itself should not become the societal vehicle for post-conflict peacebuilding.

Recent DDR efforts in Africa, led by UN peacekeeping missions such as UNAMSIL (Sierra Leone), UNMIL (Liberia), UNOCI (Côte d'Ivoire), MONUC (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and most recently ONUB (Burundi), have clearly benefited from the recommendations generated by these earlier reports. However, as DDR is viewed as beneficial, it has also become a delivery vehicle for more ambitious and wider interventions, often stretching the capacity of the UN mission, national agencies and donor support. Thus a key question arises: has DDR become a victim of its own success?

This report attempts to provide an accurate reflection of the discussion during the workshop of the need for DDR and the effective coordination of DDR efforts with other strategies aimed at assisting war-affected countries in their process of national recovery. Where general agreement among participants was clear on key areas these are noted, as are areas where there was not, perhaps, wide agreement but a strong recognition that further information and analysis are required.

The content from presentations and the outcomes of the discussion sessions are presented under the following six thematic areas:

- Trends in DDR in peacekeeping in Africa
- Planning and coordination in DDR programmes
- Disarmament and demobilization
- Reintegration
- Working with special groups
- Multi-actor coordination

The report aims to make a contribution to bridging the already narrowing gap between needs and realities in DDR and concludes with a few specific recommendations. These are summarized below.

Clarity of purpose

DDR can suffer from trying to be too many things to too many people. If DDR is too broad and tries to include everybody affected by the war it becomes impossible to implement.

DDR planning should take into consideration the extra-territorial dimension of flows of people, arms and resources in Africa.

Preparation and planning

Military intelligence and other forms of information and analysis need to be incorporated in UN missions in order to ensure proper communication and response to changes on the ground in DDR programmes.

DDR planners need to have proper knowledge of the history of the conflict, how it was fought, its politics, its ethnic dimensions and its probable impact on peace.

There is a need to move towards a new DDR framework that is based on human rights. DDR based on human rights will expose war criminals and ensure there is justice.

Spending money on planning is not futile. Greater support needs to be generated for this essential stage of the DDR process.

The UN should use “cross-cutting collaboration” to increase the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of programme delivery. This may include using local staff for core functions and bringing in more local organizations.

The reports of the UN Secretary-General should be used as a dynamic tool for monitoring the implementation of DDR and outlining specific roles and

responsibilities for UN agencies. These reports should also focus on presenting more indicator-based assessments of progress, including qualitative measurements for reintegration.

Reintegration and national recovery

National recovery must form a basic element of the peace agreement and be developed in concert with DDR and UN mission planning.

Peace processes, DDR and security sector reform are interlinked and support for security sector reform should be included as part of peace mission support. Donor constraints in supporting army or police reform need to be identified and addressed.

Activities that promote societal reconciliation and reintegration need to be emphasized.

Need for information and training

Consideration should be given to providing DDR-focused training for troops going to UN missions.

The work of the UN DPKO Best Practices Unit is valuable in evaluating UN missions. However more detailed monitoring and evaluation of DDR programmes would benefit the individual missions and provide valuable lessons for future programmes.

There is a paucity of information on reintegration and a need for more research into post-reintegration experiences of former combatants.

A database of NGOs working on DDR in Africa and the identification and documentation of successful NGO interventions would make a valuable contribution to the available information on DDR.

INTRODUCTION

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Since 1989, an essential element of almost all peacekeeping operations has been the process of DDR, as the success of an entire peace process can hinge on the degree to which warring factions are effectively disarmed and demobilized.

Disarmament has been one of the most difficult tasks for peacekeepers to implement. Attempts at coercive disarmament, such as in Somalia, have failed and it is widely accepted that DDR must be a voluntary process that requires absolute cooperation and compliance from belligerent parties. But it has been extremely hard to collect all the weapons, even at the end of an armed struggle, when the remaining conditions of societal insecurity create high incentives for the maintenance and acquisition of small arms and light weapons by former combatants and the community at large.

Demobilization and reintegration also pose challenges – both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative dimension is the tangible side of the process and can be measured by counting the number of soldiers reporting to assembly areas, turning in weapons and being relocated. This aspect has been the main focus of peace operations and is used as a measure of effectiveness in reports to the UN Security Council.

The qualitative dimension is harder to grasp and has to do with reversing the indoctrination of militaristic ideologies and values, including violence as a

means of conflict resolution. Demobilization needs to be comprehensive enough to uproot the instruments and organization of violence, in addition to the ideology of violence. For reintegration, there are qualitative indicators that can be used but are often overlooked. For example, many African countries lie near the bottom of the Human Development Index and Probable Quality of Life Indicators. Most African rebels have therefore experienced poverty and injustice as normal realities of life and these are often the motivation for joining a rebellion. For such people, reintegration can seem to be a surrendering of principles and ideals for life in a society that is plagued by deep and seemingly intractable problems.

Recently, there has been a move by the international research community and the UN itself to better understand the modalities of DDR programmes and to understand what contributes to the success of one programme or the failure of another. The motivation for convening the workshop was to better understand and document the factors in DDR programmes that encourage or inhibit the peaceful resolution of conflicts in Africa.

By bringing representatives from UN agencies, UN peace mission personnel, research and training institutions, multilateral financial organizations and civil society together, workshop participants had an opportunity firstly, to reflect on what has been learned to date from the implementation of DDR programmes and secondly, to challenge the conventional thinking on how each segment of the DDR process should be run.

Thus the objectives for the workshop were to use the expertise of DDR planners and practitioners to summarize what has been done successfully – and unsuccessfully – in DDR programmes in Africa and to identify orthodoxies that may need to be challenged. This was done in the context of putting forward ideas and suggestions to feed into ongoing efforts to make DDR as strong a contribution as possible to preventing the resurgence of armed violence in countries emerging from war.

This report provides a reflection of the discussion during the workshop of the need for DDR and the effective coordination of DDR efforts with other strategies aimed at assisting war-affected countries in their process of national recovery. Where general agreement among participants was clear on key areas these are noted, as are areas where there was not, perhaps, wide agreement but a strong recognition that further information and analysis are required.

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These are presented in the report largely as discussed, however the authors have tried to bring in examples to illustrate concepts and practice from current UN missions in Africa. Although the workshop was not designed to generate specific recommendations, these naturally arose during our discussions. These are reflected in the final section of this report.

SECTION 1

TRENDS IN DDR IN PEACEKEEPING IN AFRICA

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration are not new concepts and their incorporation into UN peacekeeping missions extends back to 1989. Thus the first set of presentations was designed to reflect on what the trends are in peacekeeping and DDR in Africa and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of practices to date.

DDR as a requirement for peace¹

The need for DDR programmes to assist in restoring peace and security to post-conflict countries is an accepted reality. However, some of the underlying assumptions of DDR can pose challenges to countries emerging from war. For example, security forces in countries such as Sierra Leone or Liberia may simply not be in a position to absorb ex-combatants. This poses fundamental challenges to the requirement that these former combatants be reintegrated into society.

