

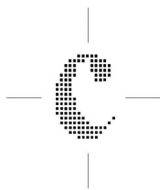
The R-Phase of DDR processes

An Overview of Key Lessons Learned and
Practical Experiences

Leontine Specker

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Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'
Conflict Research Unit



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Netherlands Institute of
International Relations
'Clingendael'
Clingendael 7
2597 VH The Hague
P.O. Box 93080
2509 AB The Hague
Phone number: # 31-70-3245384
Telefax: # 31-70-3282002
Email: cru-info@clingendael.nl
Website: <http://www.clingendael.nl/cru>

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Abbreviations

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
ADRP/PGDR	Association for Donor Recruitment Professionals/ General Programme for Demobilization and Reintegration Angola
ANBP	Afghanistan New Beginning Programme
CAAFG	Children associated with armed forces and groups
CIP	Commander Incentive Programme
CONADER	Commission Nationale de la Démobilisation et Réinsertion
CRU	Conflict Research Unit Clingendael
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FNL	National Liberation Forces
HILP	High Intensity Labour Project
IDP	Internally displaced person
IGO	International governmental organization
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INGO	International non-governmental organization
MDRP	Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MONUC	Mission des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo
NCDDRR	National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reinsertion and Reintegration
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD–DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development–Development Assistance Committee
PSU	Peacebuilding and Stabilization Unit, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
PRSE	National Social and Economic Reintegration Programme[Programme National de Réintégration Sociale et Economique]
R-PHASE	Reinsertion or Reintegration Phase
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNDP–MRR	UNDP Unit for Rapid Response Mechanisms
UNDP–ComRec	UNDP Unit for Community Recovery
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
SSR	Security sector reform
WAAFG	Women associated with armed forces and groups

Executive summary and conclusions

This section provides a brief overview of the key policy considerations as identified in the paper. It also includes aspects of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) processes on which further research would be particularly welcome.

Definition and scope

Definition and scope of the reintegration phase (the R-phase): Practice indicates a divergence between theoretical concepts and how these are implemented in practice. Furthermore, there continues to be debate among policy-makers on what can be expected from the R-phase and which activities should instead be part of wider recovery programmes. The debate is mainly centred around the question of whether DDR processes should ideally take a short-term, security-focused perspective, or else a more developmental approach. The preferred perspective influences the choice of target group as well as whether the R-phase should primarily provide short-term support, or instead be integrated into longer-term economic reconstruction programmes. A clear working definition of the R-phase and its scope as part of DDR processes is essential in order to well manage expectations and to better adjust parallel and subsequent programmes in support of the R-phase.

Planning and management

Need for socio-economic context analyses: Reviews indicate that especially the planning of the R-phase is commonly started too late, resulting in funding problems and inadequate longer-term preparation of the R-phase. As a result, context analyses, as part of preparation processes, often have not been carried out or have been inadequate. Proper economic context analyses are crucial for the success of the (longer-term) economic reintegration of ex-combatants and important for policy and programme design from a pro-poor angle, i.e. by ensuring that longer-term development prospects are not damaged. Future research should pay close attention to socio-economic context analyses carried out as part of broader, integrated context analyses.

Sequencing: Practice suggests that the sequencing of the different phases of DDR processes does not need to be linear, whereas in practice it is still implemented as such. Reviews indicate that the preparation of the R-phase in the field *can* and in many instances *needs* to start before the DD-phases have been completed. DD- and R-phases may occur in parallel or even in reverse order. There will, however, be some funding difficulties in this regard as a result of the definition of official development assistance (ODA) formulated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development–Development Assistance Committee (OECD–DAC). Further research on the possibilities and conditions for implementing DDR processes in reverse order would be particularly welcome. Important questions in this regard are how this sequencing aspect can be best included in context analyses and how to involve implementing organizations early on in this process.

Funding: After lack of political will, inadequate funding is one of the most serious constraints to DDR. International actors have often also confused the impact of political problems on DDR with the capacity of DDR funding modalities.

National ownership: The main policy challenge in relation to national ownership is to find a balance between national leadership and responsibility, and timely and effective implementation. Taking into account the political environment in which DDR is taking place is crucial, yet government organizations financing DDR have often ignored it.

Chain approach to implementation, capacity-building and market distortion at a local level: Implementation chains can contribute to the effectiveness of implementation programmes, but policy-makers should carefully take into account the side effects. It may save resources and time, but might also have adverse effects and exclude local and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) during the implementation process. A related problem is that corruption and exclusion of smaller, local organizations may hinder the local capacity-building process. This can potentially constrain the set-up of subsequent programmes by local actors to take over the task of longer-term economic reintegration and reconstruction, after DDR processes have been finalized.

The role of the local private sector: The few reviews carried out on the role of the private sector indicate that local business actors *can* play a useful role in the R-phase, i.e. the local private sector may potentially enhance longer-term economic reconstruction and development efforts through job creation and trust-building. Yet, efforts so far have not always been successful. Further research on the involvement of the (local) private sector in the R-phase is needed.

Evaluation and monitoring: There is a systematic lack of evaluation and monitoring processes on the *impact* of reintegration programmes. Thus far, evaluations have focused primarily on programme *achievements*. Practice suggests that quantitative measures of outputs may not provide a robust measure of programme performance or impact. Research on the improvement of evaluation and monitoring of the impact of reintegration programmes is required.

Implementation

Defining ex-combatants: There is no generally applicable definition of an ex-combatant. Reviews point out that reintegration programmes have frequently not taken into account the relation of ex-combatants with the communities in which they were (re)integrated. This is critical, however, for the development of strategies and further operationalisation of programmes. Moreover, even when clear criteria are formulated, evaluations indicate that also the *implementation* of the criteria remains a challenge.

Urban and rural reintegration programmes: Practice suggests that urban and reintegration programmes require a different approach. In general, reintegration into *urban* areas has proven to be more complex and requires more time to achieve. By contrast, *rural* reintegration is commonly considered more successful and easier to implement. One of the most common problems observed with urban reintegration is the tight labour market, which often has a limited absorption capacity. Rural reintegration programmes are generally faced with the discrepancy between expectations of ex-combatants (often influenced by government promises) and the realities of an opportunity-constrained environment in terms of access to land.

Training: Practice indicates that training often does not match local market requirements and opportunities, or the expectations raised among ex-combatants. This shows the importance of a due preparation process, including context assessments combined with proper socio-economic profiling of ex-combatants.

Employment creation: Reviews indicate that one of main constraining factors for DDR programmes is the economic context into which ex-combatants are (re)integrated. Employment and livelihood opportunities for ex-combatants are crucial to durable integration. Practice confirms, however, that there are no easy solutions to job creation in post-conflict states, often characterized by shattered economies and extremely tight labour markets. Future research on how to support or contribute to employment creation is needed: i.e. how to better involve the various sectors, including the private sector, particularly small- and medium-size enterprises.

The effectiveness of cash benefits: Reviews indicate that policy-makers tend to agree that cash payments for *securing disarmament* are in most cases not effective, primarily because it may lead to the programme being wrongly perceived as ‘cash for weapons’. Experts differ in their opinion, however, as to the effectiveness of cash payments for *reinsertion* benefits. Some experts insist that cash payments for reinsertion can be very effective, as practice has indicated that what ex-combatants need is cash. Others, however, instead stress that the cash-oriented assistance packages have not been effective or sustainable and have exaggerated social tensions between ex-combatants and civilians. These practitioners advocate an alternative approach, i.e. that the majority of the cash-oriented assistance packages should ideally be given as business start-up capitals after the completion of business training and the development of an approved business plan. One to two years’ follow-up services and monitoring of this process are therefore critical. Policy-makers should be aware of the fact that cash payments and in-kind assistance to ex-combatants are important precursors of, but not *substitutes* for, social and economic reintegration assistance.

Adequate amounts of cash benefits: When the choice is made to provide cash benefits, ideally there should be a difference between cash payments for *reinsertion* and those for *longer-term reintegration* programmes. Reviews indicate that reinsertion is best supported by smaller amounts in frequent and regular payments, whereas longer-term economic reintegration is better supported through larger amounts provided in fewer instalments. Reviews also indicate that the size of payments should depend on the *ultimate goals* of the intervention, i.e. consumption or investment. Even though larger lump sum payments may encourage investments, reviews also point to several drawbacks. Further research is needed on adequate forms of benefits to serve short- and longer-term goals.

The role of NGOs: Reviews indicate that implementation of the R-phase heavily relies on NGO involvement. International and bilateral aid agencies commonly subcontracted much work to the NGO community. NGOs also played an important role in spreading awareness about the possibilities and requirements of the programme. Reviews also point at more critical elements, such as the fact that NGOs revealed a tendency to replicate and propagate systemic flaws as they fell in line with top-down, blueprint approaches. Also, limited institutional capacity of local NGOs was indicated as a constraining factor.

1. Introduction

This paper aims to map key lessons learned and practical experiences of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) processes, on the basis of main reviews and evaluation documents.¹ The issues addressed relate to DDR processes as a whole, but pay specific attention to the reintegration phase (the R-phase). The paper has been commissioned by the Peacebuilding and Stabilization Unit (PSU) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and constitutes Phase I of a larger research project on the R-phase.²

Experience over the years has indicated that (long-term) reintegration of demobilized ex-combatants remains a challenge. Reintegration depends largely on two factors. First is the trust of ex-combatants in the (political) process. DDR cannot develop the political process, it needs to follow it. Second, the presence of economic alternatives is critical. DDR is fundamentally political in character and should be seen as part of a broader integrated approach to reconstruction processes, including security, governance, political and developmental aspects, requiring integrated context analyses and subsequent comprehensive strategy development. This paper will focus mainly on the second aspect of reintegration, i.e. the economic context in which it takes place. From a political and security perspective it is often required to reintegrate ex-combatants as soon as possible, yet the damaged economic context is commonly indicated as one of the main constraining factors affecting this process.³

Failure to reintegrate ex-combatants socially and economically has both immediate and long-term consequences. In the short term, disaffected ex-combatants may threaten peace processes by continuing to fight in-country and/or across borders in neighbouring conflicts. In the long term, ex-combatants may develop into a social underclass of (semi-)illiterate ex-fighters, who have not developed economically viable skills and could potentially hinder a country's economic and social development. The latest Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP) review indicates that comprehensive and practical information on the R-

¹ The paper has served as input for two forthcoming policy frameworks developed by the PSU on DDR and on socio-economic reconstruction processes. The latter document is developed in close co-operation with the MFAs Entrepreneurship and Business Development Division. The reintegration of ex-combatants is a cross-cutting issue and relevant for both policy memoranda.

² In December 2007, an international expert meeting was organized by the Conflict Research Unit (CRU) of the Clingendael Institute which served as a starting point for the writing of this paper. Experts from, among others, Bradford University (CICS), the Centre for European Security Studies, International Alert, ISS South Africa, the Niall O'Brien Centre, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), Oxfam Novib, Safer World and a number of individual experts attended the meeting. The author would like to thank the participants of the expert meeting for their valuable input and for sharing their expertise. In addition, the author would like to thank Luc van de Goor and Pyt Douma for their input, feedback and stimulating discussions. Thanks are also owed to others who have lent their time and efforts to the paper, providing material, comments and insights, i.e. Adriaan Verheul, Louise Anten, Eveline Rooijmans, Deo Mirindi and Hugo de Vries. The responsibility of the content of the paper lies with the author.

