



African Union
Disarmament, Demobilisation
and
Reintegration Capacity Program

Reintegration
Operational Guidelines on

African Union Commission
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia





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African Union Commission
P O Box 3243
Roosevelt Street
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: +251 115 513 822
Fax: +251 115 519 321
E-mail situationroom@africa-union.org
Website: www.peaceau.org



Follow us on Twitter: @AU_PSD

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AfDB	African Development Bank
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAAFAG	Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups
CAR	Central African Republic
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICRS	Information, Counselling and Referral Systems
IDDRS	UN Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MIS	Management Information System
NDDRC	National DDR Commission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OGN	Operational Guidance Notes
PCRD	AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy
PSO	Peace Support Operation
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
REC	Regional Economic Communities
RM	Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution

SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SGBV	Sexual and Gender based Violence
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TJ	Transitional Justice
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDPKO	UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations
WAAFAG	Women Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups
XC	Ex-combatants

A: Purpose of Guideline

1.1. Purpose of these Guidelines

This guideline aims to provide African stakeholders including the personnel of the African Union (AU), AU member states, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RMs), and Peace Support Operations (PSOs) with operational guidelines to assist in the planning for, and implementation of the reintegration component of DDR programming. While drawing from the experiences in Africa and catering to the particular needs of stakeholders on the continent, the Guideline is also compliant with international legal standards and norms, and is complementary to other existing DDR frameworks such as the United Nations Integrated Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS).

This Guideline does not intend to be a comprehensive guide but rather a concise operational guideline for consideration by national authorities as they plan and implement reintegration programs to downsize their militaries or to reintegrate ex-combatants of armed groups back into society. Recognising that the contexts in which reintegration programs take place are highly complex and diverse, the Guideline is not prescriptive but provides ideas drawn from best practices and illustrated by case studies.

B: Objectives, Framework and General



Definition of Reinsertion and Reintegration

Reinsertion is the small “r” of the DRR process. It is defined as short-term assistance provided to XCs immediately after demobilization, as a form of transitional assistance to help cover their basic needs and that of their immediate families before entering into the reintegration program.



Definition of Reinsertion and Reintegration *Contd.*

Reintegration is the longer-term process through which an XC regains a civilian life. In most cases, the reintegration process involves not only the XCs but also their family and community. Reintegration is multi-faceted and includes social reintegration through which the XC is accepted back into the community; political reintegration where by the XC acquires a role in decision-making processes; and economic reintegration which allows the XC to gain a livelihood through gainful employment.

B.1 Objectives of Reintegration

The primary objective of reintegration programs is to ensure that ex-combatants return to civilian life in a manner in which they can be productive and socially integrated individuals who do not pose a threat to society. While this will not by itself guarantee peace and security, a successful reintegration process is an important component of wider efforts to restore security so that national recovery and development can take root. Experience has shown that if DDR, and reintegration in particular, is not done effectively there is a significant risk that individuals may return to insurgent groups or criminal activity. In addition, if reintegration programs are conceived of poorly, they may also undermine stabilisation efforts by exacerbating tensions within communities. It is therefore important that interventions are informed by a thorough analysis of the overarching context in which they are to take place.

In Africa, the extended family and community network is often the first access point to which the ex-combatant will turn when seeking to return to civilian life. This unique social capital in Africa is a significant asset on which reintegration programming should aim to enhance rather than undermine. For this reason, assessing and addressing the needs of the host-community is often as important as the needs of the ex-combatant.

B.2 General Principals and Considerations

B.2.1 National Ownership

Ensuring national ownership of reintegration programming is essential for its success and sustainability as well as its ability to be integrated within the broader national stabilisation and development planning. National ownership ensures that the intervention is informed by an understanding of the local context and conflict dynamics as well as the dynamics between the XC and the local population.

Although the government may receive financial and technical assistance from partners, it is the responsibility of the national government to ensure that it is leading the process from the design to implementation. It is also the responsibility of the government to ensure that there is sufficient coordination within the government ministries and local government, between government and national civil society and between the government and external partners. In contexts where state structures are weak, the principal of national ownership still requires that national authorities be involved national reintegration programming with a view to progressively taking over responsibilities as their capacity develops.



Case Study: South Sudan

DDR was recognized as an essential part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan and a DDR strategic plan was developed in November 2007. However, the Government of South Sudan felt that it was never sufficiently involved in DDR programming which, in its view, did not sufficiently take into account the situation in South Sudan or its national priorities. Instead, there was a perception that external actors were leading the process. As a result, there was a lack of consensus on reintegration modalities and management leading to considerable dissatisfaction. Though the program was implemented for several years, it achieved poor results and the Sudan People's Liberation Army leadership put many of the XCs back on the payroll.