The question of how to deal with former combatants is as old as warfare itself. When Julius Caesar, the great Roman general, wanted to demobilize unwanted Gallic soldiers who had caused him serious problems, he had the right hand of hundreds of them cut off. The soldiers, if not put out of business, could have posed a grave danger to Caesar's emerging dominion, and Caesar had no time for a protracted programme of a more humane nature - these were cruel and turbulent times. Napoleon, the French revolutionary leader and a child of the Enlightenment, would have found Caesar's tactics too barbaric.

So, as soon as he was sure of his own imperial ambitions, he had thousands of his own soldiers, suspected of Republicanism, shipped to Haiti, there to be killed by the revolutionary forces of Toussaint L'Overture and the plague.² Less spectacularly, following World War II, demobilized servicemen in England were given a small payout and a suit constituting their reintegration benefit. Times and the nature of conflict have changed, however, making such straightforward solutions less practicable.

Where there is excess military capacity, the need to reintegrate the former combatants into civilian life becomes paramount. However reintegrating ex-combatants into societies cleaved by conflict can resurrect the fears and inequalities that initially led to conflict. The spate of civil wars in West Africa have a similar trajectory for combatants: they are hastily recruited, sometimes forcefully, trained to a specific set of standards that may not be recognised in a more orderly military environment and then, when no longer needed, expended to return to civilian life.

The experience of Sierra Leone illustrates this point. The war, which began in March 1991, led to a complete normative collapse of the country. By the end of 1996, an estimated 15,000 people had been killed and almost two-thirds of the country's population of 4.5 million displaced. By the end of 1999, casualty figures increased to over 70,000 people.

At the end of the disarmament process in Sierra Leone, about 70,000 combatants were disarmed and demobilized, mainly Revolutionary United Front (RUF) guerrillas and members of the Civil Defence Force (CDF). A new report on the aftermath of the DDR process, entitled *What the Fighters say: A survey of Ex-combatants in Sierra Leone, June – August 2003*, throws more light on the dynamics of the DDR process. On the whole, disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone was a success, but the reintegration aspect of the programme still faces challenges.

It is also clear that the repercussions of DDR have an impact not only in the country where the programme took place, but also in neighbouring states. The swathe of conflict in West Africa for example, has been exacerbated by the movement of combatants from one conflict to another. Thus the lessons of DDR are also being learned by those who can exploit them – what benefits to hold out for, how to keep force and communication structures in place during demobilization, and how to provide the greatest benefit to the greatest number of combatants and associated groups.

Lessons from trends

Discussion and analysis of basic trends in DDR reveal a few core lessons.

One key lesson is that integrated planning and implementation of DDR programmes is critical. Thus, from the earliest planning stages, the principle actors in the DDR programme at, for example the UN level, must work together to develop plans and identify strategic competencies to lead to a collaborative approach that cannot be exploited by parties to the conflict.

Another lesson that has been identified is that the functional element of DDR should be conceptually joined, with the reintegration phase also incorporating other “Rs” such as repatriation, reconciliation, rehabilitation and relocation. Also, the conceptual shift should extend to talking about DDR, and not DD&R, where reintegration is viewed as an additional component done by others and outside the key focus of disarmament and demobilization.

A third is that the DDR process cannot be designed or implemented as a sequence of events. Each activity forms part of a continuum whose elements may overlap and which are related and mutually reinforcing. The success of the entire process is dependent on the success of each step. However it is not

always necessary to proceed linearly. For example, advantage should be taken of seasonal variations in combat, where some combatants may return to agriculture, to identify groups that could be demobilized quickly. Such occasions may especially arise with children and women.

A fourth lesson is a negative one that has been learned by those who participate in DDR – DDR is a way to make money. For example, it has been suggested anecdotally that some former combatants in West Africa have gone through demobilization centres multiple times, qualifying for reintegration benefits each time. This illustrates the need for more accurate and better shared databases of those who have registered for DDR, and for the tracking of former combatants to ensure that they do not exploit the system either within in their own country or, as has been suggested, by moving across borders - for example from Liberia to Côte d'Ivoire, where the cash benefit will be greater.

A fifth lesson is that in areas such as West Africa where the region has been militarized by armed groups selling their labour, there is a need for a sub-regional approach to DDR that includes coordination with other UN efforts in the region. Examples of this are taking place in West Africa, through the coordination efforts of the UN Office for West Africa and in the Great Lakes region.

Finally, the objective of DDR should be clear to all parties and communicated widely. Where DDR is subject to another process, for example the reorganization of the security forces, as in the DRC, the need for the two processes to move in concert must be planned and well communicated so that the expectations of participants in the DDR process can be managed.

Evolution of peacekeeping and DDR in Africa³

The evolution of the theory of DDR in Africa can realistically be assessed through an examination of peace agreements, the UN Secretary-General's reports and Security Council resolutions.

There have been about 17 African UN peace support operations from July 1960 (Congo) to Burundi (2004). These include Namibia (1989), Somalia (1992), Mozambique (1992), Liberia (1993), Rwanda (1993-1995), Angola (1997), Central African Republic (1998) and Sierra Leone.

Peace agreements precede DDR processes and in many ways are the most important part of the peace process. Peace agreements are negotiated documents that result in a cease-fire and a regulated process toward a peaceful solution.

Peace agreements are usually followed by reports of the UN Secretary-General, out of which mandates and operational plans for peace missions are prepared by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG). The Security Council resolution, which often draws its content from the report of the Secretary-General, provides the legal basis for the mission and hopefully, the moral basis which will drive international support.

DDR Development Timelines

1990-1998 – Mandates for DDR were extremely vague.

1998 onwards – Increase in detail and scope of DDR

2004 onwards – Extremely specific DDR programmes

Phases of DDR

Disarmament consists of the collection, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons from combatants, as well as in many cases from the civilian population. Weapons destruction is becoming the norm for disposal, generally after collection. The issue of who is eligible for disarmament is now being recognized as a key issue. And in this regard, the entire society including ex-combatants and civilians who took up arms for protection should be eligible.

Such wide-scale disarmament is not necessarily linear and some parts may occur inside the DDR process while others are organized by other groups, such as the national police. Arms management processes must follow from disarmament processes. Such arms management requires capturing information on weapons in the possession of security forces and civilians, the review of legislation and steps to bring the management of weapons in concert with international best practice.

Demobilization is the formal, usually controlled, discharge of active combatants from armed forces or from an armed group. Societal orientation and health information should be separated from this activity. There is the need to concentrate on non-violent conflict management.

Demobilization is one part of a processes and not an end in itself. In this phase of DDR, pre-discharge orientation must include information on rights and responsibilities, available services and options. There is the need for a balance in the process for issues to be properly addressed. The cantonment phase of demobilization should not be allowed to transform into a refugee camp.

Reintegration is the most difficult stage of the DDR process. This is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain access to civilian forms of work and income. It involves retraining and employment and, thus,

promotion of local ownership of the process is crucial. Because every situation is different, reintegration must be tailored for a specific economic and cultural mix. While a top-down approach must be adopted in an attempt at reintegration, this phase should be a more inclusive process, which is driven by central government but includes local authorities and communities. This is important to guarantee adequate security for development.

