

BRIEFING NOTE FOR SENIOR MANAGERS

ON THE INTEGRATED DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION STANDARDS

I. Introduction

This briefing note is intended for senior managers who play a role in peace negotiations, as well as in the assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of peace operations and recovery programmes that have a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) component.

This briefing extracts key strategic and policy guidance from the series of United Nations integrated DDR standards (IDDRS), which represent the agreed policies and procedures of the United Nations for preparing and executing DDR programmes in peacekeeping operations.

Key questions that you should seek to answer when considering a DDR programme are included in boxed text so as to guide staff members in their decisions. Actions that should be taken are summarized in ‘action points’.

The IDDRS was jointly developed by DDR practitioners, at headquarters and at country level, of the 15 United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes that constitute the United Nations DDR Working Group.¹ The IDDRS are a comprehensive set of policies, guidelines and procedures covering 24 areas of DDR ranging from the strategic to the operational and tactical level. There are several reasons why senior managers should use the IDDRS:

- the IDDRS successfully consolidate policy guidance in this field and translate the guidance into a United Nations integrated approach to DDR;
- the IDDRS are the most complete repository of lessons and good practices drawn from the experience of all United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes involved in DDR;
- the IDDRS are a key document for jump-starting new DDR programmes—they provide not only the necessary policy guidance, but also lay down the policy options;
- the IDDRS are a crucial tool for informed decision-making in every step of DDR programming.

The IDDRS are available online at the United Nations DDR Resource Centre, which is an electronic platform that compiles DDR-related information (www.unddr.org).

II. What is DDR?

The objective of the DDR process is to contribute to security and stability in post-conflict environments so that recovery and development can begin. The DDR of ex-combatants is a complex process, with political, military, security, humanitarian and socio-economic dimensions. It aims to address the post-conflict security challenge that arises from ex-combatants being left without livelihoods or support networks, other than their former comrades, during the critical transition period from conflict to peace and development. Through a process of comprehensively disarming ex-combatants, preparing them for civilian life and providing them with opportunities for sustainable economic and social reintegration, DDR seeks to support ex-combatants so that they can become stakeholders in peace.

The official United Nations definition of DDR, as provided by the Secretary-General in his Note to the General Assembly on the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/C.5/59/31), 24 May 2005, is as follows:

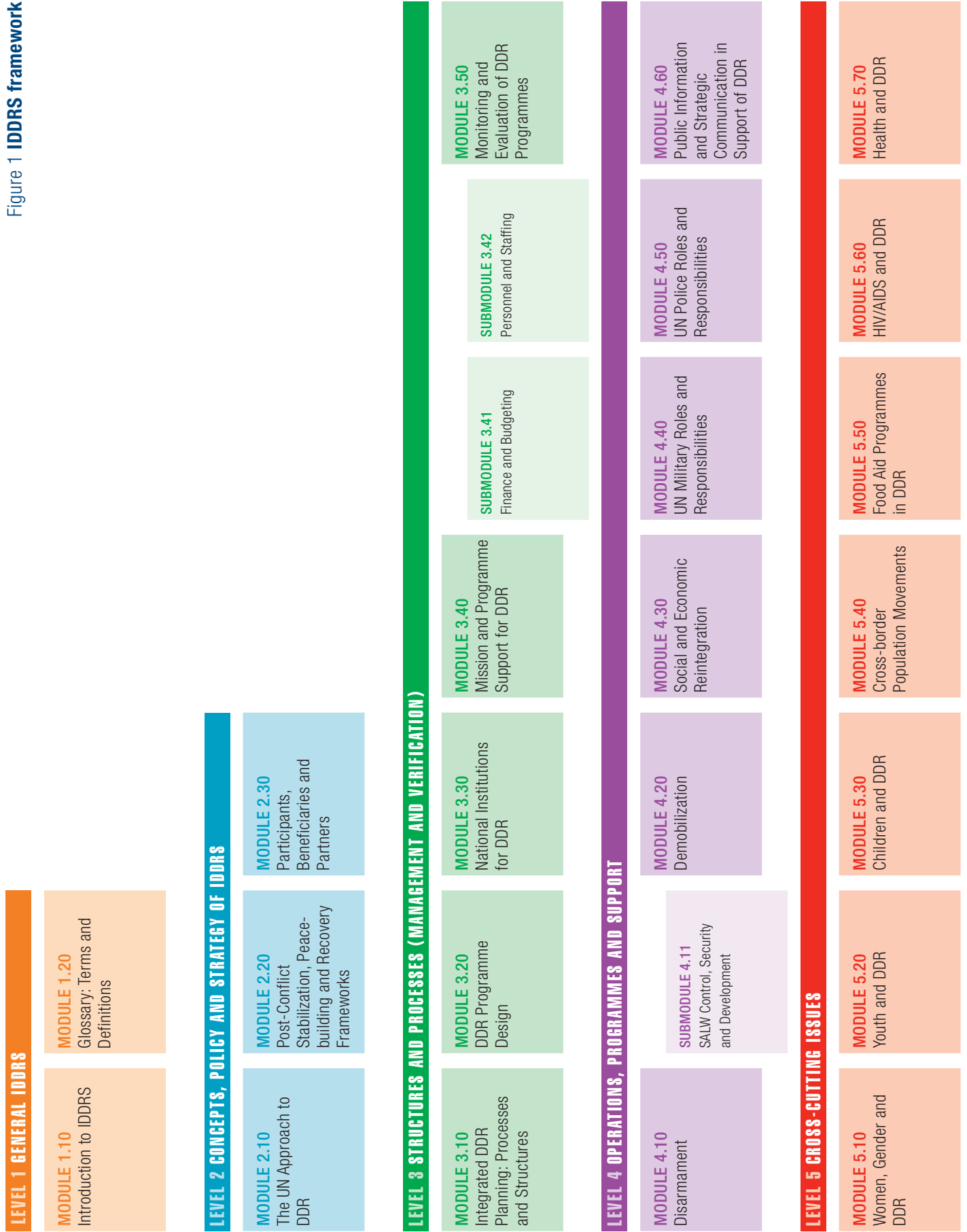
Disarmament

Disarmament is the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population. Disarmament also includes the development of responsible arms management programmes.

Demobilization

Demobilization is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The first stage of demobilization may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centres to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks). The second stage of demobilization encompasses the support package provided to the demobilized, which is called reinsertion. *Reinsertion* is the assistance offered to ex-combatants during demobilization but prior to the longer-term process of reintegration. Reinsertion is a form of transitional assistance to help cover the basic needs of

Figure 1 IDDRS framework



ex-combatants and their families and can include transitional safety allowances, food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short-term education, training, employment and tools. While reintegration is a long-term, continuous social and economic process of development, reinsertion is a short-term material and/or financial assistance to meet immediate needs, and can last up to one year.

Reintegration

Reintegration is 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 and a national responsibility, and often necessitates long-term external assistance.

It is important, however, to look *beyond* the definitions of the individual components of a DDR programme and to view it as an *integrated* process, which allows for a smooth transition from disarmament through to reintegration and also ensures close coordination with other aspects of peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction, such as security sector reform (SSR), reconciliation efforts and wider recovery and development programming.

III. Key considerations for senior managers

A new United Nations approach

The United Nations is increasingly engaged in complex DDR operations, both as a part of peacekeeping operations and in non-peacekeeping contexts. This increase in the scale, complexity, scope and type of United Nations work in DDR has required a change in the organization's approach, as in the past, programmes were often conducted in a fractured way, resulting in poor coordination and sometimes competition between and among peacekeeping operations, agencies, funds and programmes.