B.2.2 Create Synergy with other Post-Conflict Recovery Processes

Reintegration programming is only likely to be effective when it is part of the broader post-conflict recovery efforts. Reintegration should therefore be planned in coordination with and in support of national SSR and reconciliation efforts as well as national job creation and development efforts. In post-conflict settings, there are a number of processes that the government should seek to integrate their reintegration programming. This may include the Post-Conflict Needs Assessments (PCNAs) which are multilateral assessment and planning processes used by the UN, the European Commission (EC), the World Bank (WB) and Regional Development Banks and bi-lateral donors as a way of conceptualizing, negotiating and financing a common shared strategy for recovery and development in fragile, post-conflict settings. They are usually intended to culminate in the development of a Transitional Results Framework.

Integrating reintegration programming into broader recovery and development efforts will help to ensure that reintegration is prioritised by the government budget and donor community as well as ensuring that the reintegration programming contributes or forms a part of longer term development initiatives. Regional institutions, including the RECs/RMs, may also play an important role in supporting these efforts.



Case Study: Uganda Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP)

Launched by the Government in 2007, PRDP aimed to stabilize Northern Uganda through recovery and development programs. Reintegration programs were embedded within its objectives. This assisted in reintegration programming being harmonized coordinated with transitional justice efforts including reparations for victims of conflict. The mid-term review of the PRDP identified that XCs required further assistance despite the end to formal reintegration programming. If not for its inclusion at the beginning of the planning process, it is doubtful the XCs would have been identified as a segment of the population requiring additional assistance.

B.2.3 Regional Dynamics

Due to the nature of conflicts in Africa and cultural, political and economic interconnectedness of African regions, many conflicts have cross-border implications. This has been the case in particular in Libya where combatants left the country during the recent conflict creating instability in Mali and neighbouring countries. The same phenomena has also occurred during other conflicts in West, Central and East Africa. In fact, the recycling of combatants due to cross-border recruitment has now become more of the norm than an exception.

Due to the porous nature of the borders and the increasing liberalization of policies to facilitate regional movement, the success or failure one country's reintegration program impacts the security of its neighbors. As a result planning for reintegration of XCs should consider regional dimensions, including the operating modalities of armed groups and war economies as well as ensure that repatriated foreign combatants also have access to reintegration programs.

The regional nature of conflicts is also part the solution. Economic and development cooperation within the APSA, and the growing role of the RECs/RMs, also provide potential opportunities for reintegration efforts of XCs. Where there are existing trade or monetary unions, there are also opportunities for XCs to find jobs and livelihoods in neighbouring. However, to ensure that the regional dimensions are used as a positive rather than a negative, it is important that a country coordinate with and be transparent in their reintegration planning with other interested countries.



Case Study: West Africa


In Sierra Leone, many viewed the DDR process as a success as the program demobilized over 70,000 fighters and collected 43,300 weapons. However, it later became apparent that a significant numbers of XCs had not fully reintegrated but instead migrated to other West African countries where they found work as mercenaries or criminal gangs creating instability in neighboring countries.

B.2.4 Consider Gender Dynamics

Although gender is often understood to mean women, the term gender actually refers to the socially and culturally constructed differences between men and women. Across Africa, these social constructs vary widely not only between cultures but between urban and rural settings. Conflict can also change the cultural construct for gender which may change again in post-conflict settings.

Common gender related challenges for women include the fact that reintegration support tends to neglect the needs of women and children who are often not considered a security threat and are also viewed as a dependent of their male partner. Women also face higher rates of stigma when returning from conflict, particularly if they have children conceived during the conflict, and may have difficulty gaining access to land. Similarly, African male XCs often return from conflict with a perception of that prowess, power and aggression are positive components of their masculine identity. Once the XC returns to normal civilian life, this gender construct can lead some to feel deprived of their sense of purpose and identity leading to substance abuse or physical violence.

While examples of gender related needs vary widely, it is important that reintegration programs factor in these dynamics.



Case Study: Eritrea

Although women's experience of war is often profoundly negative in some cases involvement in conflict can lead to new opportunities and identities. In Eritrea women played a full and active role in the war of independence creating a new and more equal society. However when women and girls were demobilized they returned to a society that was largely not ready to accept the equality they experienced in military life. Many women XC found it difficult to accept what they saw as the traditional gender related constraints and expectations of society. As a result, women XCs who married their male peers suffered high rates of divorce as many male XC men wanted to re-marry 'civilian' women who they perceived as more feminine. As a result, women XCs often found it more difficult to reintegrate socially and economically when they returned home.

B.2.5 Transitional Justice

Situations emerging from conflict usually require a form of transitional justice and national reconciliation. Transitional justice “comprises the full range of processes and measures associated with a society’s attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation” (UNSC 2004). Although state institutions may be fragile during transition periods, it is important to begin a process of accountability in order to provide redress to victims and strengthen the rule of law. If conducted appropriately, these processes can assist in the reintegration of XCs as it may improve the sense of justice in receiving communities and reduce stigma. It is, however, important that communities are engaged prior to the reintegration of the XC in order to understand the dynamics.

There are a number of different and often parallel modalities that can be used in furthering the process of national reconciliation.

Criminal Prosecutions: Often for serious crimes, XCs may be liable for criminal prosecution. Although criminal prosecutions can at times enhance reintegration processes, they are often viewed as creating tension and possibly even disruption in reintegration programs. As such, creating a clear national policy on who is to be prosecuted is important in order to create certainty and build confidence.