Community requirements should be weighed against individual requirements and priorities identified upon which to concentrate. Research must be conducted as to the kind of training required for the ex-combatants. Better integrated planning and financing programmes are important, for example, as is being tried in the DRC.

In effect, developed poverty reduction strategies must:

- (a) understand that security comes before development;
- (b) avoid economic distortions and skewed incomes; and
- (c) stress reality over expectancy.

UNDP/DPKO interagency collaboration on DDR

The UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations (UN DPKO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are working closely on a set of standard procedures/guidelines and policy planning on DDR issues. This is being carried out in an inter-agency group collaboration that also includes UNICEF and UNIFEM. The DPKO is leading on issues to do with disarmament and demobilization while UNDP is focusing on the integration component. There has not been much monitoring and evaluation in terms of lessons learnt on DDR. The failure of the initial disarmament and demobilization phase in Liberia under UNMIL spurred this initiative. Issues of transitional allowances, cantonment and veteran associations are being considered.

Lessons from peace processes and DDR

The first lesson is that the UN itself is learning from its experience with DDR. This is being reflected in more precise and inclusive mandates, better bridging of policy and practice and commitment to a coordinated collaborative approach. In addition, the focus of DDR has broadened, so that the need for national recovery strategies that focus on war-affected populations is included.

The second lesson is that ownership of the DDR programmes needs to be better identified and reinforced. It is not the UN's DDR programme, but one that is designed to benefit the country and which therefore must be led from a national perspective. The leadership of the programme needs to be central but the execution should be devolved to the competencies of different actors. A third lesson is that more needs to be understood about how to structure reintegration programmes and provisions so that qualitative indicators can be developed and used to measure progress. The lack of clarity in reintegration planning and execution remains the Achilles heel of DDR programmes. For example, market research should be conducted to identify training priorities, job opportunities that exist or can be created, and the specific needs of former combatants. To date, blanket training in one or two vocational areas creates a glut of entrepreneurs or artisans, with no market for their skills. Reintegration should increasingly be planned within the context of a recovery framework in which return to the rule of law, security sector reform and the resettlement of internally displaced persons and refugees take place within the context of economic growth.

SECTION 2

PLANNING AND COORDINATION

The planning and coordination of DDR has been streamlined by clearer planning and implementation procedures by the UN. However the “on-the-ground” realities still pose challenges to those tasked with ensuring that DDR moves smoothly.

DDR, peace processes and troop deployment⁴

Since the 1989 UN mission in Namibia (UNTAG), DDR has been part of the evolution of the doctrine of peacekeeping. Today UN missions deploy with increasingly specific DDR mandates.

The role of the military during DDR programmes

One of the major weaknesses of the UN deployment system during peace support operations (PSOs) is the lack of consideration of country size when a decision of troop size and force is undertaken. The force size depends on the budget that the Security Council is willing to approve, and also on the resources available from troop contributing countries. Thus the dynamics and history of the conflict and the size of the country often play a secondary role.

The initial phase of DDR involves a survey of where belligerents are located and what road networks and transportation options are available. The distance between cantonment sites should ensure rapid reaction if necessary. The

credibility of the peacekeeping force, a robust mandate and enough resources to support the implementation of the mandate are extremely important.

With regards to weapons collected from former combatants, stockpile management and arms control during the mission is also important. It is essential that the mission is able to safeguard all surrendered firearms and ammunition. Arms destruction has become an integral part of the DDR process. Other actors should also be brought in during the disarmament phase, especially where the mission lacks the resources and expertise to destroy arms, such as in the UNAMSIL mission, where GTZ undertook the actual destruction of the weapons.

The National Commission for DDR (NCDDR) and others providing timelines for DDR to other central actors, such as the UN military mission, should ensure that these are feasible so that expectations can be managed during the DDR process.

Task of the military

During the early development of PSOs, the major task of the military was to protect and monitor the ceasefire line. Today, protection of civilians is important and part of mission responsibilities. Force protection remains important, but protection of cantonment sites and other UN agencies is also the responsibility of the military in the mission.

Coordination

DDR involves a multiplicity of actors - from rebels, government, UNDP, UNICEF and the NCDDR, to non-governmental organizations - making regular communication and coordination critical. Periodic meetings should be held with the NCDDR to identify needs and priorities. The changing

dynamics and politics of the peace process dictates that such meetings be used to monitor implementation, sustain momentum and encourage the commitment of all actors to their obligations to the DDR and peace processes.

Lessons from troop deployment

Better coordination among stakeholders in the DDR process has improved the delivery of DDR programmes. However, complications can still arise, especially if local conditions differ greatly from expectations and plans. Thus the need for regular communication and coordination is critical.

The lack of accurate data for numbers of combatants is a constant problem. Armed groups may not declare the number of combatants under their command, and it is easy for the number of individuals registering for reintegration benefits during disarmament and demobilization to mushroom. The lack of accurate data also complicates the collection of arms and ammunition, as up to six people may claim to share one weapon, simply to benefit from the DDR programme. Suggestions for better identification of combatants should be considered, for example stripping a weapon to show competency.⁵

Militias who are outside the peace process (and therefore generally exempt from UN-mandated DDR programmes) pose a unique challenge. Sometimes they want to be included in DDR but the UN cannot accommodate them. Other times they can be spoilers of the peace process, raising insecurity among parties to the peace agreement and stalling activities. More space within mandates to accommodate working with these groups may need to be considered.

The size of a country and the nature of the conflict has an enormous impact on mission size and troop deployment. Too often the mission size is drawn to

meet the availability of troops and not to the needs of the country of deployment. The lack of troops or changes in the security situation can have an impact on the DDR timetable and more integrated planning between troop deployment and DDR should be considered.

The capacity of NCDDRs may be limited, as a variety of people are drawn into the process to deal with issues ranging from the political to the operational and even grass roots levels. Providing training for NCDDR personnel on programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation could assist in this regard.

Troops deployed in missions often engage in local-level projects to work with communities. Examples include building schools, assisting with agricultural projects and renovating roads and water sources. These projects should be evaluated to identify lessons on what contingents can do that will contribute to national recovery strategies.⁶ In principle, these projects should be sustainable once the military contingents have left, and focus on transferring skills to local communities.

Translating policy planning into on-the-ground realities⁷

To effectively translate policy to implementation, two stages are critical: planning and execution.

In Liberia, a DDR Action Plan has been developed with the different stakeholders in the peace process. This document states clearly that responsibility and political commitment will determine the success or failure of the effort. It must be noted that during peace processes, especially when transitional governments are in place, issues related to power sharing are very sensitive and can have a significant impact of the delivery of mission responsibilities such as DDR, and this factor can delay the implementation of these activities.