ACTION POINT:

- Integrate project work and programming of United Nations departments, agencies, programmes and funds. The United Nations is uniquely positioned to support integrated DDR processes within the context of a multidimensional peacekeeping operation and in non-peacekeeping contexts, providing breadth of scope, neutrality, impartiality and capacity-building through the sharing of technical DDR skills.

An integrated long-term outlook

Approaching DDR in an integrated manner requires a shift in focus to put DDR firmly into the overall post-conflict

stabilization and recovery process. At a strategic level this means that DDR cannot be implemented in isolation from the broader peace-building and recovery process and that it must be coordinated with the wider peace, recovery and development frameworks. The reintegration component is often the hardest part of a DDR programme to resource and implement. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, which may fully engage only in the reintegration phase of the process, need to participate in the planning and design of the DDR programme at the earliest stage so as to ensure that the required resources are in place in a timely manner, especially since key aspects of the reintegration programme often have to be established during the demobilization phase.

ACTION POINTS:

- Ensure that DDR programmes are planned and implemented along with other post-conflict peace-building programmes, including elections, security sector reform, rule-of-law and economic development programming.
- Start planning for sustainable reintegration as early as possible.
- Match reintegration opportunities provided within the DDR programme with market demand.

Although there is a temptation to view DDR as a linear process, the scale and complexity of reintegration, as well as the need to ensure that this is possible in terms of both resources and structures to run and manage programmes, means that planning for reintegration must take place from the very outset.

Importance of political will

DDR is essentially a politically driven process. Many DDR programmes stall or are only partly implemented because the political climate is not right. The success of the DDR process therefore depends on the political will of the parties to enter into the process in a genuine manner.

ACTION POINTS:

- When planning and executing a DDR programme, take into account that political motivations can make or break a DDR programme.
- Act on the legal and moral imperative to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate children associated with armed forces and groups and ensure that their disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is not contingent on adult DDR.

The establishment of a DDR process

This is usually agreed to and defined within a ceasefire, cessation of hostilities or comprehensive peace accord, providing the political operational framework for the

process. Yet in some post-conflict contexts, the parties to a ceasefire or peace agreement may not trust each other and lack the capacity to design, plan and implement DDR programmes.

ACTION POINTS:

- Be an effective and proactive peace broker. A third party such as the United Nations is often called on to broker a peace agreement and to provide assistance for the planning and implementation of peace-building processes such as DDR.
- Push for the inclusion of detailed provisions for DDR in peace agreements that are in line with United Nations policy on DDR and for signatories to respect commitments they may make to be disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated.

USEFUL QUESTIONS WHEN NEGOTIATING DDR PROVISIONS IN A PEACE AGREEMENT:

- What are the strategic ways in which DDR could be used to facilitate your particular peacemaking effort?
- What principles would be applicable for the DDR effort in the particular conflict context?
- How have the principles that should guide DDR been taken into account in the provisions?
- How could the approach taken in DDR be made consistent with the United Nations approach to DDR?
- What provisions, if agreed on, may facilitate effective planning and implementation of the DDR programme?
- How could the DDR provisions be used to provide space for the development of longer-term strategies that could prevent the re-recruitment of disarmed combatants?
- What is the composition of the armed forces and groups? What roles have women and children played in the force or group? Can provisions be made for the release of women and children prior to the demobilization of other adults?
- Are there any major armed elements in the conflict that need to be disarmed, but are not signatories to the peace agreement?
- How would these elements be addressed so that they do not derail a DDR process or the peace process as a whole?
- How will DDR be linked to related aspects of the peace process, such as SSR, rule of law, and truth and reconciliation?

Risk of rapid disarmament

The long-term approach required of integrated DDR is at times offset by the short-term political or security imperative to rapidly disarm combatants that pose a potential threat to peace. When political and security imperatives push for a quick disarmament, there is a risk that this could lead to

increased insecurity at a later stage, especially if reintegration support for demobilized combatants is not well planned and resourced.