Traditional Reconciliation Processes: In many African communities traditional practices and processes exist to resolve conflict and restore relationships within communities affected by violence. In some countries, communities have adapted the use of traditional justice mechanisms has also been used in some African countries including Rwanda and Uganda. Whatever process is most appropriate, the affect should be to promote reconciliation between XC and communities so as to ensure that the XC are accepted back into their communities.

Trust Commissions: A state may decide to use a Trust Commission to investigate and report on system abuse and as a means to help communities understand the underlying causes of the harm they suffered.

Institutional Reform: As part of a transitional justice process, it may be important to restructure security institutions or to create a vetting process to avoid those suspected of committing human rights abuses from being integrated into security institutions. Equally, particularly in situations following wars of independence, it may be important to create and support veterans groups.



Case Study: Sierra Leone

While the pursuit of criminal prosecutions is often viewed as an obstacle to DDR programs due to the fear it causes with ex-fighters, there are instances of criminal prosecutions assisting reintegration programs, particularly. In Sierra Leone, the indictment of Charles Taylor by the Special Court for Sierra Leone in 2003 allowed for the conclusion of the peace process and the start of the DDR process. Some argue that when the prosecution policy targets only those most responsible it reduces the perceptions that XC have impunity, it individualizes guilt rather than attaching it to all members of the group, and it restores a sense of justice in the affected communities. Also, in Sierra Leone, although the creation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission initially caused concern among XCs, the ability of the government to clearly articulate its purpose soon caused relief with support among XCs for the Commission increasing to 85%.

B.2.6 HIV/AIDS

During most conflicts in Africa, there is a relatively higher prevalence of HIV. There is similarly a general low awareness of the risks of HIV/AIDS among XCs who had little access to information and few means of prevention or treatment. Increased promiscuity during conflict also account for increased rates of transmission. It is important therefore to include HIV/AIDS awareness programming in reintegration programs as well as access to care and treatment for those who are living with HIV/AIDS.

C: Operationalising Reintegration Programming

C.1 Contexts where reintegration activities may be requested

Every situation in which the reintegration of XC occurs will have its own unique background and features. Interventions will always need to be tailored to meet specific requirements on the ground. However, it is possible to identify a number of broad contexts or types of scenarios which may need to be responded to. These are highlighted in the table below.

Table 5: Reintegration scenarios and programming implications

Scenario	Key Features	Implications for Reintegration Programming
A. Outright and clear military victory of one conflict party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear balance of power and ability to enforce law and order • Functional command structures for overall command and control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal DDR process for combatants on the winning side as a component of restructuring of regular armed forces. • Elements on the losing side may be reintegrated into the regular armed forces, enter a DDR process or spontaneously return to their communities of origin.
B. End of conflict through a peace agreement agreed by warring parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security situation may remain precarious but a degree of “balance of power” between parties to the conflict likely to exist • Peace agreement may be supported by a regional or international peacekeeping force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDR process likely to have been agreed as part of peace agreement along with SSR and wider power sharing arrangements • Details of the DDR process may be vague requiring close follow-up and additional negotiations



Scenario	Key Features	Implications for Reintegration Programming
C. Peace agreement brokered or imposed external parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security situation remains precarious and a peacekeeping mission usually present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDR process likely to have been agreed as part of peace agreement along with SSR and power sharing arrangements but components of the agreement may remain contested. • Parties to the conflict may be reluctant to engage in DDR until there are sufficient security guarantees and there is a clear solution to the conflict
D. No peace agreement or ceasefire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing conflict or insecurity • Multiple factions, lack of clear command or other structures, lack of political will to reach a political solution • The conflict may have regional dimensions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reintegration programming may be called upon for use in specific areas as a means to de-escalate tension or as an incentive for some individuals or groups to renounce violence. • Necessitating strengthened regional cooperation both on security issues and broader recovery and development frameworks.

C.2 Context analysis and planning

C.2.1 Situation analysis and needs assessment

Whether reintegration support programmes are being developed as part of a highly structured overall DDR programme or are being carried out in response to more informal efforts to reintegrate individuals or groups from irregular armed groups as part of localised stabilisation efforts, the gathering and analysis of

information on both the context under which reintegration will take place and the XC is critical for effective planning.

The table below highlights the information needed and the possible sources of data. In each situation this needs to be considered and adapted in the light of the local context. In structured DDR programmes data on XC profiles should be available from those responsible demobilization of XC at initial registration and screening. In other cases information may not be readily available and will need to be specifically gathered and analysed. It is important that gender specific information requirements are considered in order to understand the specific needs of women and girls and boys and men.