In addition, political commitment for the sustained funding of DDR activities, such as the construction of DDR sites, provision of vocational tools and health care, are crucial to the success of the mission. It is important to take cognisance of these needs as frequently “plans are made but cannot walk” due to a lack of funds. Delays in the disbursement of funds also affect operations, and delays in delivery of commitments to former combatants, local communities and others can affect the stability of a region or country.

Operational concerns

As UN mandates for peace missions expand in scope and scale, the mission on the ground feels the pressure. For example, including provisions for the protection of civilians requires adequate material and personnel resources. An example of where the UN was unable to respond was during the recent invasion of Bukavu by Nkunda's forces in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Spreading troops more evenly across the country (or in those areas with the greatest need) limits the possibility for ex-combatants to migrate to other locations and conflicts.

Most UN missions experience problems in adapting and making logistical adjustments to operations when the situation demands it. There is therefore a need for regular communication between DPKO, mission headquarters and mission commanders on the ground. Such communication and coordination ensures that there is an acceptable level of reaction on the part of the entire mission.

Disarmament and demobilization camps (D1 and D2 camps)

The selection of campsites for disarmament and demobilization is important and can be critical to the participation of former combatants in the process. There is also a need to think through what use the camps could be put to after the UN withdraws. For example, are they located where communities can benefit if they are turned into social service centres? Ensuring the proper location of UN resources can also be an important link between DDR, the general mission mandate and national recovery imperatives of the host country.

Pressure from and on the host country and the international community can result in the DDR Plan being implemented before appropriate structures are in place. This was alleged to have been the case in Liberia in December 2003 when the SRSG insisted the mission go ahead with disarmament at a time when others were saying the mission was not ready. This led to a flow of ex-combatants from cantonment centres, who had nothing more constructive to do than engage in rioting and seriously destabilising the peace process.

Lessons from practical experience

The current mission in Liberia provides examples of what can go right and wrong during the implementation of a DDR programme. Some practical challenges relate to the identification of participants in the DDR programme: What are the criteria for eligibility in a programme and how are adequate records maintained and information shared? How can standards on who should be classified as “special groups” be better shared and the agencies responsible be identified? These criteria need to be agreed by all actors who are involved in the identification and selection process. What guidelines can be developed to assist with the repatriation of foreign combatants?

The challenge of combatant identification remains. If missions continue to rely on lists generated by the commanders of the armed groups, we will continue to have disparities between the number of weapons surrendered and the number of registered ex-combatants – is it possible for three people to share a rifle?

Lists provided by commanders are often inconsistent and are clearly used to exploit the DDR process. For example, people may agree to pay the commander part of their reintegration benefit if they are put on the list. Alternatively, the fighters with the most experience and who are most able to spoil the peace process may remain outside the DDR process by not being listed. This undermines the entire concept of DDR.

Often, post-DDR communities have high concentrations of former combatants, frequently in cities or large towns. They are there because economic prospects are perceived as brighter than in the hinterland, but their numbers swell the ranks of the already unemployed (including many IDPs), and this means that there are never enough jobs to go around. In large concentrations, this can be destabilising and affect the ability of cities and towns to provide basic services to the inhabitants. Can the urbanization phenomenon be checked?

The reintegration of former combatants requires the sensitization of communities to accept the former combatants, and of the combatants to accept the community. There is a need for better guidelines on how this can be done, by whom and how the process can be monitored.

The vocational training offered to former combatants needs to be reassessed. Often in Liberia, combatants are making choices based on short-term monetary considerations rather than taking into account longer-term needs. It has been shown that counselling on job skills and opportunities can influence skills choice – can this be improved?

The focus of DDR is sometimes lost in the desire to complete each activity. The objective should be to dismantle military structures for the belligerents and replace these with viable political structures and accountable systems of representation that will provide a peaceful avenue for the pursuit of individual and collective aspirations. Can experiences from other countries be used to develop guidelines to monitor whether or not this is occurring?

While waiting for DDR to commence, fighting forces will move off in search of other opportunities – including employment as fighters in neighbouring countries. How can implementation of DDR be changed to ensure that this does not happen?

Communication, media and public awareness⁸

The media plays a critical role during the post conflict period in any country. The media operate in the public sphere and participation of the public is largely voluntary. The media can be one of the first elements of society disrupted by violent conflict and, even prior to this, parties seek to control the media in order to influence news and opinions in their own interests. Peacebuilding, once it begins, also often takes place in a highly charged and unstable media environment, where information is scarce and often suspect.

Thus an integrated approach to peacebuilding, which takes into account the positive role the media can play, is important. The media can be used to channel information and foster public opinion in favour of supporting peace processes and building reconciliation.

For example, following the first attempt at DDR in Liberia during December 2003, UNMIL increased its radio announcements and communication outreach activities to address the ignorance of local commanders and communities on what constituted the DDR process, what benefits were available and how their participation would be structured.

Public Information in Liberia

UNMIL launched a nationwide DDDR information campaign, involving the UNMIL Public Information Section, DDDR, the force, and military observers, as well as:

- UN agencies;
- Combatants especially generals from ex-GOL, LURD, MODEL;
- NGOs, such as LINNK, WIPNET, Christian Children's Fund, Don Bosco Homes, Save the Children, and World Vision; and
- Traditional communicators - Flomo Theatre, Musicians Union of Liberia, and "Boutini" comedian.

The UNMIL Public Information Section leads on these efforts and works in support of all mission components, military and civilian. The main targets of public information are the general public, former combatants, and the international community. The main tools used are community outreach, radio, and working with the local and international media. Messages focus mainly on issues of peace and reconciliation, as well as disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration. UNMIL Radio broadcasts 24 hours a day, seven days a week, providing news and information on the peace process. The UNMIL radio signal currently has the farthest reach of any radio station in Liberia.

As is the case in any field, each country poses its own challenges with regards to the local media and any media strategy needs to be aware of and sympathetic to these local contexts. For example, the UN Preparatory Mission to Sudan reported in December 2003 that the "UN operation will require a robust and independent capacity for public information, in order to provide impartial messages about the peace process in general and the UN role in particular. Gaining the consent of the parties for the UN to communicate freely, with its own mass media assets (especially radio), is essential; this element should be included in the comprehensive peace agreements and the eventual mandate from the Security Council."

In contemplating the role of the media in peacebuilding, it is important to take advantage of all possible entry points and to think creatively of ways to use the media. Radio is generally the most influential medium during war and during peacebuilding. It is cheap to produce, has a wide reach and radio receivers

are portable and powered by batteries. The UN has started using information campaigns to complement its peace missions, for example Radio UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone, Radio Okapi in the DRC and recently UNMIL Radio in Liberia. In Liberia, the mission is concurrently running a skills-enhancement programme for local journalists.

Lessons from media, communication and public awareness

An evaluation of media interventions in peacebuilding is needed. This would provide important indications of good and bad practice in the development and running of these programmes and identify guidelines for future efforts.

It is important for the UN to be balanced in its engagement with the media and to not appear elitist or selective. The relative importance of the UN cannot be underestimated. For example in Liberia, UNMIL is the biggest source of advertising revenue in the country.