IV. General principles for the United Nations approach to DDR

The United Nations approach to DDR is guided by six principles, i.e., that DDR must be:

- people-centred and rights-based;
- flexible;
- transparent and accountable;
- nationally owned;
- integrated;
- well planned.

People-centred and rights-based

Non-discrimination and fair and equitable treatment are core principles in both the design and implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as is respect for international humanitarian law and the promotion of human rights. There are five categories of people that should be taken into consideration in DDR programmes:

1. male and female adult combatants;
2. children associated with armed forces and groups;²
3. those working in non-combat roles (including women)
4. ex-combatants with disabilities and chronic illnesses;
5. dependants.

ACTION POINTS:

- Ensure that the definition of participants and eligibility criteria are culturally sensitive and gender-sensitive, to address the different roles these groups performed during conflicts.
- Design programmes and information campaigns to meet each group's particular needs.
- Recognize the diverse needs of youth, mentally and/or physically disabled ex-combatants and those associated with armed forces and groups.
- Recognize that there are almost always women and girls associated with armed forces and groups and ensure their inclusion in the programme by, among other things, providing specialized care and support to victims of sexual and gender-based violence.
- Ensure that children associated with armed forces and groups are quickly separated and included in specific child DDR programmes.
- Recognize that according to the Rome Conventions on the International Criminal Court it is considered a war crime to recruit anyone under the age of 15 in any circumstance, while the Optional Protocol of the

Convention on the Rights of the Child make it illegal in most countries to recruit anyone under 18.

- Ensure the separation of facilities for women and girls during periods of cantonment, to prevent sexual and gender-based violence.

KEY QUESTIONS FOR ENSURING A PEOPLE-CENTRED APPROACH TO DDR:

- Is there sufficient information on the armed forces or groups to plan for DDR? Has this information been cross-checked?
- Do the eligibility criteria for entry into the DDR programme take into account the different roles of the five DDR target groups?
- Have efforts been made to establish a mechanism to identify and include women and children in the DDR programme? Including eligibility criteria for different groups of individuals?
- Have community members and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) been consulted in the planning and design of programmes?

- Ensure that HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and referral to available treatment are provided to all the participants.

Civilians and civil society groups in communities of return need to be consulted during the planning and design phase of DDR programmes, as well as informed and supported to receive ex-combatants and their dependants during the reintegration phase. These communities must be given the means to support the sustainable rehabilitation and reintegration of the above-mentioned groups.

Flexible

The United Nations approach must be flexible, adaptable and tailored to the country or region in which it is being implemented. Just as situations vary, so do the possible solutions; therefore, while keeping within the approved policy as outlined in the series of IDDRS, programmes will need to be context-specific and flexible enough to provide local solutions to local problems.

A female combatant receiving her demobilization kit in Sibut, Central African Republic. Photographer: Adama-Dian BARRY, UNDP Central African Republic, July 2005



ACTION POINTS:

- Do not allow a formulaic approach to DDR to be adopted.
- Ensure that the DDR programme is based on a thorough assessment of the local context and an analysis of the conflict and the parties to the conflict.

Accountable and transparent

The United Nations aims to establish transparent mechanisms for the independent monitoring, oversight and evaluation of all DDR operations and financing mechanisms. The United Nations system should adhere to IDDRS principles and standards for designing DDR processes, and member states and bilateral partners will be encouraged to provide political and financial support to the process.

ACTION POINTS:

- Hold national authorities and parties accountable for implementing their agreements.
- Hold national and international implementing agencies accountable to DDR participants and beneficiaries.

Nationally owned

If a DDR process is to succeed it must be nationally owned. It is therefore critical that United Nations departments, agencies and funds recognize their role in supporting national actors in the DDR process, including by building national capacities within both government and civil society. Capacity-building also helps to ensure the sustainability of a DDR process and is particularly important within the context of a peacekeeping mission, which is often drawn down before longer-term reintegration programmes are completed.