³ Note that this aspect, however, played a lesser role in the former Yugoslavia and Colombia.

phase is rare.⁴ As a number of DDR processes – among others the MDRP-supported programmes – have now fully entered into the reintegration process, management and implementation staff seems eager to share experiences from past practices. Against this background, the PSU has requested a research project on how to better plan and operationalize the R-phase, and on the relationship of this phase with the larger post-conflict reconstruction agenda.

The paper focuses on, among others, the following research questions:

- How is the R-phase defined by various policy-makers, i.e. conceptually, what are the different levels of ambition and expectations of policy-makers of the R-phase?
- What are the main practical experiences (positive and negative) as indicated by key evaluation and review documents of DDR processes, specifically in relation to the R-phase?

In Section 1, the various perspectives in relation to the definition and scope of the R-phase are set out, i.e. a conceptual overview as to the target group of DDR processes as well as to what extent longer-term reintegration objectives should ideally be part of the R-phase. Section 2 discusses some key issues related to the planning and management of DDR processes. Section 3 provides a selection of the main practical experiences related to the implementation of DDR processes.

The research was conducted primarily as a desk study. Documents from the United Nations (UN) and the MDRP were consulted,⁵ as were other reviews and a few evaluations of DDR processes from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and research institutes.⁶ Programme reviews of DDR processes in, among others, Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Sierra Leone and Uganda were studied. This material was supplemented by a limited number of interviews with individuals who have extensive experience with DDR processes. Taking into account the goal of paper, it will *map* the main issues and practical experiences involved, rather than provide an in-depth analysis.

⁴ MDRP, *Joint Donor Mission Report 2007*, October 2007, p. 1. See <http://www.mdrp.org>.

⁵ MDRP, 2007. See <http://www.mdrp.org>. UNDP, *Demobilization and Reintegration of Combatants: some lessons from Global Experience*, October 2002.

⁶ 'From Rebel to Taxpayer: working together for successful DDR', International Conference Netherlands MFA, Netherlands Ministry of Defence, ICCO, Oxfam Novib and Cordaid, June 2007. Douma, P. and Klem, B., with Frerks, G., Gompelman, G. and Van Laar, S., *The Struggle after Combat: The Role of NGOs in DDR Processes, synthesis study* Cordaid, 2008 (hereafter referred to as 'Synthesis study').

2. Definition and scope of the R-phase

2.1. Introduction

A clear working definition of the R-phase as part of DDR (i.e. what is meant by it) and scope (i.e. which activities are considered to be included in it) is essential in order to well manage expectations and to better adjust parallel and subsequent programmes in support of the R-phase. The UN definition provides a useful starting point, but practice indicates a divergence between these theoretical concepts and how they are implemented in practice.

Furthermore, there continues to be debate among policy-makers on what can be *expected* from the R-phase as part of DDR processes and on which activities should instead be part of wider recovery programmes. The debate is mainly centred around the question of whether DDR processes ideally should take a short-term, security-focused perspective or else a more developmental approach, i.e. emphasizing the longer-term socio-economic approach to programmes. The chosen perspective influences the choices made with regard to the target group of DDR processes as well as whether the R-phase should primarily provide short-term support, or rather, be integrated into longer-term economic reconstruction programmes.

The following issues will be discussed in this section:

- Definition
- Scope
 - a) long- vs short-term objectives
 - b) the primary target group.

2.2. Definition

The UN definitions of reinsertion and reintegration are used here as a starting point for the subsequent discussions.

The UN defines *reinsertion* as:

“Assistance offered to ex-combatants during demobilization, but prior to the long-term process of reintegration, as a form of transitional assistance to help cover the basic needs of ex-combatants and their families, which may include transitional safety allowances, food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short-term education, training and employment tools.”⁷

⁷ UN Secretary-General, note to the General Assembly, A/C.5/59/31, May 2005. See also United Nations DDR Resource Centre at <http://www.unDDR.org/whatisDDR.php>.

And *reintegration* as:

“The process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open time-frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country, a national responsibility and often necessitates long-term external assistance.”⁸

Overall, the literature indicates that reinsertion subsidies are primarily designed to facilitate immediate discharge from active service, but that they do not satisfy the long-term needs of ex-combatants. Reintegration, by contrast, is characterized as a longer-term and continuous social and economic process of development.⁹ Consensus seems to have emerged that reintegration should be a lengthy process which requires greater attention than was previously thought.¹⁰

Practice, however, illustrates a divergence between how reinsertion and reintegration are *defined* and how the programmes are being *implemented*. While the term ‘reintegration’ has commonly been used to cover *all activities* after demobilization, in practice R-phase programmes have generally been limited to the providence of *resettlement or reinsertion assistance only*.¹¹ The reasons why support for longer-term reintegration often have not been forthcoming are: 1) a lack of funding; 2) a lack of proper preparation of DDR programmes; or 3) a conscious decision to limit targeted assistance to ex-combatants only.¹² In the latter case, policy-makers have often advocated for complementary programmes aiming at longer-term reintegration goals, as will be discussed later.

Several practical experiences illustrate the fact that this dividing line between reinsertion and reintegration has not been clear. As a result of a lack of funding or preparation, ex-combatants sometimes had to wait for over a year to participate in public work programmes or have access to vocational training trajectories. Also, vocational training is still considered to be genuine reintegration by many professionals involved. Yet in view of the low success rate and the fact that three months have usually been insufficient to train a person properly, it may well be considered to be reinsertion support.¹³ In reality, reintegration activities often consisted of three to six months’ vocational training sequences. In the DRC, for example, High Intensity Labour Projects (HILPs) offered grants for direct revenue-earning activities, such as petty trading and bread distribution, or even safety-net

⁸ United Nations DDR Resource Centre at <http://www.unDDR.org/whatisDDR.php>. UN Secretary-General, note to the General Assembly, A/C.5/59/31, May 2005.

⁹ UN General Assembly, *Report of the UN Secretary-General on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration*, A/60/705, 2006, para 49.

¹⁰ UNOSAA and Government of DRC, *Combatants on Foreign Soil*, 2005, para. 33.

¹¹ Douma, P. and Van Laar, S. with Klem, B., *The Struggle after Combat: The Role of NGOs in DDR Processes, DRC Case study* Cordaid, 2008, p. 17 (hereafter referred to as ‘DDR in the DRC’). This issue, among others, has also been illustrated by the MDRP mid-term review of the DDR programme in the DRC, stating that the reintegration performance of the World Bank amounted to little more than payment of reintegration fees or the distribution of material perks to ex-combatants. See also N. Ball and L. Van de Goor, *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: mapping issues, dilemmas and guiding principles*, 2006.

¹² N. Ball and D. Hendrickson, *Review of International Financing Arrangements for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Phase I to Working Group 2 of the Stockholm Initiative on DDR (SIDDR)*, May 2005, p. 22 (hereafter referred to as ‘Phase I Report’).

¹³ Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar ‘Synthesis Study’, 2008, p. 17.

instalments, if there were time lags between demobilization and reintegration. Only in a few cases were higher education or professional training schemes were offered.

2.3. Scope

The literature highlights the fact that policy-makers disagree as to the ideal *scope* of the R-phase, an issue which is closely related to the discussion on the definition. The preferred scope of programmes is largely influenced by the *expectations* that policy-makers have of DDR as a whole and is particularly relevant for the R-phase. Practice has shown that these expectations differ significantly among policy-makers.¹⁴ On the one hand, there are practitioners who emphasize the security objective of DDR processes, also referred to as the spoiler contingency approach. These practitioners stress the short-term security goals of DDR and generally prefer R-phase programmes to target ex-combatants only. On the other hand, there are practitioners who emphasize instead the socio-economic objectives. They generally advocate the longer-term socio-economic objectives of DDR and prefer R-phase programmes to extend assistance to the receiving communities and people associated with ex-combatants, emphasizing the *sustainability* of the spoiler contingency approach.

These differing levels of ambition have commonly determined decisions as to which activities are considered part of the R-phase and which should be integrated into complementary socio-economic programmes. Likewise, they have influenced decisions regarding the target group of R-phase programmes.

2.3.1. Long- vs short-term objectives of the R-phase

A central issue related to the scope of DDR programmes is the question of whether longer-term reintegration, often including longer-term community development, should in fact be *part of* DDR processes. In line with the above-described perspectives, most NGOs advocate the inclusion of aspects of longer-term reintegration and development in R-phase programmes. The Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (SIDDR) guidelines, on the other hand, consider that the main concern of DDR is to establish what types of assistance are absolutely necessary from a security perspective, and they state that longer-term reintegration support should be part of parallel or subsequent recovery programmes.¹⁵ Moreover, the UN definition, as cited above, suggests that longer-term reintegration should not be part of DDR processes.¹⁶

In line with the SIDDR guidelines, a number of experts assert that DDR is not a mechanism for achieving longer-term objectives, but is most appropriately seen as a means of helping to create a stable and secure post-conflict environment that is conducive to political and economic development.¹⁷ Some even suggest that, considering these political and security objectives,¹⁸ it may make more sense to redefine the R-phase as 'reinsertion'. According to these experts, longer-term

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁵ Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (SIDDR), Final Report, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2006.

¹⁶ Ball and Van de Goor, 2006, p. 3.

¹⁷ Ball and Hendrickson, 'Phase I Report', 2005, p. 21.

¹⁸ DDR programmes have emerged conceptually as a strategy to appease volatile groups in fragile post-conflict settings, notably trying to contain young and potentially dangerous ex-fighters and hence stabilize a local, national or regional security setting.

reintegration assistance to ex-combatants and their dependants should rather be part of complementary reconstruction programmes (whether parallel or subsequent).¹⁹

Practitioners have commonly raised the question “what are we trying to reintegrate ex-combatants into?” This question becomes particularly relevant in the case of a security-focused approach to DDR, but applies to all reintegration processes. High unemployment and limited prospects characterize post-conflict environments, challenging reintegration programmes. Most evaluations indicate that reintegration faced major structural constraints due to the context of widespread socio-economic deprivation and an almost total collapse of the formal economy.²⁰ A recent review of DDR processes in the DRC, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan indicates that in all three cases one of the largest constraints to reintegration programmes was the fact that ex-combatants were to be integrated into a largely destroyed economy.²¹ A fundamental problem that practitioners often faced, as a result of the poor economy in combination with the time needed for the creation of jobs, was the question as to what needed to be done with ex-combatants in the meantime.

It is thus critical to link DDR processes to longer-term recovery and development programmes in order to provide sustainable reintegration for ex-combatants and their dependants as well as other community members. Reviews, however, highlight the fact that such complementary programmes often were not present or were inadequately addressed, whether or not considered part of the DDR process. As mentioned earlier, R-phase programmes have often been limited to reinsertion support only. Linkages have been inadequate owing to several factors. One factor is the absence of an institutional mechanism to guarantee a close connection between the bodies responsible for short-term and medium-term assistance to ex-combatants on the one hand and longer-term assistance to communities on the other hand. A second factor is that the international community’s limited time horizon often means that most resources are delivered in the first few years of the peace process.²²

A related issue, partly as a result of the different expectations of the R-phase among practitioners, is that frequently it was not clear when the R-phase was considered to be completed. This is illustrated by the following example. In Sierra Leone, ex-combatants who qualified for DDR received an identity card on which each of the programme phases was represented by a number or a letter, and this was then clipped when the relevant phase was accessed and delivered. The R-phase generally stopped when an applicant had participated in a vocational training module, regardless of whether the applicant was successful or whether they had completed the training. There were no clear parameters to define the formal completion of the R-phase. Yet practice suggests it is important to pay attention to this element in order to avoid unrealistic expectations of the DDR process as well as to ensure an adequate connection with other recovery programmes.

