

Stabilisation Issues Note

Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration

Purpose

Stabilisation Issues Notes provide a short summary of what the Stabilisation Unit has learned to date. They have been developed on the basis of experience and are aimed at improving the effectiveness of our practical engagement in various aspects of stabilisation. They are aimed primarily at the Stabilisation Unit's own practitioners and consultants, and those of other HMG departments. They are not a formal statement of HMG policy.

This Issues Note gives readers a basic understanding of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), so that they are in a position to consider whether DDR is an appropriate stabilisation intervention. It clarifies questions, issues and articulates the decisions that the practitioner may face with when considering a DDR programme. This note should be read in conjunction with *Post-Conflict Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration: A UK View*, and with other Stabilisation Issues Notes, particularly those on Security and rule of Law and Economic Recovery.

Key Messages

- Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) is often a necessary prerequisite to stabilisation, immediate safety and security and to longer term and more permanent security and development.
- DDR can be implemented on a country wide, regional or area basis depending upon the nature of the conflict. Effective DDR requires that ex-combatants are socially, economically and politically re-integrated into society.
- DDR is highly political, and any DDR programme¹ must be part of a peace settlement and positioned within a process of political transformation. Ineffective DDR programmes can undermine peace agreements, aggravate instability and inhibit development.
- DDR alone cannot prevent conflict from recurring; nor should it be viewed as the only mechanism to bring stability to a country after conflict. DDR is one part of a raft of complementary stabilisation interventions, including broader security and justice reform, and efforts to promote economic recovery. Depending on the situation, some form of transitional justice may also be needed
- DDR programmes should be community-focussed. Community engagement will help ensure that DDR supports stabilisation and peace-building, by building trust and relationships between groups and reducing the likelihood of resettlement of ex-combatants leading to tensions and violent conflict.

¹ DDR of children should happen immediately and not wait for a peace agreement. See below for more detailed guidance.

- DDR is a long-term process. Reintegration in particular can take years if not decades. Planning for reintegration must start as early as possible, before disarmament and demobilisation starts, and sufficient resources must be made available.
- DDR programmes require the definition of eligibility criteria to regulate who will receive benefits. Eligibility requirements should be tailored to the objectives of the DDR process and the operational environment in which they are implemented.
- UN Security Council Resolution 1325 commits the international community to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants in the planning for DDR.
- Child disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration need to be systematically incorporated into DDR, guided by the Paris Principles and Guidelines, as well as the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Child recruitment and use in armed conflict is always a violation of child rights.

What is DDR?

The objective of the DDR process is to contribute to security and stability in post-conflict environments so that recovery and development can begin. The DDR of ex-combatants is a complex process, with political, military, security, humanitarian, social and economic dimensions. It aims primarily to deal with the post-conflict security problem that arises when ex-combatants are left without livelihoods or support networks, other than their former comrades, during the vital transition period from conflict to peace and development. Through a process of removing weapons from the hands of combatants, taking the combatants out of military structures and helping them to integrate socially and economically into civil society, DDR seeks to support ex-combatants so that they can become active participants in building peace. As such, DDR can also make a broader contribution to stabilisation and peacebuilding. It is important to note that DDR alone cannot resolve conflict or prevent violence (indeed, done badly it can make these more likely); it can, however, help establish a secure environment so that other elements of a recovery and peace-building strategy can proceed.

The three constituent activities of DDR are defined as follows:

Disarmament is the collection, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population (UNDDR, 2007) It also includes small arms management programmes. Disarmament in war to peace transition is a symbolic test of commitment of all parties to the peace process.

Demobilisation is the process by which armed groups (government and/or opposition or factional forces) downsize or completely disband, as part of a broader transformation from war to peace. Typically, demobilisation involves two stages:

- Processing individual combatants in temporary centres or designated camps (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks) where disarmament may occur if it has not already occurred. At this stage identity data is collected, and civilian identification documents may be issued. There may also be needs/capacity assessments of former combatants; and
- Providing reinsertion support, i.e. short term material or financial assistance to help cover the basic needs of ex-combatants and their families for up to a year after demobilisation. This can include transitional financial allowances, food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short term education, training, employment and tools. Demobilisation might also include repatriation or return to places of origin.

Reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status, resettle (in new areas, or in areas they came from or where they have family), and become part of civilian communities and society. Ex-combatants will normally receive some form of transitional financial/material support (reinsertion packages can include cash, food, clothes, shelter, cooking equipment and tools). Longer-term reintegration programmes can then include: psycho-social support; vocational training; job placements or apprenticeships; business start-ups; micro-finance; and other income generating activities to help them secure sustainable civilian employment. Reintegration programmes also support communities, focussing on building trust and resolving tensions between individuals and groups who may have been in violent conflict with one another, and are complemented by other recovery and development initiatives which boost local economies to enable them to absorb ex-combatants.

DDR and Stabilisation

Stabilisation is about ending or preventing the recurrence of violent conflict, and creating the conditions for non-violent politics. Stabilisation usually requires external joint military and civilian support, a focus on the legitimacy and capability of the state, and tangible benefits to the population to underpin confidence in the state and the political process. There is no predetermined period for stabilisation, with some countries undergoing this phase over many years. Stabilisation can be broken down as support to countries emerging from violent conflict to:

- Prevent or reduce violence;
- Protect people and key institutions;
- Promote political processes which lead to greater stability; and
- Prepare for longer term non-violent politics and development.

In some stabilisation situations, outsiders also need to be prepared to play an enforcement role even in the absence of a peace deal, often taking on an insurgency. In these situations, forced disarmament is unlikely to be sustainable.

In the immediate aftermath of violent conflict, former combatants can pose a serious challenge to peace and security. DDR is often seen primarily in terms of its visible and measurable elements, i.e. the numbers of ex-combatants disarmed, demobilised, and provided with economic support. It is, however, the intangible aspects – the trust and non-

violent relationships built between ex-combatants and communities (who have often been severely affected by the conflict) during the reintegration process – that make the real contribution to stabilisation and longer-term peacebuilding.

DDR and Women

It is increasingly recognised that women comprise a significant part of armed forces and armed groups. As well as being directly involved in fighting, women perform essential support functions such as portering, washing, cooking and child-care, and they are often kept in armed groups as sexual objects. Women are often invisible in DDR programming except as dependents. This can be because of assumptions made by those carrying out registration for DDR programmes, where identification of eligible group members depends on lists provided by commanders that do not include women, or because they do not know that they are eligible for the programme. DDR programmes are often not relevant to women's needs (such as reproductive health services), focussing on income generation for the ex-combatant, and women who are unmarried or have been forcibly 'married' within an armed group may find it difficult to secure assistance as a 'head of household' with dependents in their own right.

International law and standards state that women should not be discriminated against on the basis of their sex – including in the delivery of assistance such as DDR assistance. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 also specifies that DDR programmes should take account of the different needs and experiences of women and men. DDR programmes need, therefore, to reflect the presence of women associated with armed forces or groups in whatever capacity. This will mean designing and planning DDR programmes that are accessible and relevant to women and girls, encourage them to present themselves and do not address them only as dependents of male fighters. The best way to find out what women need and how to make the programming relevant to them is to ask them, either directly or through other women.

Impact of DDR on women in Afghanistan

There has been no attempt to understand the impact of DDR on women, but there are clear negative effects on households. First, as former combatants are often left waiting at home for several months for their reintegration packages to start, stresses on the relations within the households and wider support networks increase. Secondly, women and children often had to care for fields and livestock whilst their husbands were attached to their armed units. Now, the units have been disbanded men are not necessarily taking on these tasks again and women and children continue to do much of the work. The benefits of the programme, such as the provision of animals or seeds, often means an increase in women's workloads without corresponding increases for the men who are supposed to be the beneficiaries.

Source: (2006:4) Rossi, S and Giustozzi, A *Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Ex-combatants in Afghanistan: Constraints and Limited Capabilities*. LSE Crisis States Research Centre.

Particular consideration should be given to the impact of reintegration of women and children.

DDR programmes should ensure that women in communities are not excessively burdened by having to cope with returning combatants and their dependents. For instance, asking women in the community what would be an appropriate reinsertion package can avoid making mistakes that lead, for instance, to an upsurge in prostitution and other violence against women. It can also help ensure that the community benefits from the return of ex-combatants, easing their reintegration.