Table 6: Key information needs for initial reintegration planning and potential sources of information

Information Needs	Details	Potential sources of Information
Political, conflict & security analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis on the drivers of conflict and assessment of current security status and outlook • Analyse the political process as well as special arrangements for particular groups or commanders • Understand the composition and structure of armed groups, support they receive, doctrines and beliefs; identify potential spoilers and their motives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical and analytical reports • Security briefs and peace agreements • Interviews with stakeholders



Information Needs	Details	Potential sources of Information
Demographic data on XC target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimate of number of XCs including any available data on age, health (including psychological health), sex, language, areas of origin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of returned members of the group Information from group leadership Authorities or communities in areas of combat and in areas of origin/return Service providers
Special needs Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of special needs groups such as chronically ill, women, children and youth. 	
Education & livelihoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess levels of education amongst the group and skills Information on previous livelihoods pursued by members of the group 	
XC Expectations & key concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expectations and key concerns of XC about the process of reintegration; it is important to manage expectations Assessment of XC intentions in terms of whether they want to be resettled in their areas of origin or another location 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall views and concerns of the community in the areas of return; assessment of capacity and willingness of communities to receive the XCs; identification of potential sources of conflict and reconciliation mechanisms Assessment of current and future security context as well as health, availability of services and cohesion of the communities Settlement patterns in return areas, particularly where there was displacement; availability and accessibility of land Livelihood patterns and how these have been affected by the conflict 	



Case Study: Sierra Leone

Following the end of the civil war, XCs were concerned that they would be ostracised by their communities when they returned home. This concern was well founded as community resentment against the SCs was high. To address the issue, the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR) set up social reconciliation programs which included community consultation and sensitisation with the support traditional leaders and traditional reconciliation mechanisms. In serious cases, the NCDDR directly negotiated disputes regarding the return of XCs. The NCDDR also engaged the XCs in infrastructure rehabilitation as a means to improve their standing in the communities.

C.2.2 Stakeholder analysis

There are a wide range of stakeholders involved in any DDR process. A regular stakeholder analysis is helpful to identify key partners in the reintegration process as well as potential gaps or problems that need to be managed appropriately. The goal of a stakeholder analysis is to keep all the actors involved in the DDR process moving in the same direction with the same understanding so that their interventions are complementary.




Table 7: Potential stakeholder groups involved in reintegration

Groups	Details
Ex-combatants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing interaction with XCs is essential throughout the reintegration process and they should be consulted and engaged in the design of reintegration activities. Appropriate modalities to interact and communicate with XCs need to be found that allow them to participate but avoid reinforcing their prior command and control structure or affiliation with an armed group.



Groups	Details
Leaders of Armed groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction with leaders of armed groups is important both to access data (always verify) and to ensure that proposed reintegration activities are understood and supported. It is also important to interact with the leaders in order to ensure that they do not become spoilers to the DDR process.
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support of national and local political leaders is important as they influence support from the communities. Efforts should be made to involve them in the planning and consultations should be continuous in order to maintain their support.
Leaders & opinion makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious & Cultural <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional leaders are important not only to maintain community support but also as they are the custodians of reconciliation mechanisms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within any given community there are a set of important leaders. These should be identified and consulted to ensure their support.
Service Providers & Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will be important sources of information (see table 7) but also need information and feedback for their own operational planning and resource allocation processes Likely to include local and national government, private sector and NGO's
Civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This includes an array of civilian groups involved in service providing, advocacy and peace building.
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although not often viewed as stakeholders, media play an important role in garnering support for the program. It is important to provide them with information on a regular basis.
International donors & partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a range international partners providing technical, political and financial support to the DDR process. They may include diplomatic offices, the UN or AU and RECs/RMs. It is important that all of them stay informed and work in a coordinated manner.

C.3 Information Management and Outreach

C.3.1 Information management

Given that information requirements in reintegration programs are substantial, the establishment of an information management system is important at the outset. If reintegration activities are being carried out as part of an integrated DDR programme it is likely that an overall DDR Management Information System (MIS) will have already been established. If reintegration activities are being carried out as a discrete programme, however, some form of MIS or database will need to be established in order to process the information needed by those planning and managing reintegration. The following are key areas for consideration when designing an information management platform:

- **Compatibility with other information systems:** If the reintegration program is following a traditional DDR process, it is likely that information on the ex-combatants was captured in previous databases. It is important that when the reintegration database is designed that it be able to utilise this information.
- **Identify objective indicators:** The DDR program needs to identify key information and indicators to be captured by the database so that information can be used and progress measured.
- **Consider issues of access to information:** As the database will likely include personal information, access to sensitive information in the database should be restricted. It is important, however, to ensure that access to information restrictions do not impair operational effectiveness.



Information, Counselling and Referral Systems (ICRS)

Ongoing interaction with XCs is essential throughout the reintegration process and they should be consulted and engaged in the design of reintegration activities. Appropriate modalities to interact and communicate with XCs need to be found that allow them to participate but avoid reinforcing their prior command and control structure or affiliation with an armed group.

C.3.2 Communications and outreach

The dissemination of accurate and timely information is important throughout the reintegration process in order to inform stakeholders and the broader population. A clear communication strategy should be developed at an early stage. The strategy should identify the audience, message, modality for communication and the most appropriate voice to communicate the message.