SECTION 3

DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION⁹

United Nations efforts relating to disarmament and demobilization have advanced considerably. It is acknowledged the weapons are political bargaining tools and have significance beyond their function. In addition, certain DDR concepts have developed normative status and form the core platform for disarmament and demobilization efforts.

The objectives of any disarmament intervention should be to:

- *Remove the tools of violence:* Collect, control and dispose of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons from combatants, as well as from the civilian population to prevent the eruption of armed violence and communal conflict.
- *Reduce tensions and demilitarize politics:* The insecurity generated during conflict stems from threats posed by SALW circulating in the conflict area. The availability of weapons increases the odds of combatants resorting to them to address problems rather than using dialogue and negotiations.
- *Restore the power monopoly of the state:* Limit access to and usage of arms to legitimate security forces in an environment of respect for human rights and international humanitarian law.

One of the key challenges however is in the identification of who should be disarmed. Thus, over the long term, a strategy of disarmament and arms management should encompass everybody bearing arms without legal

authority. However, during DDR processes, necessary prioritization means that belligerents as defined in a peace agreement must be disarmed. Community arms collection programmes can later be brought into consideration to disarm those outside the peace process.

Once there is clarity on those who are to be disarmed (and in current situations this is rarely clear until disarmament is underway), the process of disarmament needs to be determined. This should include the following steps:

- The broad process for disarmament is specified in the peace agreement;
- Planning is undertaken at the UN level to identify stages and processes for gathering information on force numbers, locations, force commanders, and others whose participation is critical to the success of the disarmament and demobilization stage.
- A decision is made on whether voluntary or coercive disarmament is necessary. Although the failure of coercive disarmament in Somalia and elsewhere has caused the UN to shy away from this as a method of disarmament, it may be wrong for coercive disarmament to be rejected out of hand. If voluntary disarmament is favoured, a decision must be taken on what, if any, incentive will be used to encourage participation (see challenges below).
- A decision on the process for registration, reporting, encampment and disarmament. For example, belligerent groups can report together and be disarmed individually. Modalities for collecting information on combatants and verifying the status of combatants must be decided at an early stage.

The timing and location of disarmament becomes the next issue for consideration. Often, when to disarm is stated in the peace agreement, although these timelines are frequently unrealistic and unachievable. There may thus be a need for mission planners to produce realistic and achievable

timelines, reflected in the mandate and well publicized. The principle, however, is that disarmament should take place at the earliest time possible, as delays can undermine confidence building measures, frustrate belligerents and may prompt their return to the bush to fight. However, care should also be taken to ensure that the necessary planning and preparations are made at reception centres so that the combatants can be processed smoothly and quickly.

There is ongoing discussion on the need for and duration of cantonment. As DDR programmes have broadened to include groups associated with the fighting forces (but not combatants), such as porters, cooks, wives and abductees, cantonment sites have become relocation centres where large numbers of people overwhelm the military troops and structures in place to deliver food, health care and process former combatants. However, cantonment for armed fighters is important, as it forms a critical stage in the sequence of demobilization and demilitarization necessary to move from a combatant to civilian mentality.

In terms of the identification and disbursement of reinsertion benefits, the following observations and suggestions are made.

The first is that DDR is suffering from being viewed as a moneymaking process and, most problematically, weapons are viewed as commodities that the UN will purchase for cash. While it is necessary to identify the benefits that former combatants will receive and communicate these to the affected groups, this process must be decoupled from the disarmament stage of the process.

Secondly, the immediate safety and physiological needs of combatants enrolling for DDR must be taken care of. This may also include confidence-building measures, such as buffer zones, secure corridors, mutual observation and regular communication between and among the belligerents. Reinsertion packages, social and medical assistance and reinsertion allowances may also help provide for the physiological needs of the former combatants.

Medical/psycho-social support and counselling is also important. Combatants may have been exposed to all kinds of health hazards and psychological abuse. Some, if not all, are exposed to disease (including STDs), suffer from drug addiction, or have experienced rape, torture and abduction.

Third, the needs of combatants should be analysed to identify their profile and opportunities available to them in the various communities or resettlement areas. The excessive focus on vocational training should be rectified by the identification of training in skills that are needed at a community level and can be absorbed within the economic profile of the country. For example, training in teaching, social work or basic medical care could help bring skills back into communities.

The demobilization phase leads naturally into reintegration. While demobilization often takes place in a militarized environment, it is important for demobilization planners to recognise the need for demilitarizing the mindset of the combatants to assist their entry into reintegration training programmes.

ECONOMIES AROUND DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION

In recent years, it has been recognized that many individuals have become quite adept at refurbishing old weapons to turn in for cash. A UNICEF study found a young man in Liberia with the uncommon name of Mozart who was able to go through the disarmament process numerous times in order to get cash for his 'weapons'. This highlights the need for better screening and registration processes to prevent further lapses in the programmes. Care should be taken to ensure that it is not those with the means to buy their way or those with the knowledge to con their way into the programmes who benefit, while many of the neediest are left out.

Challenges of disarmament and demobilization

Conflict complexes and regional dynamics: The effective demobilization of former combatants very much depends on stability in neighbouring countries.

For example, on-going efforts to harmonize DDR programmes in West Africa have been necessitated by the easy movement of people, weapons and goods across the conflict region. The Great Lakes region has also been recognized as posing a specific challenge, one which coordination between MONUC and ONUB, as well as the Greater Great Lakes Regional Strategy for Demobilization and Reintegration seek to address.

Restoration of confidence between belligerents: Demobilizing former combatants in an atmosphere characterized by a lack of trust, transparency and communication can undermine confidence in the DD exercise. Restoring confidence between belligerents who may end up in the same security force or the same community is essential.

Voluntary nature of disarmament: The current political will for disarmament extends only to voluntary disarmament. Although disarmament may be stipulated in the peace agreement, as well as a Security Council resolution, and therefore be considered mandatory, incentives to encourage participation are often used. Non-cash based examples include weapons for food/goods approach or weapons in exchange for development projects. This compromise might be necessary but should not be accepted without question in every situation. In cases where people refuse to disarm, diplomatic pressure may be the first option of eliciting compliance after which some enforcement measures could be used.

Planning for reform of the security sector: While there is debate about whether former combatants should form part of the security sector, the need to re-establish the security sector is recognized as important in most countries. Thus a national plan for security sector reform should be developed that relates to the DDR process so that any decision on integrating former combatants into the security forces can occur smoothly and without delaying the DDR programme, as has occurred in the DRC.

Creation of political space: If the reasons that led to war included the marginalization of specific groups from the national political scene, planning to constitute political parties as an avenue for political aspirations should be explored.

Lessons from disarmament and demobilization

DDR has become a money-making process for participants. Ex-combatants have equated DDR processes with making money by selling weapons. While a weapons buy-back programme may have a perceived short-term benefit as weapons are collected, the longer-term drawbacks are greater and include increasing the value of weapons and drawing more weapons to the area to be sold. Combatants may also stay out of the DDR process in order to traffic weapons.