DDR and Children

The recruitment and use of children in violent conflict is a violation of international human rights and humanitarian law. It is contrary to international law for armed groups to recruit or use children under 18, and recruiting or using children under 15 is a war crime. Nevertheless, internationally about 250-300,000 children are used by armed forces and groups. They may be engaged in active combat or perform essential support services such as pottering, weapons maintenance or cooking. Girls and boys may be used as 'sex slaves'. Girls may have had babies as a result of rape while with the armed group. It is up to armed forces and groups to ensure that no children are in their ranks.

Because child recruitment and use is always a violation, their DDR should not wait for a peace agreement or be dependent in any way on the progress of adult DDR programmes or SSR. Even while the conflict is raging, no effort should be spared to get children out of armed forces and groups.

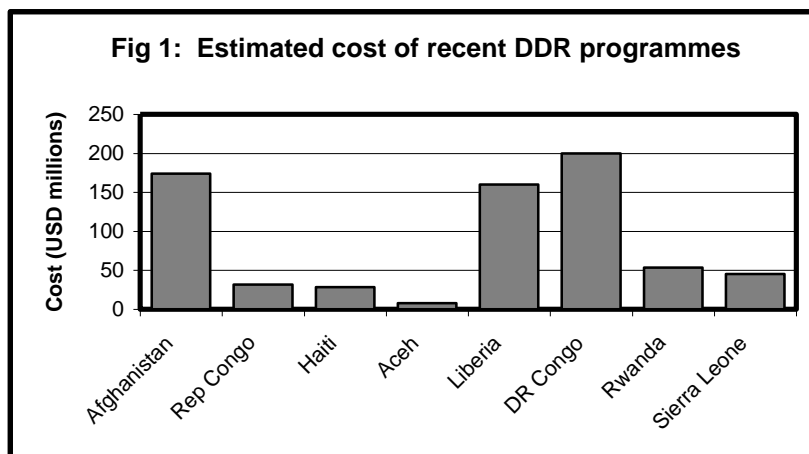
Where there are parallel child and adult DDR programmes they should be harmonised so that children are not put at a disadvantage because of their age and so that young women and men who were recruited as children can be catered for appropriately. Where children are demobilised along with adults, they must be separated at the earliest opportunity and they must be disassociated from the command structure of the armed group. Attention must be paid to children's particular needs, for example family tracing and reunification, psycho-social or health needs. Cantonment is not suitable for children and they should be transferred as soon as practicable and safe to alternative care facilities, then home whenever possible. Cash payments should never be made to children.

Child DDR is complex and carries its own sensitivities. UNICEF and its child protection partners have many years of experience in this regard and their lead should be followed. The Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups provide comprehensive guidance on children's DDR.

Costs of DDR

DDR programmes are expensive and there is often a significant difference between the proposed budget and the amount actually available. Figure 1 gives an estimate of the costs of DDR programmes undertaken since 1995. DDR takes place in dynamic environments where situations change and flexible funding from donors is essential. Typically, donors contribute to trust funds for DDR, managed by the UN or World Bank. In

stabilisation situations where individual donor countries are very active, these donors may contribute the majority of resources and manage them in direct partnership with the national government. Commitment by donors to reintegration assistance, including creating an enabling environment for reintegration, is usually insufficient. Costs of DDR are often calculated on a per ex-combatant basis, and initiatives to increase opportunities in the community, such as through employment creation, are under funded.



Source: Analysis of DDR programmes in 2005, Albert Caramés, Vincenç Fisas and Daniel Luz, Escola de Cultura de Pau, Feb. 2006 in HMG (2006) Post-Conflict Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration: A UK View.

DDR Actors

The UK supports, but does not directly implement a number of DDR programmes including in Afghanistan, Sudan and the Great Lakes. The UK has a particular interest in DDR when UK troops are in theatre. As the UK will be one of several actors involved in DDR, planning must involve coordination and task allocation between partners. Where the UK has been actively involved in the conflict as a fighting force, there may be legal constraints on certain aspects of its involvement in DDR.

The overall management and co-ordination of a DDR programme is usually undertaken by a national commission or authority. The national commission should be representative and involve all key actors where possible.