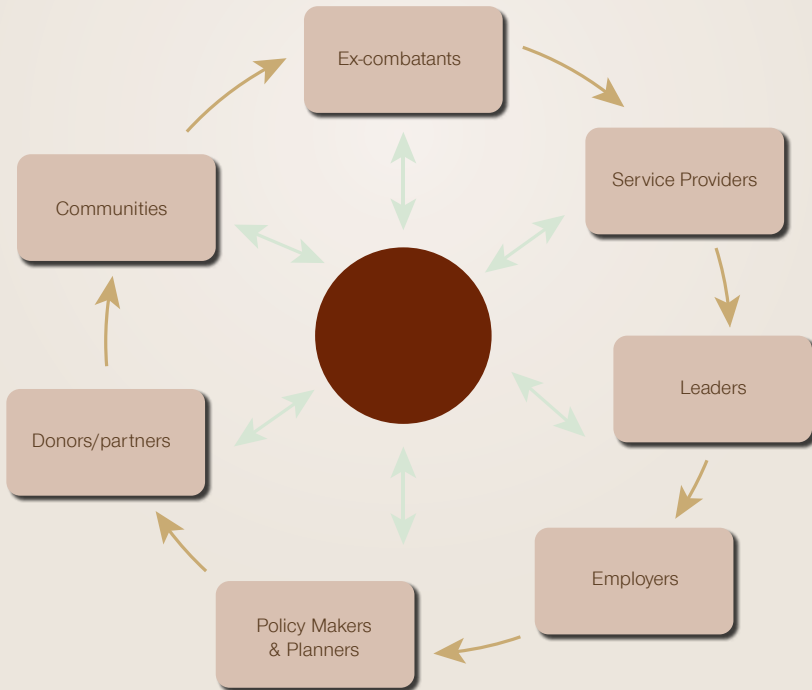


Figure 1: Diagram showing the importance of information flows

Modalities of communication may include the radio, television and print media. Non-traditional communication may also be considered including drama, music a story telling as well as the use of mobile phones and other electronic media.



Case Study: Sudan

In Sudan, female singers known as Hakamas ('the wise ones') are a traditional cultural feature of the states of Southern Kordofan, Northern Kordofan and Southern Darfur. During conflict these groups were known to be associated with armed groups encouraging combatants to fight by performing cultural songs on the front lines. After the conflict, the DDR program enlisted the support of these women developed songs of peace and reconciliation in support of DDR.

C.4 Reintegration models and approaches

Every situation requiring a reintegration program is different. As such the reintegration approach that is used needs to be adapted to the context and the prevailing needs. After conducting the necessary analysis' it is important to choose the most appropriate reintegration model and adapt it as needed. Below is a description of several reintegration models and a description of the advantages and disadvantages. They include:

- Ex-Combatant Focused Reintegration
- Community Focused Reintegration

It is important to note that some of these models can be integrated into one program or used simultaneously.

C.4.1 Ex-combatant focused reintegration.

This approach focused on providing targeted assistance to individual or groups of XCs. This assistance will aim to address their unique set of needs of the individuals which may vary depending on the context of the locality to which

they are returning. The assistance provided is intended to provide the XCs with a sustainable livelihood and assist them in their transformation into productive members of their community. Programs of this nature may include vocational training, micro-credit and micro-project programs as well as specialized services.

Potential advantages include:

- Allows for specific concerns of individuals to be addressed and followed up on. In some situations, these types of programs may have been included in peace agreements making it a political imperative.
- Requires fewer resources than other reintegration programs.

Potential disadvantages include:

- Communities may feel that the XC is being rewarded for actions that have caused them to suffer. The program may increase tensions between the XC and the community.
- The program may create perverse incentives for persons to opportunistically claim XC status or to initiate acts of conflict in order to benefit from the program. This may worsen the security situation, creating splinter groups and, ultimately, inflating the target group. Situations of ongoing armed conflict are particularly susceptible to this phenomena.
- Where conflict has severely impacted on the available social services and economy, directing assistance to one group may not contribute to the wider recovery of the community making any assistance to individual livelihoods unsustainable.

C.4.1.1 Reinsertion Packages

In many DDR programmes, XCs receive a reinsertion package when they exit from the demobilisation phase of the program. This package is intended to provide for the basic needs of XCs and their dependents as they return to their community. The reinsertion package is sometimes referred to as the “transitional subsistence support” or the small “r” in DDR. This support may include a cash payment or cloths and household items. While important to assist in addressing

the XCs immediate needs, a few issues need to be considered.

Firstly, as in any XC focused program, there is a danger of perverse incentives with people pretending to be XCs or initiating acts of violence in order to obtain the benefit. There are also the danger of the communities resenting the XC for the assistance that is provided thereby complicating the reintegration process. To manage these risks, evidence indicates that it is best to avoid giving significant cash payments as a reintegration package. That stated, even commodity packages such as seeds and tools can be sold and monetised. Another approach is to give access to services such as training, literacy through a voucher program. A service-based approach, however, will need to be balanced against the immediate subsistence needs of the XC and the dependents. Once innovation that could be explored is the use of mobile phone as a means of money transfer. This system is used increasingly in social protection programs and could be considered as an option if the conditions are appropriate. If a reintegration program or other beneficial programs are envisaged for, it is important to link the reinsertion support to these more comprehensive programs.