In some cases, post-conflict governments may be weak, lack means and legitimacy and not exercise full control of a country. They may also possess little or no DDR expertise or capacity in programme development and management, making national ownership more difficult. In such situations, the United Nations must commit to systematically strengthening and developing national capacity. This can be achieved not only by providing technical assistance, training and financial support, but also by facilitating the involvement of local authorities, affected communities and combatants and their dependants. Genuine national ownership is broader than central government leadership and implies the participation of a wide range of state and non-state actors at national, provincial and local levels.

ACTION POINTS:

- Ensure that the DDR process is nationally owned, by ensuring the full engagement of national actors in the design, planning and implementation of DDR programmes.

- Work closely with national actors to build capacity from the earliest possible stage of the process.
- Include civil society and women's organizations in DDR programme design and implementation. Where necessary, work with civil society groups to strengthen their capacity to participate in the process.

POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS ARTICULATES ITS APPROACH TO NATIONAL OWNERSHIP IN A GIVEN COUNTRY:

- What is the nature of the conflict and the nature of the government in place?
- Who are the national stakeholders in this particular context?
- Whose interest in DDR needs to be represented in the peace process?
- Given the particular political context and character of the government, what aspect is most appropriately owned by the national stakeholders in DDR?
- What DDR technical support is needed to support and promote national ownership?

Integrated

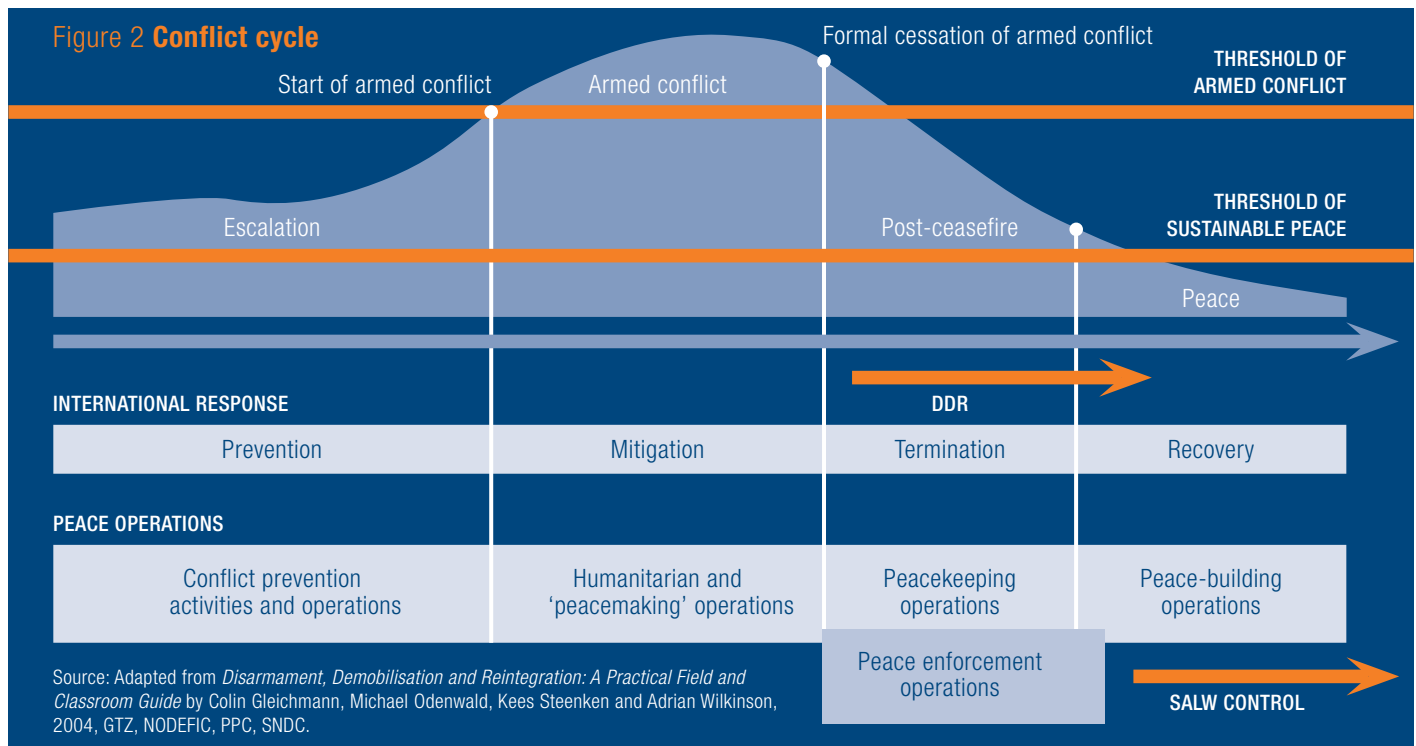
The overarching goal of the United Nations approach to DDR is to enhance security so that post-conflict reconstruction and wider recovery can begin. Therefore DDR programmes are often at the nexus of peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and development and involve a variety of national and international, military, police and civilian actors and institutions.