Notwithstanding this apparent ‘grey area’ concerning which medium- and longer-term reintegration activities should be part of DDR processes and which not, there seems to be overall agreement on the fact that *larger (macro-) economic needs and challenges* surpass the objectives and abilities of a DDR programme. Sustained economic recovery and income for ex-combatants will require other, and more enduring,

¹⁹ Ball and Hendrickson, ‘Phase I Report’, 2005, p. 22. Ball and Van de Goor, 2006.

²⁰ Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, ‘Synthesis Study’, 2008, p. 37.

²¹ Ibid., p. 24.

²² Ball and Van de Goor, 2006, pp. 16–17.

interventions than DDR can normally offer. UN and World Bank reviews²³ therefore strongly advocate that reintegration assistance be linked to broader economic reconstruction efforts that can generate employment opportunities and contribute to local reconciliation and recovery efforts.

A suggested option for effectively connecting the R-phase to broader socio-economic recovery programmes is to establish links with the respective line ministries, so that they can: 1) take over specific problems on termination of the programme, and 2) embed these initiatives into the general development policies.²⁴ [ok?]Also, the importance of sharing vital information to enable the promoters to identify the needs of the target group and the ex-combatants to access services is commonly stressed. Yet, documentation and practical policy documents seem to be rare in this area and it appears that further research is required.

2.3.2. Identifying the primary target group

There has been discussion about the desirability either of expanding the scope of DDR programmes to encompass both community rehabilitation and development as the main mechanisms for reintegrating ex-combatants, or of limiting it to target only ex-combatants and their dependants. These differing expectations of DDR processes seem to be particularly important for the R-phase and to some extent have led to rather vague or even contradictory positions.²⁵ The UN definition cited earlier suggests that there is growing agreement, however, that ‘combatants’ are the main object of DDR.²⁶

Practitioners emphasizing the security objectives tend to argue that DDR processes ideally should prioritize the needs of ex-combatants, as they are regarded as a potential threat to peace. They claim that DDR should not be seen as a support programme for the entire conflict-affected population or a tool for socio-economic recovery. Rather, (longer-term) development of communities should be addressed in complementary programmes.

Critics of this security-focused approach commonly assert that it risks key target groups being excluded from DDR processes, such as people associated with ex-combatants, and the communities in which ex-combatants are to be received.²⁷ They prefer to address the needs of wider communities within DDR programmes, as a matter of equity as well as in order to avoid exacerbating tensions where ex-combatants are seen to benefit unfairly, and as a means to improve the communities capacity to absorb ex-combatants.²⁸ The objective of this community-based approach

²³ MDRP, 2007, pp. 3 and 5. See <http://www.mdrp.org> The MDRP advocates that reintegration support for ex-combatants include both short- and medium-term assistance – ‘short-term’ being reinsertion and ‘medium-term’ economic and social reintegration.

²⁴ N. Colletta, M. Kostner and I. Wiederhofer, *Case Studies in War-to-Peace Transition: the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants in Ethiopia, Namibia and Uganda*, World Bank Discussion Paper No. 331, 1996, p. 336.

²⁵ Centre for International Cooperation and Security (CICS), Bradford University, *DDR and Human Security: Post-conflict security-building in the interests of the poor*, August 2006, p. 17.

²⁶ Ball and Van de Goor, 2006, p. 13.

²⁷ UN General Assembly, *Report of the UN Secretary-General on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration*, A/60/705, 2006, para. 8.

²⁸ Interestingly, however, some experts have mentioned that the attitude of populations usually changes over time. Initially, their level of acceptance is rather high, because of their wish to stop the violence at all costs. Once stability has increased, people tend to become more critical of targeted assistance to ex-combatants only. Expert opinion, N. Ball, 2008. This underlines the fact that, ideally, a two-pronged

is thus to provide assistance to *all* war-affected populations in a given area and to emphasize sustainability. The assumption is that targeting ex-combatants and other war-affected populations simultaneously within one project will increase tolerance between different conflict-affected groups and thus support reintegration and reconciliation efforts.²⁹ Also, the approach aims to contribute to socio-economic development of communities and job creation in order to facilitate the reintegration of ex-combatants.

There is thus disagreement among policy-makers on *how* community needs are best addressed: 1) by opening up R-phase programmes to *war-affected* groups, particularly in the context of local communities; 2) through initiatives that, while targeting ex-combatants, are also designed to benefit communities as a whole, i.e. through programmes that engage ex-combatants, for example in public works or programmes that include both community members and ex-combatants; or 3) by matching ex-combatants' targeted programmes with separately funded programmes aimed at members of the wider community (including internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees).³⁰

In other words, the main policy consideration in this regard is whether support to communities receiving ex-combatants is to *supplement* reinsertion *outside* DDR programmes or, rather, *substitute* for reinsertion assistance *as part of* DDR processes.³¹ Policy-makers who prefer community support as a *supplement* tend to make a clear distinction between: 1) assistance provided to all members of war-affected communities, including ex-combatants and individuals associated with fighting forces (longer-term reintegration); and 2) targeted assistance to ex-combatants and people associated with the fighting forces, to buy time for the peace process to begin to take hold (short-term reinsertion). Community-based recovery and rehabilitation efforts than need to be linked to DDR processes, but ideally are not an integral part of it.³² Others claiming that community support should rather be seen as a *substitute* claim that the target group of reinsertion efforts should not be limited to ex-combatants only, but should also include the wider community.

A related issue is the fact that until relatively recently, DDR programmes tended to assume that all combatants were male and denied that children were part of fighting forces. As a result, women and children have often received inadequate benefits or have been excluded entirely from DDR programmes.³³ Although it is currently widely

communication strategy should be developed. First, it is important to communicate to the ex-combatants what the DDR programme consists of and which benefits they are eligible for. Second, it is essential to communicate to non-combatants why assistance targeting combatants is important, which combatants and dependants will receive support and which not and, where applicable, which support is offered to communities. Ball and Van de Goor, *Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration*, 2006, p. 15.

²⁹ I. Specht, "Jobs for Rebels and Soldiers", in *Jobs after War – A critical challenge in the peace and reconstruction puzzle*, p. 21.

³⁰ CICS, August 2006, p. 15.

³¹ Ball and Hendrickson, 'Phase I Report', 2005, p. 22.

³² MDRP, 2007, pp. 2–3. Other groups, i.e. civil society, communities, private sector firms, etc., cannot 'reintegrate ex-combatants'. However, their support can greatly contribute to ex-combatants' individual reintegration process.

³³ The status of children is regulated by the Cape Town Principles. UN resolution 1325 is the only international statement on the status of women in conflict, but does not provide the same level of guidance as the Cape Town Principles. See Ball and Van de Goor, 2006, p. 13.

recognized that women and children have been associated with armed groups,³⁴ there has hardly been any effort to identify the specific roles these groups have played. In most cases, it seems that women and children have provided logistical and service support necessary for the maintenance of the fighting force (cooking, cleaning, food processing, carrying ammunition, and weapons, water and firewood collection, sex slaves, 'bush wives' and so on). However, there is ample proof of more active engagement of women and children in the fighting itself (as spies, for reconnaissance purposes, but also as soldiers at the front line). The Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone and Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia, as well as numerous Mayi-Mayi forces in the DRC, actively recruited children (most of them involuntarily through abduction and capture), who were valued as loyal and fearless fighters by their adult commanders. Female fighters, although a minority, were common among most of the militia and rebel movements, playing active roles as foot soldiers, but also as commanders, and were considered as equals by male fighters. It seems fair to assume that inadequate definitions used in DDR programmes of what precisely constitutes an ex-combatant, combined with post-conflict marginalization of women and child soldiers by their erstwhile commanders, and for women who fear social stigmatization, are among the main reasons why these groups were largely left out of the DDR process or self-demobilized.

³⁴ Respectively labeled as 'women associated with armed forces and groups' (WAAF) and 'children associated with armed forces and groups' (CAAFG).

3. Planning and management of the R-phase

3.1. Introduction

There are many technical issues relating to the design and implementation of DDR programmes, a number of which are common to several countries and therefore deserve special attention. In this section the more technical issues connected with the design of DDR processes will be discussed, with a special focus on those aspects relevant for the R-phase. Section 3 will thereafter set out the main issues related to implementation, although the two are obviously linked to each other.

The following aspects will be addressed in this section:

- Timing and preparation
- Sequencing
- Funding
- National ownership
- Chain approach to implementation, capacity-building and market distortion at the local level
- The role of the local private sector
- Evaluations.

3.2. Timing and preparation

Experts stress that planning for DDR processes as a whole should start as early as possible in the course of a peace process. For conflicts ended through negotiated settlements this is ideally during the negotiation phase.³⁵ Reviews suggest, however, that especially the planning of the R-phase is often started too late in the process, commonly resulting in funding problems and inadequate longer-term preparation of the R-phase. As a result, context analyses, as part of the preparation process, frequently have not been carried out at all or else have been deficient.

Practice shows that during many DDR processes, the planning of the R-phase was not well timed. One of the reasons is that the urgency of DD processes and immediate post-conflict concerns, i.e. establishing oversight institutions and systems, addressing the political process and organizing disarmament and demobilization, often consume most of the time, resources and staff.³⁶ Consequently, there have frequently been significant delays to the R-phase, and ‘quick-fix’ responses with little consideration

³⁵ Ball and Van de Goor, p. 11.

³⁶ MDRP, 2007, p. 21.

for the effects of longer-term reintegration. Proper planning early in the process therefore seems essential to close the current gap between the DD-phases and R-phase, and in order to ensure the required connection with wider recovery programmes.

Considering the fundamental political character of DDR processes as a whole, as part of integrated policies on security, governance and development, reviews indicate that thorough integrated context analyses and integrated strategy development as well as impact assessments are important components of a proper preparation process. As part of this broader context, socio-economic context analyses seem crucial for the success of (longer-term) economic reintegration of ex-combatants and important for policy and programme design from a pro-poor angle, i.e. by ensuring that longer-term development prospects are not damaged. In many cases, no local labour market and impact assessments were conducted, although they are crucial for dealing adequately with the socio-economic consequences of reintegration, and for increasing the success rate and sustainability of reintegration. Practice suggests that there is a particular need for assessments to take into account: 1) how ex-combatants can best be integrated into society (i.e. what are the main characteristics, capabilities and needs of the local economy, which sectors are best suited to take in the ex-combatants, etc., also considering the economic context and capacities *before* the conflict); and 2) what are the effects of reintegration processes on the local market economy, state and society. The reintegration of ex-combatants into civil society can place a heavy burden on a country's labour market. Yet on the other hand, ex-combatants can also contribute to economic development by entering into productive, income-generating activities.