Case Study: Ethiopia

Following the end of the 1991 Civil War, the Ethiopian government initiated a DDR program for a large number of XCs. This included immediate financial or in-kind support when the XC returned home and the XC was also eligible for free health care and provided with land for residential and agricultural use. Studies have shown that the Ethiopian reintegration program was relatively successful, particularly in the rural areas.



Case Study: Liberia, DRC, Uganda and Sierra Leone

All three of these countries provided reinsertion packages to the XCs. This created community resentment as the community felt that their needs were not addressed. Studies have shown, however, that community resentment dissipated if i) the rationale for the reinsertion support was explained, ii) the community shared in the benefits through trade and purchase of commodities iii) if the benefits were viewed as limited and proportionate, and iv) if they were accompanied by community focused interventions of wider benefit.

C.4.1.2 Commander Incentive Programs

A variation of ex-combatant focused reintegration programming is the Commander Incentive Program. This program creates a two-tiered system of reintegration that provides special assistance to commanders of armed groups. The purpose of such a program is to dismantle the command structure of armed groups by separating the commander from his fighters as well as to co-opt them to supporting the DDR process rather than act as spoilers either by re-recruiting or becoming involved in criminal networks.

There are a number of factors to be taken into consideration when designing such a program. This includes the affect it may have on junior commanders and the rank and file who are given a lower amount of assistance. This may create resentment and dissatisfaction which could encourage some to engage in illicit activities. The other factor to be taken into consideration is that some of the commanders may be suspected of committing serious crimes which could result in the local community perceiving the assistance as a reward for their misdeeds. Such a perception could negatively impact the process of national reconciliation and transitional justice.

As a result, the use of a Commanders Incentive Program should only be done after thorough analysis as well as consultations with the affected communities. Careful monitoring of the program and the activities of the former commanders is needed and assistance should be suspended if there are indications of abuse.

Alternatively, support for commanders could be facilitated through support for veterans groups or cooperative associations. This could dilute the perception that the commanders are receiving special assistance while providing them with a new role and purpose that could benefit the XC community at large.

C.4.1.3 Vocational and life skills training

A common component of both XC focused and community-based reintegration (below) is providing the beneficiary with training and new skills that will assist them in obtaining employment and a sustainable livelihood. Best practices demonstrate that before providing vocation training that an assessment of the labor market should be done to ensure that there are adequate employment

opportunities for this skill. If the beneficiary is not able to obtain employment with the skill provided, it may become a source of frustration. As such, before training beneficiaries to be carpenters, make sure there are jobs available in the community to avoid flooding the market.

It is also identified as best practice that the training be used as a platform to provide life skills to the beneficiary. While providing vocational training may be the focus of the training, XCs benefit significantly if they are provided with conflict resolution skills, domestic and family planning as well as a course on their rights and responsibilities as civilians. These types of courses can assist XCs in the transition process.

It is equally important in designing a training program that the differing needs of men and women are taken into account as well as the needs and capacities of the disabled. Defining what training is best for which group requires not only consultation with the beneficiary group itself but also an understanding of what would be beneficial to their host community based on the prevailing social values and economic needs.




Case Study: Liberia

After the conflict in Liberia, significant investments were made in vocational training for XCs. However, in the post-conflict situation in which the economy was only beginning to recover and there was a large return of IDPs and refugees, there were few job opportunities for the XCs. As a result, the 10,000 who benefited from the program became frustrated when their hope for employment did not materialize.

C.4.1.4 Short-term employment programmes

In some situation the creation of short-term, labour intensive employment opportunities linked to the rehabilitation of essential infrastructure have proved useful as instruments for providing immediate economic support to XCs and the community as well as simultaneously contributing to the infrastructure development. and at the same time can help reduce immediate security concerns by ensuring that XC are actively engaged in day to day activities.

Labour intensive schemes of this nature should involve both XC and other community members and, if possible, should be linked to longer-term sustainable livelihoods. To do so, those who participate in the labour programs could also be included in training, micro-credit loan schemes or small business development. This will help to ensure that the income earned is invested for longer-term impact. Before launching such a program, it is important to ensure that they do not compete with the local labour market development.



Case Study: Liberia

In 2006 the Liberian Ministry of Public Works with support from UNMIL, UNDP and the World Bank initiated a labor intensive employment scheme that was focused on the rehabilitation of road networks along that provided access to markets and essential services. Some 8,000 jobs were offered to both the XCs and war affected youth. Studies indicate that the crime rate and domestic violence reduced in areas where these programs were implemented and a number of the participants invested their income into other income generating activities.

C.4.2 Community-based reintegration

This model provides assistance to XCs in the context of support to the community to which they are returning. In this model, both the XCs and the community are actively engaged in selecting the activities and interventions. This approach is sometimes referred to as “dual targeting” as the XCs are assisted as part of a broader group be it youth, the unemployed or broader job creation initiatives. This type of program can be particularly useful where XCs cannot be readily identified due to widespread spontaneous return. In such situations, support can be provided to communities where there are high concentrations of XCs.