The main international DDR actors are the UN and the World Bank. Bilateral donors often support these multilateral institutions. For example, the Multi-Country Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme for 9 countries in the Greater Great Lakes Region are managed by the World Bank and UN, with donor countries offering funding and advice.

The UN's Interagency Working Group (IAWG) on DDR involves representatives of 15 UN agencies, including Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Regional organisations, such as the EU, OSCE, ECOWAS and the AU have also been involved in DDR programmes. There can be considerable competition between

international organisations mandated to undertake DDR. In most DDR programmes, NGOs act as implementing partners for the reintegration component.

Peacekeeping missions often have a major role to play in DDR. The DDR components of peacekeeping missions work closely with the military and police components. Early DDR requirements are factored into both military and police planning processes such as force generation and security assessment. The military can contribute to DDR in the provision of security, gathering and distribution of information and the technical aspects of disarmament. In addition, military capabilities can be used to provide various aspects of logistic support, including camp construction, communications, transport and emergency medical assistance, if spare capacity is available. The relevance of policing to DDR is two-pronged: crime control, law and order, and security; and police reform/restructuring in the post-conflict period.

DDR as part of the State Led National Poverty Reduction Strategy in Rwanda

Rwanda's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) was launched in 2002 after four years of preparation. The PRSP is the country's most important policy planning document, with government and the international community working within its rubric. It is the guiding plan for the country's political and socio-economic development. The PRSP recognises the unique reintegration challenges posed by the high numbers of ex-combatants that have gone through the DDR process.

The need to support demobilisation poses a specific challenge. Demobilised soldiers are a valuable human resource, often possessing organisational skills. It is critical that this group has economic opportunities, and some temporary support will be provided to help them reintegrate into civilian life.

Two major forms of support have been given. First, there has been a 'safety net' cash payment for demobilised Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) soldiers. The allowance needed to support a veteran for ten months is estimated at Rwf 90,000 for shelter and Rwf 270,000 for living costs. An allowance of this kind will be paid to demobilised RPA soldiers. Secondly, since 1999 support was provided in the form of formal and vocational education (provided by the Veterans Vocational Centre in Butare), microfinance and toolkits.

There is also a need to allocate land for those veterans who wish to return to rural areas (as the majority do) and have no land already. All returnees need this form of support. Additionally, health support needs to be provided including voluntary HIV testing and counselling, and information for behavioural change.

Policy issues arising are:

- The level of the safety net allowance needs to be set at an affordable level, given the numbers of people who will qualify for it.
- The kind of training provided needs to be linked to the private sector's demand for skills and integrated into the general policy on training and employment generation.
- The strategy for community-based labour-intensive public works, will offer opportunities for ex-soldiers to exercise their practical and organisational skills.

Source: Government of Rwanda (2002:58) *National Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.

Ensuring DDR is Appropriate to the Context

DDR programmes are often one of the first forms of international assistance in stabilisation contexts. Yet their design and implementation can be complex. Few have been judged to be wholly successful; few impact assessments have been conducted; and in some cases there are doubts as to whether DDR should have been undertaken at all. Before embarking on a DDR programme, it is essential to consider whether DDR is appropriate to the political, economic and security context in the country or region, and what level and nature of resources will be required to make a sustainable impact.

Often, DDR programmes fail because of insufficient understanding of the local context and culture. For many potential beneficiaries of DDR, disarmament equates to surrender or being fired. Therefore, DDR as a term can have unfortunate connotations. In such circumstances, it may be helpful to talk about arms management or decommissioning, or promoting alternative livelihoods.

Linking DDR to a Peace Agreement and Political Transformation

In the aftermath of conflict there is usually pressure to commence DDR as soon as possible. DDR planning should commence during, rather than after peace negotiations, and peace settlements should ideally outline the broad aims of DDR, giving particular attention to how DDR will be undertaken, who will benefit and over what timeframe. A dilemma may be that difficulty to agree such detail may dissuade parties from signing up to a peace settlement. Conversely, if DDR is not covered by a peace settlement, parties could, with some justification, claim that they did not sign up to the details of the DDR programme. Achieving the right balance is difficult; the earlier these discussions start, the better.