Reviews furthermore indicate that context analyses should pay specific attention to the absorption capacity of the local labour market. The informal sector is sometimes too heavily burdened with the reintegration of ex-combatants.³⁷ Insight into the absorption capacity of the local, and largely informal, labour market is thus important in order to avoid ex-combatants being trained for jobs which will give them little ability to make money. Context analyses should ideally be complemented by the economic profiling of ex-combatants.³⁸ While the registration of demobilized combatants will give DDR programmes a clear picture of their socio-economic expectations, capacities and resources, by the time this has taken place it is already too late to start planning for reintegration processes. Therefore the UN argues for a pre-registration beneficiary survey that should take place before DD begins, based on the preliminary definition of the target group.³⁹ Surveys can be based on, for instance, a sample of fighters to be demobilized in order to develop a fair idea of what can be realistically expected of these people in terms of their skills and qualifications.

³⁷ See also 'Training' in Section 3.

³⁸ UNDP, *Practice Note Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants*, 2005; MDRP Guidelines.

³⁹ UNDP, 2005, para. 4.2.4. An example of where a DDR programme *did* pay attention to the specific economic context of DDR programmes was in Uganda. A crucial step in the design and the preparation of the DDR programme in Uganda was the completion of three studies. These were: 1) a socio-economic profile of soldiers to identify capabilities, needs and expectations of the target group; 2) an analysis of opportunities for ex-combatants in product and markets to design the settling-in kit and long-term reintegration programme; 3) the examination of institutional requirements to determine the programme implementation structure. Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1996, p. 3.

3.3. Sequencing and funding

Reviews point out that the sequencing of the different phases of DDR processes does not need to be linear, whereas in practice it is still commonly implemented as such. This is closely related to the fact that policy-makers tend to focus first on the DD phases, which are considered to be more urgent in the direct post-conflict phase. Also, activities *within* the R-phase itself are not always well sequenced, resulting in significant delays between the various activities.

3.3.1. Sequencing

The fact that peace processes often do not proceed in a linear manner produces sequencing problems and affects DDR processes in their outcomes.⁴⁰ The R-phase is often initiated only after the DD-phases have been (nearly) finalized, mainly because of a (perceived) lack of security.

Reviews and practice indicate, however, that the preparation of the R-phase in the field *can* and in many instances *needs* to start before the DD-phases have been completed.⁴¹ Combatants may only want to disarm and dismantle their groups once they have gradually resumed civilian life. In other cases DD may occur at a variable pace in different areas within the same country. This means that individuals managing DDR programmes should be prepared to implement DD and R activities simultaneously.⁴² Practice thus suggests that the DD- and R-phases may thus occur in parallel or even reverse order.⁴³ This was the case in, for instance, Colombia, even though it should be noted that the economic context here was less restrained than in many post-conflict states. Practice illustrates that only in a few cases was the situation too insecure to start preparing the R-phase earlier on in the process. In most other cases, such as northern Uganda, there was enough time to prepare well for the R-phase, but in many cases this opportunity was not used. There may be some funding difficulties when starting R-phase activities before DD-phases have been completed, as a result of the OECD–DAC definition of official development aid (ODA). This aspect is discussed in the following section. Taking into account the current debate among policy-makers on this topic, further research on the possibilities and the necessary conditions for, starting the R-phase before completion of the DD phases would seem to be very welcome. Important questions are how this sequencing aspect is best included in context analyses and how to involve implementing organizations early on in the process.

Furthermore, as a result of inadequate sequencing between the phases within the DDR programme there were significant delays in the reintegration process and in some cases donors resorted to ‘stop-gap’ measures. Ex-combatants were commonly forced to wait several months between demobilization and entering the reintegration programme of their choice, leading to various security constraints for DDR implementing partners at local levels. In sensitive post-conflict environments, delays in support may mean a total reversal of the situation and efforts may be wasted overnight.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Ball and Van de Goor, 2006, p. 12.

⁴¹ ‘From Rebel to Taxpayer: working together for successful DDR’, June 2007, p. 8. CICS, 2006, p. 12.

⁴² Ball and Van de Goor, 2006, p. 12.

⁴³ It may even be cyclical when ex-combatants disarm and demobilize once again at a later stage, though DDR programmes generally block ex-combatants who have already enrolled for benefits earlier. Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, ‘Synthesis Study’, p. 8.

⁴⁴ Specht, 2003, p. 25. In Sierra Leone, for instance, DDR efforts have failed at least twice because reintegration programmes were not ready when demobilization had been finalized

Box 1: Sequencing problems in the DRC

In the east of the DRC, reintegration programmes were implemented belatedly after the DD phases had been finalized. Tendering procedures and contract negotiations took much time, procurement was costly and demanded additional staff and time. As the war had almost completely destroyed most of the training infrastructure of the DRC, quick remedies failed to surface in a general context of post-war poverty and a fragile security setting. Consequently, most ex-combatants were obliged to wait for over one year for the start of a reintegration course. Initially the MDRP had not counted on such delays and the safety-net disbursement was designed only when it became clear that these ex-fighters had to be ‘entertained’. The sequencing gap between the last D- and the R-phase caused local security problems, as ex-combatants would stay in the towns where the instalments were paid out to them. Also, with hindsight, the timing of the security-net disbursement was inappropriate, because that money should rather have been given during the training period, which was when ex-combatants really needed it. This in turn created problems for the training period as ex-combatants rushed through their courses because they needed to earn money to be able to support their families.

The example of the residual Mayi-Mayi groups active in the south of Kindu province in the DRC suggests that linear sequencing was not the best option. In August 2007 some of these groups still carried weapons, but it became clear that once given some reintegration support they would eventually hand in their guns. In other cases, combatants had never really become disconnected from civilian life because they stayed with their communities in between spells of military activity.

(Source: Douma, P. and Van Laar, S. with Klem, B., *The Struggle after Combat: The Role of NGOs in DDR Processes, DRC Case study* Cordaid, 2008)

Also, *within* the R-phase itself, there is often no clear vision of how the various activities should follow each other. After vocational training was finished, it frequently occurred that no jobs were available for ex-combatants to take up. The different trades had not been studied prior to the training sequences and no thorough analysis was made of the local market or supply and demand of services. In many cases, implementing agencies merely took stock of what was there in terms of training capacity and proceeded to approach the existing informal sector workshops with requests to take on a number of ex-combatants for a fixed fee. The importance of matching training facilities with local labour market opportunities is further discussed in the sections on context analysis and training.

3.3.2. Funding

Although DDR processes should be built on a foundation of national ownership, most countries undergoing DDR do not have the amount of financial and technical resources needed if DDR is to be successful. Technical expertise can always be acquired if financial resources permit. As mentioned earlier, DDR processes are often political instruments and largely depend on the political context in which they take place. Apart from that, reviews highlight the fact that after political will, funding seems to be one of the most serious constraints to DDR. For this reason the international community, as the main provider of financing, has a central role to play in supporting DDR processes.⁴⁵ The limited time horizon and the preponderance of security concerns of the international community, however, frequently resulted in

⁴⁵ Ball and Van de Goor, 2006, pp. 17–18.

resources being used primarily for the DD-phases, leaving inadequate funding for the R-phase. Sometimes the setting-up of reception and processing structures is costly and gobbles up a large proportion of available funds for the entire DDR process. For example, in the DRC, the logistical costs and the setting-up of demobilization centres countrywide took up a relatively large part of the available MDRP funding. Consequently, R-phase activities seem particularly affected by a lack of adequate and timely funding – also as a result of poor planning and sequencing problems – as well as uncertainty on the conceptual level about what can be expected from DDR. Another important factor is that reintegration cannot be funded from assessed budgets from UN DPKO like the DD phases, but only from voluntary funding sources. Since 2003 (as a result of the Brahimi Report) the demobilisation phase has, however, been extended with reinsertion, which has made it possible to pay reinsertion costs out of the assessed budgets. This had some positive effects on closing the gap, but has by far not closed it. It is interesting to note here that increasingly, the voluntary funding resources are coming from private sector actors.

Another related issue is that each bilateral donor has different windows from which it can fund DDR activities. This has made flexible and integrated DDR funding difficult to achieve. Many bilateral development donors cannot or will not finance combatants until they have been demobilized, because of either national legislation or long-standing agency practices.⁴⁶ Additional constraints derive from the OECD–DAC definition of ODA, which excludes expenditures while individuals are considered to be still part of a fighting force. This may challenge efforts to start the R-phase *before* the DD-phases have been completed. However, field staff have in the past found creative ways around such restrictions. For example, “ODA regulations allow infrastructure to be built to support DDR activities, but ultimately used for civilian purposes to be counted as ODA. Additionally, donors can provide additional funding in other areas that allow the government to use some of its own resources for non-ODA eligible DDR activities.”⁴⁷

Notwithstanding the above observations, also political factors play a critical role in the delays to DDR processes and some experts have even pointed out that international actors have often *confused* the impact of political problems on DDR with the capacity of DDR funding modalities. This has led to unrealistic expectations as to the speed with which DDR processes can be carried out, and a tendency to blame financing instruments for delays caused by circumstances beyond the control of those managing the financing instruments.⁴⁸ This again highlights the importance of explicitly taking into account the central importance of the political context in which DDR takes place.

3.4. National ownership⁴⁹

It is interesting to note first that practice illustrates that policy-makers have given different meanings to the term ‘national ownership’. Some view national ownership as a process by which all relevant national actors assume leadership of and responsibility for decisions, ideally implemented by national actors and institutions. According to this interpretation, the national government may require support both to make and implement decisions and recognize that oversight is present. Others define national ownership as giving national actors full authority to make decisions and manage

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 21.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 21.

⁴⁸ Ball and Hendrickson, ‘Phase I Report’, 2005.

⁴⁹ This section largely draws on the findings of Ball and Hendrickson, ‘Phase I Report’, 2005.

resources without any oversight.⁵⁰ Reviews and guidelines frequently cite the importance of national ownership, however it is defined. Yet practice indicates that many DDR processes are primarily externally driven.⁵¹

Reviews suggest that a main policy challenge in relation to national ownership is to find a balance between national leadership and responsibility, and timely and effective implementation.⁵² In almost all DDR processes there has been a trade-off between national leadership and responsibility and the speed and efficiency of implementation. “Considering the time constraints, it may not always be possible for donors to invest as much time and resources as required for getting a strong and committed national counterpart, but this does not mean that national actors should be excluded from the process.”⁵³ Also the capacity of a national government plays a crucial role in making up this balance.

This trade-off is well illustrated by the MDRP mid-term review, comparing experiences from the DDR processes in the DRC and Liberia. In the DRC, for instance, delays were largely caused by unwillingness of Congolese actors to see the peace process move forward. This suggests that a directly executed DDR process with minimal national participation would not have succeeded. In contrast, the decision by the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to initially bypass Liberian actors clearly had an effect on the UN’s ability to execute the DD phase on its own timetable.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Ball and Hendrickson, ‘Phase II Report’, 2005, p. 3.

⁵¹ A clear exception to this is the Colombian DDR process. Office of the High Commissioner for Reintegration, *DDR in Colombia – A situational analysis*, March 2008.