Potential advantages include:

- Improves the chances that the XC will be accepted back into the community and avoids stigma
- Create opportunities to address the needs of both XCs and others associated with armed groups (e.g. CAAFAG and WAAFAG)
- Reduces the risk of perverse incentives

- Community involvement in the planning and benefits of the program may support the broader process of reconciliation and the rebuilding of social cohesion
- Creates opportunities to link the DDR reintegration programs with the wider recovery and development efforts

Potential disadvantages include:

- There is a risk that targeting some communities and not others may create tensions
- If there are provisions for direct support to XCs in a peace agreement or perceptions of direct entitlement, XCs may not be satisfied with this approach and could act as spoilers
- DDR reintegration programs may not have sufficient resources to invest in an adequate number of qualifying communities. For this reason, it is important to link the DDR funded efforts with wider recovery initiatives



Case Study: Somalia

A community-based rehabilitation program implemented in Somalia in the 1990s excluded the eastern part of Somaliland. Studies reported that this exacerbated existing tensions amongst armed groups and communities thereby undermining the main objective of the DDR program.

C.4.2.1 Community-based violence reduction initiatives

In conflict areas, the deterioration of the security situation may result in a proliferation of armed groups as well as criminal and vigilante gangs. In some situations groups may have allegiances with state actors or other powerful elites.

In these circumstances a range of initiatives has increasingly been deployed that seek to change the behavior of these individuals by creating alternative livelihood opportunities, counseling and mentoring, community associations and dispute resolution mechanisms. These are not traditional DDR programs in the sense that individuals are not formally demobilizing but the goal of transforming these

individuals into productive and integrated members of the community is the same.

Potential advantages include:

- The range of responses is diverse and can be tailored to the needs and circumstances of the particular community
- The process are locally owned with a high degree of participation from the affected communities
- The programs are adaptable and can respond to opportunities and crisis as they emerge

Potential disadvantages include:

- The choice of the initiative must have the consent of the necessary political and social polities of the given community or government
- Programs should be able to address not only the needs of the individuals at risk but also the underlying sources of conflict within and between communities
- Depending on the benefits being offered, there is the risk of perverse incentives




Case Study: Somalia

In 2011, the local and national government in Somalia, with the support of UNDP, initiated the Youth-at-Risk Program. This program centred on the formation of community-based security committees who would identify youth who had committed or were at risk of committing crimes. These individuals signed an agreement on behaviour with the local authority and were paired with a mentor from the community who would assist the youth in various programs including employment, substance abuse and other programs. If there were infractions, the youth would be brought before the security committee to determine what should be done to correct the behaviour.

C.4.3 Pension schemes:

Pension schemes have been used as a means to downsize the number of personnel in national security institutions and support their reintegration as well as provide a degree of official recognition of the duties they provided. Pension schemes are often done as part of a Security Sector Reform process. However experience with pension schemes across Africa has often been highly problematic. A number of issues need to be carefully considered prior to the selection of this option:

- **Affordability:** it is important that a realistic assessment of the ability of the state to pay the entitlements is undertaken prior to giving any commitments. The recurrent cost implications may be significant particularly in the context of a country recovering from conflict suffering from severe resource constraints and where the numbers of people registered as members of the armed forces may be large.
- **Perverse incentives:** Potential pension payments could act as an incentive for further recruitment into armed groups prior to DDR registration occurring or the inflation of lists.
- **Security risks:** Failure to make payments when they have been promised could have significant implications and become a source of renewed violence.



Case Study: Liberia


As part of the restructuring of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), 10,000 personnel were de-activated. Of these, approximately, 4,600 were eligible for pensions at a cost of \$2.1 million per year. However, the government had difficulty providing regular payment of the pensions which resulted in several violent demonstrations by XCs.

C.5 Special needs groups

XCs are not a monolithic group. There are some groups of XCs or persons associated with the armed group that have special needs. The identification and analysis of these special needs groups is important at the outset of any

reintegration program. Support provided to these groups may be linked to or addressed by existing health and social services if they exist. Otherwise, particular programs will need to be developed. Special needs groups may include:

- i) **The chronically ill and disabled:** Due to injuries or health problems associated these combatants will require access to health services as well as particular attention in developing an appropriate livelihood program. This group often has the most difficulty with social reintegration and finding employment. On average about 10% of XCs are in this category.



Case Study: Rwanda

The Rwanda DDR program created a special assistance to XCs considered ill or disabled or otherwise vulnerable. Assistance provided included access to grants, additional training and counseling services. Candidacy for this additional assistance was based on criteria that included socio-economic and health factors. Candidates were identified by representatives of the community and civil society.