The failure of disarmament and demobilization of former combatants has been a real concern, given the possibility of a recurrence of conflict. Reintegration of former combatants into society and back to their normal way of life, however, depends very much on a successful DD programme. An answer to what constitutes adequate preparation for reintegration therefore remains crucial to the entire DDR process.

The disarmament of the wider society (or at least regulated control over weapons) is a desirable outcome of a DDR/community arms collection programme that leads to a national arms management approach. While the formal process of disarmament and demobilization may be quite short, this does not mean that all weapons have been recovered or that all armed groups or individuals have participated. Thus, processes for complementary disarmament efforts should be considered, such as in Sierra Leone.

Pre-deployment training for those who will be undertaking DDR in peace missions would be very valuable. Training institutions which offer DDR courses, such as KAIPTC, should consider whether they could assist in developing such programmes to provide for pre-deployment as well as generic DDR training.

SECTION 4

REINTEGRATION – DEFINING A NEW APPROACH¹⁰

Does the current practice of DDR reduce conflict? If the perpetrators of violence are not taken out of the equation, potential conflict is torpedoed back into the centre of any new political establishment.

Another approach to demilitarization is the implementation of demilitarization through existing command structures as part of security sector reform (SSR), thus absorbing some combatant divisions into a national army or police force. Although this approach was successfully implemented in Europe following World War II, it is not appropriate for internal conflicts between non-state actors, where violent exploitation may characterize wartime and the immediate post-war period. Within these loosely organized groups, any form of bureaucratic evidence regarding combatants and units is highly unlikely. Yet these informal structures enable the manipulation of the DDR process, as the command structure of these units hijack demobilization resources, but fail to demobilize core combatant groups.

This is the case in Liberia today, where DDR is structured in such a way that commanders provide the lists of combatants to UNMIL through the NCDDR. Thus the previous perpetrators of violence have become the gatekeepers of the DDR programme, a development that was also observed during the first DDR attempt in Sierra Leone, in 1999. Access to DDR lists also provides political power as the commanders are able to gain supporters for future democratic elections.

In such circumstances there is the need for military intelligence to verify commanders' lists of combatants and to identify core combatants before DDR is started. A good test in terms of numbers might be to compare the wartime estimates of military strengths with the numbers enrolled in the DDR process. However, even here there is a blurred line between actual estimates of fighters and 'hard core' combatants.

For example, the actual number of 'hard core' combatants in the Liberia conflict from 1999-2003 numbered about 10,000; the UNMIL planning figures for DDR in early 2004 came up to 38,000 combatants; and to date UNMIL has disarmed over 50,000 combatants, with the expectation that the number will grow by an additional 10,000 before the DDR process is completed.

The current DDR programme in Liberia has largely failed to demilitarize 'hard core' combatants, like Taylor's former body guards (the State Security Service, SSS), who have a history of committing atrocities and exploitation and are still operating on the streets without being subjected to any SSR process. Considering that a rather high number of hardcore combatants has never been subjected to DDR, one might wonder how much closer the DDR programme has moved towards actual demilitarization.

The predominant focus of DDR on the reduction of weapons throws up problems regarding the definition of a combatant, as weapons have been common currency in countries like Somalia and Liberia and thus do not qualify as a parameter for defining combatant status. In addition, the cash payments for weapons attract a wide range of youth who need the money to access food, education and health resources, especially in the absence of parallel reintegration initiatives.

Overall, disarmament alone will only prevent weapons circulation in the short term and thus an effective DDR programme must focus on the more difficult

goal of demilitarization through disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants.

Consequently there is the need to combine the demilitarization of combatants with a broader recovery strategy for the victims of violence through:

- Intensive DDR focused on small group of 'hard-core combatants', who have been identified through gathered intelligence during and after the conflict.
- More widespread assistance (through DDR or other means) to include relief and rehabilitation of a majority of the war affected population.
- Broader weapon collection programmes linked to relief and rehabilitation through a general amnesty, for example.
- Political control of DDR in the hands of a civil administration.

Participatory role of national and local communities in the reintegration process

Reintegration should not be understood as an individual process, but rather as a community orientated process, as the respective host communities are playing an important role in the reintegration of the returning ex-combatants. For example, the DDR process in Uganda followed a holistic reintegration approach.

The Ugandan government carried out the demobilization and reintegration of more than 36,400 ex-combatants in the National Resistance Army (NRA), through facilitating the social and economic reintegration of these soldiers into civilian life. In addition, Uganda incorporated traditional peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives into the overall DDR structure.

Local communities have a key role to play in the successful reintegration of former combatants and they should be informed about the ongoing DDR developments through exposure to 'real life examples' of people who are directly affected by DDR. Again, Uganda was used as an example where ex-combatants went on the radio to tell their own story, thus reaching more people than the official press briefings. Local reconciliation customs and practices should be supported and incorporated into the overall structure of DDR programmes. This would require better access of funds to local communities and could include direct international funding towards local communities. Within this context the symbolic value demobilization and demilitarization of combatants can have for local communities should be recognized and, in some cases, the establishment of reconciliation processes such as truth and reconciliation commissions should be supported.

In terms of national ownership and control of DDR, the DDR process in Côte d'Ivoire underlines the importance of national ownership in formulating and implementing reintegration programmes. The national commission of Côte d'Ivoire decides the relevant steps in the DDR process with the support of the international community.

Multi-agency initiatives

DDR also needs to link up with existing recovery frameworks (e.g. refugee resettlement, relief and development initiatives such as interim Poverty Reduction Strategies), to enhance the success of the DDR programme. Cooperation between DDR and development initiatives are important elements in enabling parallel processes of social and economic integration and demilitarization. Joint approaches that were practised in Burundi and the Republic of the Congo were given as examples.

Rethinking existing reintegration procedures

Commanders and combatants need to go through different reintegration procedures. Further, the need for military intelligence to differentiate between combatants and criminals is critical as this can result in different reintegration measures (supportive or punitive).

While the weapon criterion is still dominant for identifying combatants, it may not always be appropriate. Weapons collection is a short-term aspect of demilitarization and a broader framework is needed for long-term demilitarization and reintegration of ex-combatants, if the weapons are to be permanently taken out of the equation.

Regarding the reintegration of combatants into the national army through a general security/army reform, such absorbing measures should only be applied in cases where the ex-combatants represented only a small group of people, for example in Burundi. El Salvador was introduced as a positive example for a successful UN mission (ONUSAL). In El Salvador, the economic and social reintegration of ex-combatants was effectively implemented through an extensive land transfer programme, where ex-combatants became farmers.

The commanders of fighting forces are often considered part of the group of ex-combatants and not recognised for the unique responsibility they hold. It is important therefore to identify special treatment of commanders, as the reintegration of commanders and unit decommissioning are key elements of strategies for security and future stability. This is explored in more detail in Section 5.

Lessons from reintegration

It was recognized that comparatively little is known about reintegration in DDR, and especially about the long-term effects of reintegration on national recovery. Although there are instances of “bad” DDR and a few of “good” DDR, the qualitative information necessary for better analysis and development of guidelines is generally lacking.