⁵² Ball and Hendrickson, ‘Phase I Report’, 2005, p. 50.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

Box 2: National ownership of the DDR processes

The desire for rapid implementation affects views on the feasibility or desirability of national leadership and responsibility. One of the reasons why (in Liberia) UNMIL, for instance, bypassed the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reinsertion and Reintegration (NCDDRR) was the concern that engaging with national actors would slow down the DDR process.⁵⁵ In the DRC there is perception of at least some members of the international community that the MDRP's approach has slowed down the DDR process. In Burundi, the MDRP faced considerable pressure from other donors to compel the Burundi authorities to approve the national DDR plan. The MDRP, however, judged that the parties were not yet at the stage where they were able to effectively implement a DDR process, and resisted this pressure.

(Source: N. Ball and D. Hendrickson, Review of International Financing Arrangements for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Phase I to Working Group 2 of the Stockholm Initiative on DDR (SIDDR), 2005)

Field reviews confirm that taking into account the political environment in which DDR is taking place is crucial, but that government organizations financing DDR have often ignored it.⁵⁶ DDR usually involves large cash flows into a war-torn and poor society and parties may attempt to 'play' the system to achieve control over how and to whom the resources are being disbursed. In response to that, international actors have often attempted to control the DDR process. Experience in the DRC illustrates the fact that if there is much at stake, both in financial and political terms, DDR processes may be 'held hostage' to an existing political situation if national stakeholders are given control over the DDR process, including over DDR programme financing. Liberia demonstrates the opposite, i.e. that problems arise associated with trying to eliminate national actors from the process entirely.⁵⁷

International actors cite the absence of adequate political will on the part of local actors to participate fully in the peace process as a reason why they – international actors – need to be in the lead. "Other difficulties related to national ownership are limited local capacity and tight timetables for peace operations which can exacerbate the conditions that militate against national ownership. Furthermore, some international actors find it difficult to work with all national DDR stakeholders, particularly national militaries or armed groups."⁵⁸ This is largely due to the fact that donors may view DDR as an entry point to larger and more structural reform processes (within the framework of security sector reform (SSR) whereas domestic security agencies resist such pressure and try to maintain their autonomy. Any attempt at reform, such as screening ex-combatants and former army personnel as part of DDR processes, in complicated political settings where multiple actors compete for hegemony over crucial security and political institutions, will encounter much resistance. For some domestic actors the process of DD is an exclusively domestic affair primarily controlled by the national army and the Ministry of Defence.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 37.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 37.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 3.

⁵⁸ Ball and Hendrickson, 'Phase II Report', 2005, p. 3.

3.5. Chain approach to implementation, capacity-building and market distortion at the local level

3.5.1. Tendering

Typically in many post-conflict settings bidding procedures tend to exclude small local NGOs to the advantage of larger established international NGOs. Open tendering is a risky option in a context where national agencies are often weak, unable to run operations smoothly and do not always operate professionally, owing to a lack of coordination, lack of qualified personnel, lack of logistical capacity or a lack of funds.

Again, in the DRC this process is exemplified by the fact that larger foreign NGOs won the Commission Nationale de la Démobilisation et Réinsertion (CONADER) tenders, as they had larger implementation and logistical capacities as well as reserved capital to cover costs in advance awaiting the transfer of the MDRP funds. In fact, the World Bank had prescribed such a system, ruling out the possibility of an open and fair tendering process. The World Bank simply wanted CONADER to work with so-called strategic partners, i.e. large multilateral and bilateral organizations and international NGOs (INGOs) with significant implementing, logistical and financial capacities. The World Bank feared that otherwise, CONADER would be swamped by small contractors working with tiny groups of ex-combatants, which would be disastrous for programme management. These strategic partners were supposed to contract out to local NGOs.

Therefore, (I)NGOs mainly became service providers in a DDR system that had been conceptualized without their contribution. However, the DDR process had become a market and ex-combatants represented money. Many larger INGOs, UN agencies and private consultancy firms fought hard to be able to win tenders for MDRP resources. Meanwhile, the prospective partners were selected on the basis of a limited tendering process, which at the outset had already excluded local organizations. Tender conditions specifying a ten per cent contribution from each strategic partner (and in the specific case of European Union (EU) funding requiring an office presence in an EU country) automatically excluded potential local bidders. Hence, there was no level playing field and external donors engaged in, as it were, an exercise of pre-emptive damage control anticipating the existence of domestic systemic flaws among potential local implementers.

3.5.2. Capacity-building

It has been common for reintegration programmes to contract with specialist partners to deliver certain components of reintegration assistance.⁵⁹ This strategy has been promoted as a means of capitalizing on the expertise of individual agencies in particular aspects of reintegration programming, of enabling programme activities to be launched quickly and of creating an environment for national programme staff to learn from more experienced partners. The MDRP 2007 review illustrates that partnerships with local stakeholders may strengthen the effectiveness of reintegration programmes in the short term and creates synergies which promote longer-term community development.⁶⁰

This review also indicates that such partnerships can build capacity among local stakeholders to carry on related activities beyond the life of the reintegration

⁵⁹ Among others programmes carried out under the MDRP.

⁶⁰ Different partners can support different aspects of programming, e.g. content support, implementation, financing of communication.

programme. A review of the Angola Demobilization and Reintegration Programme,⁶¹ for example, found that beyond its immediate objectives, the programme had also contributed to strengthening the capacity of the local and international NGOs it had partnered to implement reintegration activities.⁶² The review particularly highlighted the impact of the programme in encouraging NGOs to begin to shift from emergency operations towards ongoing development projects and to strengthen their administration, fiscal management and their accountability, benefits which will endure beyond the programme itself. Investing in the capacity of partner organizations seems to be particularly valuable in regions where the infrastructure and community structures were destroyed by conflict, where community-based organizations are young or few, and where little structured, funded development activity has previously taken place.⁶³

3.5.3. Market disruption at the local level

Research has indicated that, even though implementation chains do not have to be problematic, there are possible negative aspects such as market disruption at a local level in tendering procedures.⁶⁴ Typically, for the DDR programme in the DRC large international organizations such as the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) were contracted by the national co-ordinating agency CONADER for a specific province. Subsequently, these UN agencies would subcontract national NGOs such as Caritas, or INGOs with local branches such as the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), to implement the reintegration projects on their behalf. These NGOs in turn would approach local NGOs, training centres, individual craftsmen or small enterprises to train the individual ex-combatants in the specific skills they had opted for.

The assessment of DDR in the DRC highlighted the fact that smaller organizations progressively ended up with less money to get the job done, whereas larger organizations took up most of the funds for expensive supervision and co-ordination overheads, which could not be accounted for when looking at field presence, time and staff allocated.⁶⁵ Likewise, institutional survival tactics, competition between agencies and inequalities between local and national NGOs and INGOs were common challenges. The World Bank had prescribed a system of strategic partners – mostly INGOs and technical bilateral co-operation agencies – which contracted local NGOs. Foreign agencies, therefore, often acted as interlocutors and the resulting chain system raised overhead costs while increasing the number of layers between decision-makers and beneficiaries. In the DRC this system also marginalized national and local NGOs as they ended up at the lower end of the chain, or were outright ignored.⁶⁶

Implementation chains can thus contribute to the effectiveness of the implementation programme, but policy-makers should carefully take into account the side-effects when planning and designing DDR programmes. It may save resources and time, but might also have adverse effects and exclude local and national NGOs during the implementation process. A related problem, as mentioned earlier, is that corruption and exclusion of smaller, local organizations may hinder the local capacity-building process. This can potentially constrain the setting-up of subsequent programmes by

⁶¹ MDRP, *Lessons Learned as Best Practice in Angola Reintegration Process*, MDRP, Presentation at the Advisory Committee Meeting, 13 December 2007, World Bank, Paris.

⁶² MDRP, Joint Donor Review, 2007, p. 27.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁶⁴ Interview with UNDP official in Bunia during Cordaid research 2007. Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, 'Synthesis Study', 2008, p. 33.

⁶⁵ Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, 'Synthesis Study', 2008, p. 25.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

local actors to take over the task of longer-term economic reintegration and reconstruction, after DDR processes have been finalized.

3.6. The role of the local private sector⁶⁷

Even though the three phases of DDR are strongly interlinked elements of one process, there are significant differences in the type of actors involved in the three phases. The DD-phases, implemented soon after a political agreement has been reached, require the involvement of actors primarily dealing with technical aspects of the process.⁶⁸ The R-phase is more related to socio-economic aspects of reconstruction and requires the involvement of a number of different actors. Yet, practice suggests that these different roles and objectives have often not been identified properly, limiting insight into how the various actors can best be supported. The following section will focus on the potential role of the local private sector in reintegration efforts.

Reviews on the role of the private sector in reintegration processes are rare. The few reviews carried out on this topic, however, showed that local business actors *can* play a useful role. Involvement of the local private sector may potentially enhance longer-term economic reconstruction and development efforts. The most effective area for such engagement is through *job creation* and *trust-building*.⁶⁹ It was also indicated, however, that efforts to involve the local private sector so far have not always been successful.⁷⁰ A number of critical factors need to be addressed if business is to play a substantial role in reintegration programmes, whether considered part of DDR processes or not. Concerns have been raised in many initiatives about, for instance, retaliation against business representatives and scheme participants, as well as mistrust of ex-combatants on the part of potential employers.⁷¹

Reviews highlight several key lessons learned from efforts to involve local business actors in reintegration programmes.⁷² First, in order to help ensure that the opportunities offered to ex-combatants by international donors fit better with private sector needs, businesses need to be more involved during the *planning stages* of DDR if they are to have a more substantive role.⁷³ Second, in order to ensure a constructive contribution from the private sector, it is important to improve clarity on the *roles and possibilities* of the private sector to reintegration processes.⁷⁴

Practice shows that also the informal private sector and smaller formal entrepreneurs play an important role in the reintegration phase. Both reinsertion and reintegration

⁶⁷ This section is largely based on a report from International Alert on the role of local businesses in peacebuilding efforts: International Alert, *Local Business, Local Peace: the peacebuilding potential of the domestic private sector*, 2006.

⁶⁸ Apart from army and defence actors, also NGOs play an important role during the DDR phase, among others with respect to the screening process.

⁶⁹ International Alert, 2006, p. 152.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 151.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 151.

⁷² Ibid., p. 151. For example in Somalia, a partnership between UNICEF, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), a local peace-building NGO and a Somali telecommunications company established an agreement on a programme for the rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers. The company provided training and offered placements to graduates at the end of the programme.

⁷³ International Alert, 2006, p. 148.

⁷⁴ Office of the High Commissioner for Reintegration, March 2008.

activities, for instance, rely heavily on the informal sector for vocational training programmes. Tailors, carpenters, welders and other professionals commonly took on limited numbers of demobilized combatants as trainees in exchange for minimal training fees.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the absorption capacity of this sector is understandably limited, and reviews indicate that it was often overestimated. Local entrepreneurs from the informal sector did not always have the capacity in terms of required skills to engage in the provision of training themselves.⁷⁶

Considering the potentially useful contribution of the private sector to the success and sustainability of reintegration processes, more time and resources should ideally be spent on the contribution of local private sector actors to reintegration processes. The few reviews carried out on this topic indicate that the local private sector ought to be involved already during the early stages of the planning processes, in order to map their possibilities and willingness. Boxes 3 and 4 describe the experience of attempts to involve the private sector in DDR processes in Afghanistan and Colombia.