Focussing on Communities

DDR programmes should not overburden communities in which ex-combatants resettle, but nor should they overly privilege ex-combatants in relation to the wider civilian population. Where communities in which ex-combatants are resettling have been severely affected by violence, there may also need to be some form of transitional justice. This can take the form of 'truth and reconciliation' commissions but, more often (particularly for children), takes place through local level ceremonies and traditions. Understanding and supporting these dynamics can promote broader stabilisation and peacebuilding processes, by transforming the relationships between groups and individuals.

National Ownership and Leadership of DDR

National actors, including national governments, the former armed opposition and members of civil society, should assume leadership and responsibility for decisions about objectives, policies, strategies, programme design and implementation modalities. Ideally, the state should lead DDR, but its role has to be balanced by its often inadequate institutional and administrative capacity to deliver, as well as potentially questionable

legitimacy. International support should promote, not undermine, national leadership and responsibility.

DDR within the Context of Wider Security and Justice Sector Reform (SSR)

DDR is likely to fail if it is being implemented in an environment where the potential target groups feel insecure in terms of a perceived or real threat of violence from other parties and a perceived or real inadequacy of protection measures offered. Hence, it is important that the DDR process is coordinated with broader security sector reform (SSR) where the latter is planned or ongoing. These issues should be addressed by the peace settlement, but where a peace agreement is lacking, the immediate security vacuum must be addressed, including through DDR, while considering the future security needs of the country.

Whether and how to incorporate former combatants into national military forces is a complex issue. This may be an appropriate temporary measure, but goes against the aim of downsizing a national military after war fighting. Care must also be taken to ensure that those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law are not integrated into the national armed forces but are dealt with appropriately.

DDR requires a legal framework – not just the terms of a ceasefire or peace agreement. Transitional governments in stabilisation contexts are hard pressed to enact legislation. It may be that the pre-conflict legislation or the military justice code can provide an effective framework of law, to underpin the discipline and authority required during DDR. International law provides a useful and necessary framework.

Eligibility for DDR Assistance

The immediate goal of a DDR programme is to ensure security in an immediate post-conflict environment, by eliminating the threat posed by former combatants. Although of wider benefit to society, DDR programmes should not be seen as support programmes for the entire conflict-affected population, or a tool for socio-economic recovery. They need to be complemented by such programmes, which should be designed concurrently and adequately funded. DDR programmes have to be clear about the primary target group, eligibility criteria and benefits to be offered. These must be communicated to all groups affected by a DDR process.

While the peace agreement will generally state or otherwise indicate which armed forces and armed groups² will participate in DDR, the development of detailed and transparent eligibility criteria for individual combatants to enter into the programme is a priority in the initial assessment and planning phase. These criteria should avoid allowing persons to enter the programme only where they have surrendered weapons or ammunition. Rather, the criteria should be based on tests to determine an individual's membership of an armed force or group. All those who are found to be members of an armed force or group, whether they were involved in active combat or in support roles (such as cooks, porters,

² "Armed forces" refers to the national / state armed forces. "Armed groups" are distinct from these (Art. 4 Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict to the Convention on the Rights of the Child)

messengers, administrators, sex slaves and 'war wives'), shall be considered part of the armed force or group and therefore shall be included in the DDR programme.

Cash Packages as Reinsertion Benefits

Reinsertion assistance can last up to one year, while reintegration aims to be more sustainable. The choice of cash packages for reinsertion is controversial as ex-combatants have sometimes spent money on items with little positive impact, including weapons. Cash should never be given to children. However, some practitioners now believe that cash payments are simpler and more effective for adult ex-combatants than other forms of transitional assistance such as food or goods. Serial payments, or even micro-finance, over a longer period may offset some negative impacts. If cash is used, the emphasis should be on the payment as a needs allowance. It can also be given to the family, rather than to the ex-combatant alone.

Delays in Delivering Reintegration Packages in Afghanistan

In 2005, there were nearly 2,500 former combatants in the north who have been waiting for 6 months [for their reintegration packages] and both they and their communities were extremely angry over the delay which had put them in a financially precarious situation and caused unnecessary social stress on their communities. The responsibility for the delay lay largely with the donors and Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme who did not sign the contracts for the reintegration packages until two months after most of the soldiers had been disarmed.