However, it is recognized that effective DDR must include the state of peace, human rights and security in society to ensure success of long-term reintegration procedures, and that civilian authority needs to control DDR programmes.

SECTION 5

WORKING WITH SPECIAL GROUPS¹¹

There are a number of guiding questions that may help frame some of the discussions about 'special groups', in the DDR process. Some of these include: Who should be disarmed, demobilized, and reintegrated? Should the process be sequential? Does reintegration work? Or indeed what is reintegration for special groups?

Additionally there is scope to discuss the training needs of operational actors in dealing with 'special groups,' perhaps in the disarmament and demobilization phases in particular. And should the needs of core commanders and core fighters in the armed groups be prioritized? This is a debate that is increasingly of concern as successive DDR processes are deemed to have failed or only partially succeeded.

The debate has raged and was starkly defined during the workshop with military presenters clearly preferring to deal only with armed combatants while the humanitarian/non military participants favour a wider definition of who should be included in the reintegration phase, in addition to the disarmament and/or demobilization phases.

Even if those who are eligible for official DDR programmes are limited to only those who are 'combatants', we still face the issue of how we define a 'combatant' and additionally what qualifies the 'combatant' for disarmament and demobilization. Then, once these criteria have been established, how do we properly identify these individuals and ensure that only the genuine ones get through?

The reintegration needs are probably greater for the non-combatants associated with the fighting groups/forces. These non-combatants include: children, workers, domestics, sex slaves, human shields, camp followers, and abductees. However, unless they pass through the disarmament and demobilization phases they are unlikely to be identified or come to the attention of agencies working on reintegration, in fact they may well be totally excluded or worse, still remain in captivity or situations of subservience perpetuating the command structure after the military elements have been disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated.

Priority must be given to those who are in the groups/forces illegally (children under fifteen years old, slaves, abductees, and prisoners of war). Vulnerable groups such as children, women (particularly those used for sexual services), the elderly, the wounded, and the insane among the fighting forces/groups, combatants and non-combatants alike should also be prioritized. We must also ensure that core commanders go through the process and not just manage it.

All of these issues have huge implications for DDR and the type of training and skills needed by those at disarmament and demobilization sites. The one-man-one gun policy leaves out vulnerable groups and puts them at risk of remaining invisible or even in the informal/remnant command structure. In this context, it was suggested that the military work with humanitarian actors to assist with tasks such as the identification of children, traumatized combatants and women. On the other hand, including all individuals associated with the armed forces/groups makes nonsense of the military objectives set by most DDR programmes, turning the process into a humanitarian activity which revolves around visibility. The counterpoint to this view is that disarmament and demobilization processes, as they stand now, work against the victims, people associated with the forces, and often against the offended communities if they are seen to reward fighters.

Sequencing and the uniformity of the process

The way we talk about 'DDR' suggests that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is a linear process that takes place after a conflict. However, the realities of many situations and programmes are that people move in and out of armed forces/groups at different stages of a conflict, even at different points in the year. Child demobilization has been possible in many countries prior to the conclusion of conflict, but there has rarely been any disarmament associated with these activities.

DDR processes do require specific planning for each and every 'special group', their needs have to be taken into consideration at pick up points, at disarmament sites, in terms of discrepancies about access to weapons and how they are registered at demobilization sites in terms of screening, encampment, move to family tracing centres and their return.

Is there a case for saying that changing the sequence of DDR would circumvent the need for specific targeting of 'special groups'? Reintegration which targets communities throughout the conflict, during the peace process, and beyond may create the prerequisite environment where 'special groups' feel they no longer need the armed forces as their social and economic needs can begin to be addressed.

Equally, reintegration options and development activities remove the justification used by many forces for the presence of children, camp followers, elderly and sick among them and provide an opportunity for them to be filtered out if their presence is genuinely about social welfare. If the factions claim that their grievances are about lack of equal opportunities to services and development programmes, reintegration activities can start before DD or in tandem; combatants and others who have freedom of movement will be drawn away from the armed forces without incentive-led DD.

Equally, in societies and communities where it is culturally accepted that each and every household owns weapons and each and every adult (male) is considered a combatant, what is the value of a formal DD component? Is it not possible that alternative options would actually attract genuine removal of people from the fighting forces who see the value of such options, but who would be prone to reject involvement in a process against their will or better judgment?

Providing DD for 'special groups' in armed forces can legitimize illegal recruitment. Passing children under 15 through a DDR process can put up the numbers of soldiers in one faction or another to improve their post-conflict bargaining power. However, the very presence of the children is illegal, and those who recruited them or allowed them into the forces should be considered war criminals.

In Sierra Leone, the DDR process was largely considered a success by the international community. However, out of the estimated 48,216 children involved in the armed forces, only 7,000 went through official demobilization programmes. This significant disparity was especially pronounced with girls and women who were even less likely to go through the process. This example clearly illustrates the shortcomings surrounding the inclusion of special groups, such as children who move with the forces/groups (orphans, separated, workers), women who move with the forces/groups (workers, domestics, sex slaves), human shields, camp followers, and abductees, within DDR programmes. The exclusion of these groups has serious humanitarian as well as security implications which in turn directly affect future peace prospects in a region.

Who should be demobilized?

It is clear that all those attached to the armed factions in supporting or abusive roles should be included in the demobilization phase of the DDR process. This would encourage the visibility of hitherto marginalized groups within

DDR processes and would allow them to take part in the reintegration programmes. However, this process should be managed so that certain groups (combatants and commanders) are tracked into more focused disarmament and demobilization stages, while associated groups move more quickly into reintegration.

Vulnerable groups

The demobilization phase is significant because currently it is a catalyst for those who will be allowed to continue through and benefit from the reintegration programmes. However, it is also where the exclusion of special groups continues (it usually begins in the disarmament phase). Although most DDR practitioners acknowledge the existence of 'special groups' and the need for their inclusion in the DDR process, this knowledge has not been translated into implemented policy on the ground.

Many past and current DDR programmes still have a one-person-one-gun policy on paper, meaning that in order to take part in the programmes an individual must turn in a weapon, although in practice there is a more liberal interpretation of the policy. Most domestics, sex slaves, human shields and camp followers do not have weapons and hence no need to be disarmed. However, by not going through the disarmament process, they are not identified by the UN or NGOs working in the cantonment areas. Additionally, when weapons are indeed actually shared by combatants, individuals such as child and female soldiers do not have the bargaining power within the groups/forces to obtain one of these to turn in. Ironically, these are the individuals who often have the greatest reintegration needs, but are unlikely to come to the attention of agencies working in this area. In fact, many remain captive, perpetuating the abusive command structure after the stronger military elements have been disarmed, demobilized, and reintegrated.