Box 3: The Afghanistan New Beginning Programme (ANBP)

The DDR programme, as part of the ANBP, explicitly envisaged a role for the private sector, but achieved mixed results. Former militiamen were offered a chance either to start their own business or to join a training or apprenticeship scheme run by NGOs and businesses in partnership with the ANBP. The incentive offered to business for engaging in the programme was the opportunity to employ DDR trainees at no cost for 4–12 months. Ex-combatants would be treated like any other trainee and supervised by the NGO that signed up as implementing partner. The NGO received funding from the ANBP for the reintegration activities. Early surveys indicated that small- to medium-sized construction firms played the biggest role in offering meaningful opportunities, followed by small shops.

Although official figures do not exist, some estimates put the failure rate of businesses set up by ex-combatants at between 60 and 80 per cent. The factors explaining this include the small size of the initial ANBP start-up grant and the recipients' limited ability to manage credit. Another relevant factor that the report indicates is the country's level of poverty, which has significantly reduced the purchasing power of the local population.

(Source: International Alert, Local Business, Local Peace: the peacebuilding potential of the domestic private sector, 2006)

⁷⁵ Douma and Van Laar, with Klem, 'DRC Case Study', 2008, p. 57.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 58.

Box 4: Private sector involvement in Colombia

In Colombia also, efforts were made to involve the local private sector in the reintegration process.⁷⁷ Initially, however, there were mixed results. An impediment in mobilizing the private sector for DDR was poor management and co-ordination on the part of government. In the view of many private sector actors the government had not designed a concrete plan to engage the private sector, which led to doubt as to how the private sector could contribute. Could ex-combatants become micro-entrepreneurs, could they be trained in a short period of time to compete in the labour market and would companies have any guarantees? Above all, business feared being left to bear the full legal and political responsibility for their reintegration.

National and local authorities have consequently refined their approach in a bid to win private sector support for reintegration activities.⁷⁸ One improvement was the design of specific schemes and proposals, such as the development of agribusinesses involving ex-combatants. The Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, which manages the paramilitary reintegration jointly with the Minister of Interior, has come up with a model to set up agribusinesses in which former combatants can work and make profits as part-time owners. Also, the Minister of Interior has committed state contractors to hiring individually demobilized combatants for road-building projects. Firms now receive financial incentives, such a tax reduction, and the state covers social security costs.⁷⁹

(Sources: International Alert, *Local Business*, *Local Peace: the peacebuilding potential of the domestic private sector*, 2006; and Office of the High Commissioner for Reintegration, *DDR in Colombia – A Situational Analysis*, March 2008)

3.7. Evaluations

Current reviews point out that there is a systematic lack of evaluation and monitoring processes on the *impact and outcomes* of reintegration programmes. Thus far evaluations have primarily focused on programme outputs and *achievements*, i.e. they compared the benchmarks with the actual implementation performance (for example, did as many ex-combatants benefit from a specific component of the programme as expected?). In other words, evaluations have commonly measured the number of weapons collected, the range of ex-combatants processed and the funds disbursed – the so-called ‘process indicators’ as opposed to ‘performance indicators’. Several reasons are mentioned why especially performance indicators have been watered down or abandoned: 1) they are typically hard to measure;⁸⁰ 2) it may be still *too early* to evaluate the effectiveness of reintegration programmes like the MDRP, especially in terms of *sustainable* reintegration; 3) some policy-makers find that impact assessments do not fall within the scope of DDR processes.

Although performance indicators are important outcome markers, practice suggests that quantitative measures of outputs may not provide a robust measure of programme

⁷⁷ Note that the level of economy in Colombia is much higher than in most post-conflict countries and other fragile states.

⁷⁸ In January 2006 the government designed a three-person high-level team to co-ordinate contacts with businesses willing to help.

⁷⁹ International Alert, 2006, p. 150.

⁸⁰ Specht, 2003, p. 27.

performance or impact.⁸¹ Impact assessments, on the other hand, focus on evaluating the consequences of the programme for ex-combatants, their families and the communities of settlement⁸² and may also take into account the more macro-economic effects of DDR programmes. As some World Bank studies have indicated, DDR programmes can have several types of impact on the national economy. A significant number of people usually enter the civilian labour market, which may potentially contribute to the gross national product (GNP) and overall tax revenues of the state. More generally, DDR programmes may contribute to overall economic gains from improved security in society and a restructuring of government spending. Improving our insight on how reintegration processes affect other reconstruction programmes, including socio-economic recovery, seems particularly important in order to enable policy-makers to better adjust and link programmes complementing the R-phase. This again emphasizes the central importance of an integrated approach to DDR processes in general, including integrated context analyses as well as the subsequent integrated strategy development.

⁸¹ MDRP, 2007, p. 30.

⁸² Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, *The Transition from War to Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa*, 1997, p. 28.

4. Implementation

4.1. Introduction

Policy-makers and practitioners are faced with a number of challenges, including continued warfare and sometimes a lack of political will from the armed groups or government. These challenges, however, surpass the abilities of a DDR programme at large and they underline the fact that DDR cannot drive military or political change; it can at best consolidate wider transitions. However, in addition to these contextual challenges, reviews point also to important shortcomings with regard to programme implementation. These include, among others, inadequate or insufficient training, and difficulties in finding sustained employment and in implementing the eligibility criteria.⁸³ Reviews of DDR processes in the DRC and Sierra Leone also noted the exclusion of certain beneficiaries (particularly women and children) and in some cases problems related to the societal acceptance of ex-combatants. Typically, many of these difficulties were also indicated in earlier evaluation documents, but have not yet resulted in strategies to overcome these challenges.⁸⁴

The following aspects will be discussed in this section:

- Eligibility criteria
- Urban and rural reintegration
- Type of benefits
- NGO involvement.

4.2. Eligibility criteria

As discussed in Section 1, opinions differ as to the desirability of expanding the scope of DDR programmes to encompass both community rehabilitation and development as the main mechanism for reintegrating ex-combatants. This section instead aims to set out experiences in relation to targeting and dealing with different needs *within* groups of ex-combatants and difficulties with the *implementation* of set criteria. DDR programmes require the development of eligibility criteria in order to regulate who will receive benefits. They should ideally be tailored to the objectives of DDR processes and the operational environment in which they are implemented.

Firstly, practice has shown that in most of the environments in which DDR is currently undertaken, the line between combatants and non-combatants is thin, especially as far as the armed opposition is concerned.⁸⁵ There has been no generally applicable definition of an ex-combatant. Contemporary wars typically involve

⁸³ Douma and Klem, withn Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, 'Synthesis Study', 2008, p. 25.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 25.

⁸⁵ Ball and Van de Goor, 2006, p. 14.

asymmetric warfare and ‘irregular’ groups, i.e. non- or semi-combat members, such as cooks, porters, spies, and sex slaves. They may also include cadres who are gradually drawn into the fighting: these are normally porters, but fight if needed. Many armed groups consist of part-time combatants. Some of them may carry modern weapons; others may be armed with a knife or a slingshot.⁸⁶ The types of ex-combatants who enter the programmes clearly influence the type of support provided during the R-phase.

Reviews point out, for instance, that reintegration programmes frequently have not taken into account the relationship of ex-combatants with the communities in which they were (re)integrated. For some ex-combatants, home may have gone, because their village no longer exists. Some may not be able to return, while others fear reprisals or enmity from their former community members. Though some fighters may be seen as legitimate or heroic, many are also despised because of atrocities committed. It seems to be useful to distinguish between on the one hand rebels and fighters, who fought away from their homesteads and may have abused the local resident population groups, and on the other hand those who merely defended their own villages or territories and never left their homes. Making this distinction is important for the development of strategies and further operationalisation of programmes.

Secondly, even when clear criteria are formulated, evaluations indicate that also the *implementation* of the criteria is a challenge. Even though the UN Integrated DDR Standards (IDDRS) stipulate that eligibility for DDR programmes needs to be adjusted to each different situation, programmes have often selected people on the basis of their having handed in a weapon or, for instance, of their ability to assemble, use and dismantle a gun. This practice has come under heavy criticism, because it falsely *qualified* some people (*non-cadres* with a gun at home, or associates of commanders who receive a gun simply to enrol for DDR benefits) and falsely *disqualified* others (combatants who did not have a modern gun or had it taken from them, or members of the faction in non-combat positions).⁸⁷ Technical innovations such as iris scans and online interconnected databanks can help avoid double enrolment of the same individuals into DDR programmes, but they are not sufficient to help avoid the practices of DDR impostors. The flexibility of the criteria themselves, and the flexible application of these criteria during intake, remain critical.

4.3. Urban vs rural reintegration

Practice suggests that urban and rural reintegration programmes require different approaches. In general, reintegration into *urban* areas has proven to be more complex and requires more time to achieve.⁸⁸ By contrast, *rural* reintegration is commonly considered more successful and easier to implement. However, this may well be limited to those who really want to be reintegrated into largely agricultural reintegration trajectories. Many ex-combatants, and a high percentage of those who used to live in rural areas before the war, have been changed by the war and aspire to getting a job in the urban setting. One of the most common problems observed with urban reintegration is the tight labour market, which often has a limited absorption capacity. Rural reintegration programmes are generally faced with the discrepancy between expectations of ex-combatants (often influenced by government promises)

⁸⁶ B. Pouligny, *The Politics and Anti-Politics of Contemporary Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programmes*, Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva, September 2004. Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, ‘Synthesis Study’, 2008, pp. 14–15.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 14–15.

⁸⁸ CICS, 2006, p. 16.

and the realities of an opportunity-constrained environment in terms of access to land. In both cases, it should not be forgotten, that next to ex-combatants there may also be returning IDPs and refugees. When it concerns large numbers, it may increase tensions considering the tight labour market and access to land and affect the political and security context of a DDR process.

4.3.1. Urban reintegration programmes

Reviews point out that given the relative complexity of urban labour markets, support measures for urban reintegration generally need to be more diverse and of longer duration than those of rural reintegration. Practice indicates that urban reintegration is often hampered by a lack of skills and a depressed labour market. Urban reintegration processes seem to be more complex than rural programmes because of: 1) the diverse social and economic backgrounds of ex-combatants; 2) the tightness of the urban labour market; and 3) the different measures required to assist ex-combatants; 4) changes in mentality. By contrast, rural settlers possessed, by and large, the skills necessary for reaching self-sufficiency in the short term.⁸⁹

Training

As a lack of skills was indicated as an important constraining factor in urban reintegration processes, the training of ex-combatants seems vital. Vocational training can provide ex-combatants with marketable skills. Reviews indicate, however, a number of critical aspects which generally relate to the fact that the training provided often did not match local market requirements, opportunities and the expectations raised among ex-combatants.

Reviews show that training has often been too short for ex-combatants to obtain the skills required to reintegrate into the formal or informal economy. An often cited example relating to this topic is the training provided to ex-combatants in Sierra Leone. As discussed earlier, commonly mentioned reasons were a lack of funding or practitioners' uncertainty about when support should be considered completed.

In other cases, practice strongly suggests that training programmes were targeted at inappropriate livelihoods, in an attempt to fulfill market requirements. Generally, too little attention had been paid to the notion that skills development should be tailored to the social and economic context in question, including relevant educational and employment opportunities.⁹⁰ Consequently, economic sectors which *could* absorb labour⁹¹ were not always exploited properly. In other cases, too many ex-combatants were trained for one particular sector, making it impossible for the local market to

⁸⁹ Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1996, p. 13. In both Namibia and Ethiopia, for instance, the low level of skills of ex-combatants meant that they were ill equipped to find gainful employment in the formal sector.