- ii) **Victims of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV):** Women ex-combatants or women and girls associated with armed groups often suffer high rates of sexual or physical abuse, particularly if they were forcefully conscripted. While studies show that men constitute the vast majority of SGBV perpetrators, it is important to note that men may also have suffered. Victims of SGBV may suffer from varying degrees of physical disability and illness (including sexually transmitted diseases including HIV) as well as psychological trauma. Both victims and alleged perpetrators of sexual violence may face significant stigmatisation at community level and may have difficulty expressing or acknowledging the violence that occurred.

In addressing SGBV, it is important to ensure that the needs of this group are incorporated in the planning for health care and services. This care includes the provision of surgical care as well as counselling and sensitisation on sexually transmitted diseases. The provision of

health care often provides a relatively non-threatening entry point for discussions on SGBV with both XCs and the community. The use of media, both electronic and traditional, may be used to provide venues to discuss the topics that may otherwise be socially taboo. The provision of life skills is particularly important for victims as many may suffer from low self-esteem as well as social stigmatisation. The use of transitional justice mechanisms, including accountability and truth telling, may also assist in addressing the sense of injustice carried by victims.



Case Study: DRC

Health clinics in the DRC report that up to 6% SGBV victims that they treat are men, while legal clinics report that 10% of their SGBV cases involve male victims. In addition to rape, men and boys were subjected to other forms of SGBV including being forced to have sex with relatives or be forced to watch SGBV crimes.

- iii) **Children:** Child combatants or children associated with armed groups are often one of the most vulnerable groups. They suffer from psychological trauma, loss of access to education and social stigma. The involvement the community and the child's family is essential for reintegration. To overcome fear and stigma, it is important that families are consulted prior to the return of their child. This will allow them time to prepare. It is also important to consult with community and traditional leaders who may assist in enhancing community acceptance as well as providing positive role models for the child.

Children and communities are resilient and, with the right support, usually have the capacity to cope with the experiences they have gone through. Support activities should aim to build upon a child's natural resilience and the community and families desire to care for and protect children. The support should be provided in an inclusive manner addressing the needs of other war-affected children. This will reduce stigmatization and avoid stigmatization that the child soldier is being unfairly rewarded. The type of support provided may include the provision of health services as


well as the formation of youth groups and counseling or mentoring. The provision of education and training to allow the child to catch up with his/her peers is particularly important. The provision of reinsertion packages to children has been found to create problems, resources instead should be focused on establishing sustainable reintegration programs.



Case Study: DRC

In areas of eastern DRC where there exists high levels of child recruitment and re-recruitment, international partners provided support for the creation of Community Child Protection Networks (CCPN). These were forum bring together local leaders do discuss child protection issues and devise strategies to address them. Despite security difficulties, studies found that some of the CCPNs had registered successes in preventing the recruitment and re-recruitment of children as well as increasing the level of community acceptance of returning child soldiers.

- iv) **Psycho-social support:** XCs with unaddressed psychological trauma and mental health issues, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), may exhibit anti-social behaviour such as numbness, guilt or anxiety. Some may also use self-medication to address their disorders which may lead to drug and alcohol abuse. This can complicate their relationship with the community and result in self-harm. Support from the family and community is critically important but some may not know how to address the illness. As such, reintegration programs should plan for the provision of mental health services or programs that can provide the required treatment. This may include providing training to health workers, women's groups, teachers and community organisations so they can identify symptoms and refer them to get treatment. It is important in any reintegration program that mental health issues are given prioritisation as those with mental conditions may not benefit from the economic livelihood programs and may become a burden to their communities.



Case Study: Uganda

In northern Uganda approximately 20% of formerly abducted youth show severe and persistent mental health disorders including PTSD, depression and suicidal tendencies as well as high levels of aggression. Several NGOs developed programs to address these issues by combining counseling, which included the recounting of traumatic incidents in order to externalize the trauma, in combination with vocational training which provided beneficiaries with a new sense of purpose.

D.1 Choosing the right approach

Every reintegration process will need to be adapted to the particular of the given situation. Often a combination of the models are used concurrently or sequentially to address the needs of the XCs and the community. However, it is increasingly recognized that for reintegration to be successful, a narrow focus on XCs alone should be avoided. Instead, successful reintegration program focus on addressing both the needs of the XC as well as the immediate family and community.

Given the complexity and endemic nature of some of the conflicts in Africa, many of the pre-conditions for traditional DDR processes may not exist. As such, it may not always be appropriate to frame the reintegration programs as pertaining to DDR as such but rather as stabilization or conflict reduction measures.

However the programs are described, it is critical that interventions are based on a realistic assessment of the problem and the needs as well as the likelihood the programs having a positive impact on the situation. It is also important to assess the risks of a program, including the availability of resources, as well as the mitigating measures to control the risks. It is also essential to develop the program in consultation with the XCs as well as local government and communities in order to better understand the situation, moderate expectations,

and promote ownership. A constant monitoring of any of these programs is necessary as well as the ability to adapt the program to the changing situation.

Africa has a relatively high degree of social capital, particularly within its extended family structures. It is important to utilise and enhance these existing structures and relationships rather than undermine them by imposing new structures or engendering an unhealthy sense of dependency and entitlement.

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