Core commanders

Another group that is often overlooked but can be detrimental to peace prospects are the core commanders and their followers, who often manage the DDR process but do not go through it themselves. This point was painfully illustrated in Liberia where, arguably, the most notorious core commander/“political leader”, Charles Taylor, never went through the process. Instead, he was given a position in the interim government until his “victory” in the flawed elections of 1997. While some may argue that previous DDR efforts in Sierra Leone have succeeded, others argue that key core commanders and their factions failed to go through the process. Today, the Sierra Leonean National Army contains many who fought to overthrow the current President, Tejan Kabbah, the man whom they are now charged with protecting.

Thus it is critical that every core commander, as well as the rank and file fighters, go through some form of disarmament and demobilization programme even if they will eventually be reintegrated into a national army. A break between old and new service must become an essential component of the DDR process and should not be compromised for the sake of political expedience or perceived short-term security needs.

Sequencing and prioritising

The sequencing and uniformity of the DDR process are also important. There is a greater need for flexibility within DDR programmes. For example, removing children from armed forces must be a priority; their presence is a violation of the Geneva Conventions, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as other instruments of international law. Simply removing them from fighting forces is not enough, however. Proper alternative care must be in place beforehand.

Additionally, special priority must be given to the additional 'special groups'. While most practitioners are in agreement with this point, the question of how is still debatable. To begin with, there is a need to clarify the categories of 'special groups'. Beyond that, there is a need for better intelligence gathering in order to identify and locate the special groups; a Certified Personnel Register (CPR) would be ideal, but is admittedly unlikely to be produced by faction leaders.

Lessons from working with special groups

While strides have been made towards including special groups in DDR programmes, the level of success achieved is still rather low. Vulnerable groups need to be recognized, located, and included in reintegration programmes, while the core commanders must not be exempt from DDR.

Children under fifteen represent a unique challenge and must be removed from armed forces whenever possible. The specialized agencies that work with children, such as UNICEF and Save the Children, should be brought into DDR planning to identify how opportunities to remove children can be created.

Meeting the needs of special groups requires flexibility in the sequencing of DDR programmes as *ad hoc* and sporadic opportunities may arise to remove certain individuals or groups without a fully-fledged DDR programme being in place. This requires that resources are readily available for such initiatives and demands a high level of coordination and cooperation among agencies.

The needs of special groups, how to identify and adequately respond to these needs, and monitoring the reintegration of individuals from special groups into post conflict societies needs to be better understood and analysed.

SECTION 6

DEVELOPING MULTI-ACTOR COORDINATION¹²

The need for coordination among the actors involved in DDR processes has been widely recognized. However, while an increasingly coordinated UN approach applies to peace missions in general, less coherence is found in actions focused on DDR. For many actors, DDR programming is limited to sectoral or project-oriented interventions.

In the past two decades, many UN agencies have gained considerable experience in DDR, and the current high profile of DDR programmes means that political support and donor resources are generally available. However, this also puts pressure on those planning DDR to deliver effective programmes.

Mechanisms for coordination

Currently the UN and its agencies lack the structure needed to plan, manage and monitor DDR operations. This has been the motivation for collaboration between the agencies to develop usable policies, guidelines and operating procedures for DDR.

Coordination between international, regional and national organizations is also essential for effective DDR to take place. The challenge is to ensure synergy and cooperation between various actors.

Key features of the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme:

- Joint Assessment Missions
- Multi-partner DDR technical committees
- Positioning national counterparts at the centre
- Drawing together of multiple funding sources
- Development of common strategy and programme

Advantages:

- Opens cooperation between UNDP and World Bank.
- Single Trust Fund creates coherence.
- Multi-agency cooperation aimed at quick responses

A sound basis for taking forward collaboration is provided in a paper by the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs on Harnessing Institutional Capacities in Support of DDR, which was published in July 2000. This paper confirmed that:

- DDR is complex and multidimensional;
- The UN system needs to be flexible enough to respond to a range of circumstances; and
- It is necessary to explore the contributions of partners outside the UN system.

The surge in DDR operations since 2000 has necessitated the re-examination of the UN's role. Thus UNDP is codifying policy and practice, UNDP and DPKO are agreeing to "integrated missions" (for example, in Haiti, Liberia and Sudan) and they are working on the development of UN-wide guidelines and operating procedures.

The new approach also recognizes that national ownership is the foundation of a successful DDR programme, including the support of the parties to the conflict. Too often, the role of national partners has been limited to technical management and service delivery. The hope is that eventually a national

organization, rather than an international organization, will take responsibility for the DDR process.

Time limits placed on mandates by the international community threaten continuity. It is more manageable for the international community to be involved in a mission for a short period, but the reality is that today's missions go beyond securing the peace to long-term rebuilding of collapsed states and economies.

There is nevertheless a need to sensitize donors to the fact that DDR cannot encompass everything or become a means of delivery for national recovery programmes. For example, with the focus on DDR, refugee issues have fallen off the map. There is a need to continue to engage the international community in ensuring that DDR planning and funding is linked to other issues of national recovery. There is a lot of donor resistance to mixed mandates. Though clear and limited mandates enable a clear point of exit, they also limit the impact and scope of international support due to the fact that complex emergencies that engage the UN today have multiple needs and challenges that go beyond traditional international engagement and funding.

Finally, NGOs should be considered as more active partners in coordination. For example, an NGO coordinating committee could become a way for a network of NGOs to engage with the UN and other actors on issues such as DDR. Individuals with specific expertise should also be included in assessment missions, including locals with specific country knowledge. However, it is equally important for NGOs to consider what value their work adds to DDR and to identify ways in which their contributions can be made sustainable for local communities and to engage local partners in projects.

Lessons from multi-actor coordination

There are many sources of information that can be used for DDR planning and these should be better identified and utilized. For example, often UN country teams are not brought into the DDR planning process but have valuable insights on the country concerned. Teams can also be brought from neighbouring countries to assist with DDR assessments, especially in regions such as West Africa where a large amount of DDR experience has been generated.

DDR strategies should be integrated into broader country strategies, especially the recovery strategies that are often being developed whilst peace missions are being planned and implemented.

Cooperation among actors should start early. For example, immense effort has gone into planning for Sudan, giving a much clearer understanding of the conflict, the challenges of DDR and the role of different agencies in implementing the DDR programme.

Consideration should be given to positioning DDR advisers or multi-actor teams in the field before the start of the DDR process to ensure that DDR is included in the peace agreement, provide technical assistance, prepare the ground for national ownership, undertake community sensitisation campaigns to gain local support for the peace process and identify opportunities for civil society to participate in planning and implementation.

It is easy for DDR to be thrown off track. This can be due to the peace process stalling, lack of funds, or simply bad weather. Better planning can overcome some of these hurdles. For example, funding for DDR should be better streamlined and budgets should be more flexible to allow for changes or amendments. In addition, securing funding for reintegration is critical – but

often difficult, as funding interest wanes after the threat posed by demobilizing ex-combatants disappears. Local level planning tools, such as Management Information Systems for registering and profiling ex-combatants and registering and maintaining stockpile locations of weapons should be more widely used.

DDR programmes need to be monitored and evaluated as a routine matter and the lessons learned fed back into policy development and planning processes.