⁹⁰ UNDPKO, *Disarmament, Demobilization and reintegration of Ex-Combatants in a Peacekeeping Environment: principles and guidelines*, 1999,[in the Bibliography, it's 2000] para. 166. Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1996. In the DRC, after the training had been completed, ex-combatants could often not find work. In fact, the various trades should have been studied prior to the training sequences as it is imperative to know whether these students will find a job once they have finished their training. No thorough analysis was made of the local labour market or of supply and demand in terms of services. In Sierra Leone there have been complaints that reintegration packages have been too short and directed at the wrong job skills. Poorly directed training and assistance in terms of returning ex-combatants to civilian life is said to be a common pattern of many DDR processes. Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, 'Synthesis Study', 2008, p. 28.

⁹¹ A good example is the agricultural sector in Sierra Leone.

absorb. “These problems are partly a consequence of the opportunities offered and partly the result of poor choices made by ex-combatants themselves.”⁹² Because of these shortcomings, reintegration activities provided mostly short-term benefits and opportunities to ex-fighters, and failed to deliver sustainable results.⁹³

These observations are related to the issue discussed earlier, namely the importance of due preparation processes, including context assessments combined with proper socio-economic profiling of ex-combatants. The 2007 MDRP review also emphasizes that policy-makers should be aware that matching training options to local economic opportunities and traditions and the supply of vocational skills to demand is crucial in order to maximize the impact of vocational training. “Labour market surveys and studies of traditional production and service patterns in both formal and informal sectors are a prerequisite to developing appropriate vocational training options, particularly in post-conflict settings with disrupted or rapidly evolving markets.”⁹⁴

In addition to that, reviews pointed out that formal administration requirements for entry into training institutes have been a constraint to ex-combatants without formal education. Also, if training is a central element of support, then technical capacity of training providers will need to be identified and if necessary improved.⁹⁵

Employment creation

Another aspect commonly constraining urban reintegration has been the tightness of the urban labour market in post-conflict settings, making employment creation an important aspect supporting reintegration (whether or not considered part of DDR). As already mentioned, reviews indicate that one of the main constraining factors for DDR programmes is the economic context into which ex-combatants are (re)integrated. Especially in the medium to longer term, employment and livelihood opportunities for ex-combatants are the key to durable integration and may contribute to preventing ex-combatants from taking up arms again. Former combatants with a decent job or livelihood will be less prone to re-recruitment than those who are unemployed and destitute.⁹⁶ Furthermore, and perhaps crucial to the issue of training, is the prevailing lack of formal training institutes, as many have been destroyed by warfare. Also, many trainers have been killed or have become refugees or IDPs as a result of the war.

Practice suggests that the creation of public sector employment *can* be effective in preventing unemployment in the short run. This may include public works schemes, limited absorption into the civil service (including the civilian police force) and the employment in public services (e.g. the health sector). Special labour-intensive public works may provide immediate employment opportunities for a large number of unskilled ex-combatants, for instance in the environmental field (reforestation), to refurbish obsolete or destroyed infrastructure (e.g. road construction), as well as ex-combatants in security agencies (e.g. guarding commercial premises).⁹⁷

⁹² Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, ‘Synthesis Study’, 2008, p.27.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 28.

⁹⁴ MDRP, 2007, p. 13.

⁹⁵ CICS, 2006, p. 48.

⁹⁶ UNOSAA and Government of the DRC, 2006, p. 10. However, it should be noted that the recurrence of violence also has strong political dimensions and in many cases should not be solely attributed to economic factors.

⁹⁷ Note that some concerns have been raised concerning the potential of the latter type of employment to turn ex-fighters into ordinary members of the community in cases such as Somalia where tens of thousands of ex-combatants are employed as security guards in the capital.

In theory, the benefit of public works projects is twofold. Ex-combatants are gainfully employed and communities benefit from the reconstruction of conflict-affected infrastructure such as roads, water and sanitation systems, schools, health facilities and other community buildings. Public works projects that target both ex-combatants and members of the wider community also potentially offer the additional benefit of encouraging social integration and networking.⁹⁸

The 2007 MDRP review, however, indicates that even though public works programmes can be a useful aspect of reintegration programmes, they have given rise to some concerns.⁹⁹ For example, public works programmes have frequently been ineffective in teaching or reinforcing skills on which sustainable livelihoods can be built. Although such programmes tended to generate substantial interest among ex-combatants, they were also costly, difficult to sustain and generally required a large up-front investment of time and financial resources in order to prepare the necessary logistical and security arrangements.

Moreover, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) has raised concerns regarding the notion that such programmes are frequently a political expedient forced on governments when reintegration programmes fail to provide sustainable development options, and that these public works schemes themselves cannot be sustainable until economic circumstances allow for the expansion of public services.¹⁰⁰ [ok?] A better alternative, as suggested by UNDP and the MDRP reviews, would be to create or find job placements for ex-combatants and develop incentives to encourage employers to hire or provide apprenticeships to ex-combatants.¹⁰¹ Other experts suggest that the preferable course would be to expand *ongoing* public works programmes to cover [i.e. 'take on'?] ex-combatants, rather than to start new ones. Also, large-scale absorption of ex-combatants should ideally be avoided, because such employment could foster ex-combatants' dependence on the government and might have negative budgetary implications.¹⁰²

The National DDR Programme in the DRC, for instance, explored the possibility of including public works projects within the programme's mix of reintegration options as a means of creating more visible links between individual support and community gains. Significant drawbacks for the implementation of such programmes were, among others, that the initiative was considered overly complex, expensive and unlikely to impart sufficient marketable and specialized skills to participants. Experience with the process in Angola has also shown that grouping together large numbers of ex-combatants can renew insecurity and foster new dependence on organized programming.¹⁰³

The creation of employment is critical and forms part of many donor policies on post-conflict reconstruction. Yet, practice confirms that there are no easy solutions to job creation in post-conflict states, often characterized by shattered economies and extremely tight labour markets. More research seems required on means of involving other sectors such as the private sector, small- and medium-sized enterprises in particular. This topic has also been raised in Section 2, above.

⁹⁸ MDRP, 2007, pp. 16–17.

⁹⁹ MDRP, 2007.

¹⁰⁰ UNDP, 2005, para. 5.6.6.

¹⁰¹ MDRP, 2007, p. 15. UNDP, 2005, para. 5.6.6. CICS, p. 16.

¹⁰² Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1997, pp. 22–23.

¹⁰³ MDRP, Joint Donor Review, 2007.

4.3.2. Rural reintegration programmes

Reviews point out that rural reintegration programmes are often more successful than urban reintegration programmes. They commonly indicate that access to arable land and supportive social capital are the main determinants of successful reintegration.¹⁰⁴ Any strategy for rural reintegration should ideally identify suitable areas for resettlement and ensure that ex-combatants have a clear title and secure rights to land, either individually or as part of a resettlement programme.¹⁰⁵

Reviews indicate that an important factor is the commonly observed discrepancy between expectations of ex-combatants (often influenced by government promises) and the realities of an opportunity-constrained environment.¹⁰⁶ There seems to be a risk of unrealistic promises of land and unemployment in order to achieve short-term security aims, which cannot be fulfilled and may lead to instability later.¹⁰⁷ It should also not be forgotten that next to ex-combatants, there are often also large numbers of refugees and IDPs returning home, potentially contributing to political and security tensions. Even though this challenge is well beyond the means and time frame of a DDR programme, land reform and access to land require attention in parallel and subsequent economic reconstruction programmes in support of reintegration efforts.¹⁰⁸

Reviews thus emphasize the need for context analyses and the socio-economic profiling of ex-combatants in advance of programme appraisal, in order to improve the relevance and design of programme interventions. An *ex ante* analysis of the relationship between former combatants and the availability of arable land allows time to inform local officials of the pertinent problems and seek early solutions by identifying alternative sources of land or employment.¹⁰⁹

The majority of ex-combatants in Uganda, for instance, were expected to and eventually did return to rural areas and start farming activities. With a large number of ex-combatants settling with families in established communities, access to land was potentially a major issue notwithstanding the fact that most ex-combatants returned to the district of their origin, where many had rights to land in one form or another. The potential constraint to economic and social reintegration was acknowledged from the outset. The programme attempted to quantify this constraint on the basis of the population density on cultivable land, percentage of cultivable land used and the number of ex-combatants settling in any particular district. A settlement index was made on the basis of: 1) land tenure arrangements; 2) socially acceptable use of land; and 3) soil quality, thus taking into account the differences among districts.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1996, p. 277.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 13 and 87.

¹⁰⁷ B. Hoffman and C. Gleichmann, *Programmes for Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants: Changing perspectives in development and security*, 2000, p. 33.

¹⁰⁸ Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, 'Synthesis Study', 2008, p. 14.

¹⁰⁹ Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1996, p. 333.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 224.

4.4. Types of benefits

A wide range of support has been offered to former combatants and their dependants by DDR programmes over the years. A distinction can be made between *benefits* which are available to all who are accepted into the DDR programme and *opportunities* for which former combatants need to compete with other members of their community. If the longer-term reintegration assistance is not considered part of the formal DDR process, it is nonetheless possible for donors to earmark a certain amount of their longer-term recovery and development assistance for former combatants or their dependants.¹¹¹

Reviews generally specify that policy-makers should pay more attention to tailoring benefits to the needs of different categories of combatants, according to, e.g. background of ex-combatants, the time they have served with an armed group, age, or specific needs of female ex-combatants. Practice has shown, for instance, a need to adjust benefits for leaders of groups of ex-combatants. Also, women, children and those with disabilities require different kinds of support. Box 7 illustrates the fact that DDR process in the DRC has typically not paid attention to the specific needs of women.

Box 5: Attention to gender aspects in the DDR programme in the DRC

A major reason for criticism of the MDRP programme in the DRC was that, as the MDRP never took into account the idea of female ex-combatants, the programme did not pay adequate attention to gender. A recent review indicates that CONADER, Mission des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo (MONUC) and the UNDP Unit for Rapid Response Mechanisms (UNDP-MRR) have not undertaken sufficient action to gender-sensitize the disarmament and demobilization trajectory and the UNDP Unit for Community Recovery (UNDP-ComRec) has not paid sufficient attention to the different community reinsertion and reintegration needs of women and men. There was a lack of gender expertise to address a number of issues, including to gain more insight into the number and roles of women in the militias; to clearly decide whether women associated with the armed forces were regarded as direct beneficiaries; to actually trace and identify these women in the militias in order to inform them about the benefits of the programme; and to take into account the different encampment and reinsertion and reintegration needs of men and women in the militias.

(Source: T. Bouta, *Gender and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration in the DRC*, Conflict Research Unit, Netherlands Institute for International Relations, Clingendael, March 2005)

The reintegration of commanders has proved vital to the success of DDR. Reviews thus indicate a need to distinguish commanders from 'normal ex-combatants'. Practice strongly suggests that in many cases commanders and leaders of armed groups play an important role in the implementation of DDR programmes, as they commonly determine who gets demobilized and receives a share of their reinsertion payments. Also, military leaders can play a large role in persuading people to abandon violence. Many of those demobilized are not people who have fought, but are relatives and others with personal ties to the commander or people over whom the commander has control.