Source: Dennys, C (2005:4) Disarmament, Demobilisation and Rearmament? *The Effects of Disarmament in Afghanistan*. Japan Afghan NGO Network

The Need for Effective Reintegration

DDR programmes are often undermined because of lack of sustainable reintegration. Reintegration is viewed by many as the final component of DDR; after the initial urgency to begin disarmament and demobilisation, inevitably attention begins to turn elsewhere once they have been undertaken. Conceptually, reintegration should be viewed as an ongoing activity that is bolstered by ongoing SSR, peacebuilding and development initiatives. However, in the past, commitments to reintegration initiatives have proved too short and have become unsustainable. In addition, reintegration activities are often cut short due to funding difficulties and the assumption that other programmes will support reintegration. Getting the balance between targeted assistance to one group, and investing in overall economic recovery and development is especially difficult when stability is fragile and the economy weak. Research will be required to understand what types of reintegration activities will work in the context.

In many cases there is a significant time lag between the disarmament/demobilisation and reintegration components (and the reintegration support). This may cause combatants and communities to lose faith in the programme and those who are delivering it, and give them cause to rejoin/reform an armed group and/or participate in banditry or other criminal activity.

Reintegration programmes should recognise that former combatants have capacities that can contribute to the social, political and economic development of a country emerging from conflict. Reintegrating ex-combatants into impoverished communities, without activities to increase communities' absorption capacity, will undermine the DDR programme and can place additional burdens on community members, particularly women. Hence, reintegration activities and benefits should not just be limited to the ex-combatants; their families and receiving communities also benefit. Without this, communities may perceive ex-combatants to be uniquely privileged by the DDR process, and this may undermine stability.

DDR contributes to create a 'peace dividend' which will become more substantial as longer term development initiatives are rolled out. In the stabilisation context development gains are frequently absent, so consideration should be given to Quick Impact Projects and similar initiatives, as well as to longer-term economic recovery programmes. Box 3 uses the example of Rwanda to show how DDR can be linked to longer term development initiatives and prioritised under national poverty reduction frameworks.

Slow Payments of Reintegration Packages in Northern Uganda

One of the objectives of UNDP's Transition to Recovery Programme (TRP) was to pilot support for programmes aimed at reintegration of adult ex-combatants living in IDP camps in the Gulu District of Northern Uganda. The TRP aimed to complement existing programmes (undertaken by Government of Uganda/Amnesty Commission/World Bank) by providing training in livelihood initiatives (such as baking, bee keeping and agriculture), to former members of the Lords Resistance Army (LRA). UNDP funded the initiative but it was implemented by a UNDP contracted private sector organisation. By April 2006 training and sensitisation had taken place but by November 2006 'beneficiaries' were still waiting for their livelihood support reintegration packages.

There was a great deal of resentment from those who were trained but were still waiting for full reintegration packages. As one ex-combatant who had spent over five years in the LRA summarised: *'When we were trained our hopes increased, we had been in the bush [with the LRA] for so long and were hurting, but we finally had the chance to be productive and better ourselves, this could be our profession - not all is lost we thought, life can improve. But now nothing. It would have been better if you [UNDP] had not raised our hopes at all, rather than betrayed our trust and give us so much hope only to desert us. It's like UNDP used our misfortune to get money for themselves at our expense and have given us nothing'*.

The situation was made more acute and regrettable because many ex-combatants were hoping (like many other IDPs) that they would soon be able to return to their villages where such equipment was essential for their livelihoods.

Source: Jones, R (2007:61) *Evaluation of the UNDP Transition to Recovery Programme*, Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit, University of York, UK

Resources and Further Information

UK Approach to Stabilisation <http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk/>

Security Sector Reform Stabilisation Issues Note

Economic Recovery Stabilisation Issues Note

Peace Processes Stabilisation Issues Note

The UN Integrated DDR Standards (2006) <http://www.unddr.org/>

The Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (2007)

http://www.un.org/children/conflict/_documents/parisprinciples/ParisPrinciples_EN.pdf

OECD Handbook on Security Sector Reform 2007

Multi-country Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme (MDRP) for the Greater Great Lakes <http://www.mdrp.org/>

Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles, Nicole Ball and Luc van de Goor (2006) www.clingendael.nl/cru

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (Women, Peace and Security)

<http://www.peacewomen.org/un/sc/1325.html>