¹¹¹ Ball and Van de Goor, 2006, p. 15.

In some cases efforts have been made to sever commanders' ties with foot soldiers, breaking the command structure of armed groups. More lucrative benefits (political power, access to state patronage, leading positions in the state army, special training programmes) have also been offered to persuade commanders to abandon their position.¹¹² In Afghanistan, for instance, a commander-specific programme has been applied. The Commander Incentive Programme (CIP), acknowledges high-ranking commanders who have fully complied with the DDR process by nominating them for government appointments, redundancy payments and economic and non-economic packages.¹¹³ Reviews also point to difficulties in this regard, i.e. that some international actors might be reluctant to pay for commanders, who may have a background in criminal activities..¹¹⁴

4.4.1. The use of cash benefits

Another policy challenge, as commonly highlighted in reviews and evaluation documents, is to find the appropriate balance between monetized and in-kind support during DDR processes. As monetized support is the most commonly used, the following sections will focus on assistance provided in cash. Policy-makers and practitioners differ in opinion, however, as to the effectiveness of cash payments for *reinsertion* benefits.

A clear distinction needs to be made between cash payments for *securing disarmament* and cash payments for *reinsertion or reintegration benefits*. Experience suggests that the former is least effective. The main reason for this is that, even though cash for securing disarmament provides financial incentives for those ex-combatants who voluntarily disarm, it may lead to misperception of the programme as being 'cash for weapons'. In West Africa, for instance, ex-combatants have gone through demobilization centres several times, receiving cash benefits on each occasion. Cash incentives also contributed to the cross-border flow of weapons by armed groups, which move from one country to the next to exploit more attractive cash-for-weapons programmes.¹¹⁵

Policy-makers and practitioners differ in their opinion, however, as to the effectiveness of cash payments for *reinsertion* benefits. Some experts indicate that cash payments for reinsertion can be very effective.¹¹⁶ Accordingly, these reviews highlight the fact that the history of DDR programmes shows numerous examples of beneficiaries monetizing their benefits, which indicates that what ex-combatants need is in fact cash. They also stress that cash support enables ex-combatants to purchase items according to their own preferences and needs, that beyond direct benefits to ex-combatants, cash payments can have a positive impact on the wider community of settlement and that cash used for social and productive investments can stimulate the local economy and strengthen the local banking sector.¹¹⁷ In addition, other experts have pointed out that it is harder to deliver in-kind assistance than cash and that in-kind support has in some cases led to greater opportunities for corruption.¹¹⁸

¹¹² Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, 'Synthesis Report', 2008, p. 17.

¹¹³ Peacebuilding Initiative, *Disarmament, Demobilization, Reinsertion and Reintegration*, preliminary version, March 2008, p. 33.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹¹⁵ CICS, 2006.

¹¹⁶ Expert opinion N. Ball, 2008.

¹¹⁷ MDRP, 2007, p. 7.

¹¹⁸ Ball and Van de Goor, 2006, pp. 16–17.

By contrast, other practitioners clearly state that cash-oriented assistance packages have not been effective or sustainable and have exaggerated social tensions between ex-combatants and civilians.¹¹⁹ Cash payments can, for instance, be perceived by community members and war victims as being unfair. Therefore, cash payments are a potentially dangerous proposition, as many ex-combatants may consider cash payment as a war bonus and a premium for ‘services’ rendered. Civilians may easily come to view payment in cash as the wrong signal in a fragile and largely destroyed economic context. Some practitioners recognize that it may not be possible to change the practice of providing cash benefits, as expectations have already been raised. Rather, they tend to advocate a different way of providing cash benefits, i.e. cash given as business start-up capital. This approach is in accordance with the line taken by UNDP which has pointed out that it is important to link cash payments to work and services, to help avoid the perception that this is pay for participating in conflict and a reward for war efforts, thus legitimizing their role in the conflict.¹²⁰ The option of using the majority of cash benefits for business start-up capital is further discussed in the following section.

A main policy challenge is therefore to separate the DD process from the payment of reinsertion benefits as well as distributing the reinsertion benefits in such a way as to maximize the likelihood that families, i.e. women and children, benefit from cash assistance for male ex-combatants and that sustainable results are achieved where possible.

4.4.2. Adequate amounts of cash benefits during the R-phase

The 2007 MDRP review indicates that there should ideally be a difference between cash payments during the *reinsertion* period and cash payments aimed at *longer-term reintegration* programmes. The MDRP review states that successful reinsertion is best supported by smaller amounts in frequent and regular payments, whereas longer-term economic reintegration is ideally supported through larger amounts provided in fewer instalments.¹²¹ The review indicates that adequate amounts of payment should depend on the ultimate goals. Smaller and more frequent transfers (monthly or bi-monthly) tend to favour transitional safety support and are thus advised when the cash benefits are intended for *consumption purposes* only.¹²² Larger and less frequent transfers tend to favour productive *investments*.¹²³ Lump-sum payments have the advantage of offering ex-combatants the opportunity to make up-front investments, which can be harder to achieve through smaller instalment payments.¹²⁴

However, MDRP and UNDP reviews also indicate drawbacks of larger lump-sum payments for reintegration, such as higher inflationary effects on the local community, increased security risks to ex-combatants and families and greater risks of money mismanagement. Therefore, even if cash benefits are to be used for investment purposes, payments in two or three large instalments are suggested as a better

¹¹⁹ I. Specht, ‘Community Based Reintegration in the DRC’ (preliminary draft), forthcoming in 2008.

¹²⁰ CICS, 2006, p. 12. UNDP, 2005, para. 5.4.4.

¹²¹ MDRP, 2007, presentation on reinsertion benefits, Paris, December 2008.

¹²² Ibid. Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1997.

¹²³ MDRP, 2007. For ‘pure reinsertion’ support the threshold for recurring spending patterns is between two to three times the value of a basic food basket. For productive investments (promoting reintegration) the threshold is between six and eight times the value of a basic food basket.

¹²⁴ Ibid., pp. 7–8 and MDRP presentation on the impact of cash payments, World Bank, Paris, December 2007. Moreover, participants in skills training tend to allocate cash payments to more productive uses, affecting the flexibility of economic reintegration.

option.¹²⁵ Amounts should be large enough to pay for equipment or to use as collateral for loans. Furthermore, ex-combatants who lack skills and experience with cash management, investment and formal banking systems can find it difficult to maximize productive use of lump-sum payments.¹²⁶ The use of bank accounts seems particularly appropriate when large payments are made in two or three instalments, but requires insight into the capacity of the banking system beforehand, especially in rural areas.¹²⁷ Making payments through banks has the added benefit of educating ex-combatants about formal financial processes, which may eventually contribute to the rural capital formation and thus the development of the rural banking system. Therefore, if policy-makers opt for cash benefits, they should decide at the outset which is the intended purpose of the support – consumption or investment.

However, as mentioned earlier, some practitioners and policy-makers assert that practice has shown cash benefits to be not effective or sustainable. They advocate that the majority of the cash-oriented assistance packages be given as business start-up capital after the completion of business training and the development of an approved business plan.¹²⁸ DDR programmes, such as those in north Mali and the child DDR programme in Liberia, are referred to as successful examples. According to these experts, ex-combatants should thus ideally receive cash, but in connection with a business plan. This would increase the chances of creating the opportunity for long-term reintegration through establishing sustainable livelihoods. They suggest, for instance, that during the first few months (e.g. 4 months) cash benefits will need to be provided for immediate needs of ex-combatants such as paying off debts.¹²⁹ In the meantime, ex-combatants should be trained in designing a business plan. On the basis of the approved plans, ex-combatants should then receive the rest of the money as an investment grant.¹³⁰ These same experts also stress that this alternative for ‘full’ cash benefits does not require additional funding and will be perceived by combatants as fair, because they will receive the same amount as their colleagues who have demobilized earlier. They also suggest that reintegration packages which are provided in kind should remain in place, but ought to be better adapted to local realities.¹³¹

This alternative to full cash benefits would mean an increase in the overheads of implementing partners. Newly established businesses will need 1–2 years’ follow-up services and monitoring in order to succeed.¹³² It is suggested that the implementing partners cannot provide this kind of service with the same overheads as would have been available when support was provided in the form of cash benefits only. This approach is in line with other reviews which have highlighted that reintegration programmes which focus solely on cash payments, without parallel livelihood and investment support, risk failing to help beneficiaries to save or make productive use of

¹²⁵ Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1997, pp. 177, 334.

¹²⁶ MDRP, 2007, p. 8. In addition, reviews mention the importance of prior assessment of the banking system’s capacity (especially in rural areas) and establishing ways to physically transfer liquid assets within a short period of time, which is considered vital to the smooth delivery of cash benefits. Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1996, p. 334.

¹²⁷ Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1996, p. 335.

¹²⁸ Specht, 2008 and interview with the Director of the DDR Unit/ United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNAMIS), A. Verheul on 28 February 2008.

¹²⁹ For instance 4 x \$25. Specht, 2008.

¹³⁰ For instance \$200 previously paid per month. Groups of ex-combatants should also have the opportunity to receive grants based on a joint business plan. Specht, 2008.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid.*

their allowances and make little contribution to ex-combatants' long-term economic reintegration.¹³³ It is therefore essential that policy-makers are aware of the fact that cash payments and in-kind assistance to ex-combatants are important precursors, but not *substitutes* for, social and economic reintegration assistance.

4.5. NGO involvement¹³⁴

A recent review, commissioned by Cordaid, describes a number of practical experiences with respect to the role of NGOs in DDR processes. The study also indicates that implementation of the R-phase often relied heavily on NGO involvement. International agencies (such as UNICEF, UNDP and the International Organization for Migration [IOM]), bilateral aid agencies (mainly the German development agency, Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) subcontracted much work to the NGO community. NGOs also played an important role in spreading awareness about the possibilities and requirements of the programme, as they were in frequent contact with communities and ex-combatants.¹³⁵

The review also presents a number of critical elements in this regard. Many NGOs were unclear about the details of the programme, because they had not been properly informed or because criteria and standards had been changing.¹³⁶ In general, NGOs revealed a tendency to replicate and perpetuate systemic flaws. Because they fell into line with top-down, blueprint approaches, NGOs often became responsible for some of the main programmatic shortcomings of DDR, such as inadequate training and tool-kits, neglect of certain areas or groups, a lack of sensitivity to local needs and delays in delivery (partly due to stalled funding).

The review also points out the more conceptual shortcomings that led to NGOs' inadequate implementation of DDR processes in the countries studied: a lack of knowledge about socio-economic conditions and local labour markets and a lack of innovative ideas on how to kick-start employment for ex-combatants. Another constraint is the limited institutional capacity of local NGOs in particular. Local NGOs generally lacked financial reserves, logistical capacities and sufficiently trained staff. Capacity-building efforts (if present at all) usually did not resolve this problem. Particularly problematic were the so-called 'pocket NGOs' which were created in response to lucrative contracts, but lacked the reputation, expertise, dedication and durability to deliver proper results.¹³⁷

¹³³ MDRP, 2007, p. 9.

¹³⁴ This section draws largely on: Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, 'Synthesis Study', 2008, pp 25-30.

¹³⁵ Douma and Klem, with Frerks, Gompelman and Van Laar, 'Synthesis Study', 2008, p. 28.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

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