This particular positioning of DDR operations requires the establishment of integrated DDR structures to facilitate joint planning, programming and resource mobilization. It is also necessary to adopt strategies across sectors (for instance, there needs to be close coordination with security sector and rule-of-law reform) and, where applicable, across borders.

In view of the regional dimensions of many conflicts, it is also necessary to have an integrated approach in terms of geography and to address cross-border concerns that may have an impact on DDR. These may range from cross-border support for armed forces or groups to the presence of foreign combatants and the cross-border movements of combatants and weapons (as well as civilians associated with combatants, such as family members and abductees).

ACTION POINTS:

- Ensure that cross-sectoral strategies are taken into account when planning and implementing a DDR process.
- Include a regional approach in planning the DDR programme.



- Form close coordination and linkages among DDR programmes operating in the same region to ensure programming coherence.

Well planned

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes must be prepared with careful attention to safety and security; assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation; public information and community sensitization; transition and exit strategy. Further information on planning is included below.

V. Planning and implementing DDR in integrated DDR processes and structures

Lessons learned from previous DDR processes suggest that some problems have been due to poor planning and programme design. The IDDRS place particular emphasis on the importance of planning and identify five phases of internal United Nations planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in a peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building environment. These are:

1. Pre-planning and preparatory assistance

Pre-planning and preparatory assistance includes early identification of potential entry points and strategic options for United Nations support.

PRE-PLANNING AND PREPARATORY ASSISTANCE CHECKLIST:

- ✓ Establish a DDR programme based on thorough political analysis, including an evaluation of the risks involved.
- ✓ Evaluate existing capacity and how this can be boosted so as to respond efficiently and effectively.
- ✓ Provide technical advice during the peace process.
- ✓ Undertake exploratory pre-programme assessments and surveys, including on key issues such as: sexual and gender-based violence; special needs of women, youth and children; disability and HIV/AIDS; in-country United Nations, national institutional and civil society capacities; and the early engagement of donors and other international and local stakeholders.

2. Initial technical assessments

A well-prepared technical assessment should provide the basis for the more in-depth assessment required for programme design and is often undertaken as a part of a multidimensional technical assessment mission to develop the United Nations strategy in a conflict area.

INITIAL TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS CHECKLIST:

- ✓ What are the conditions and requirements for DDR?
- ✓ Is DDR outlined in the peace agreement?
- ✓ Has there been an assessment of national capacities for DDR?

- ✓ How best can the United Nations support the process and what are the organization's strategic objectives and operational role?
- ✓ What is the role of DDR within the broader United Nations peace-building strategy?
- ✓ What role will the United Nations play in supporting other national and international stakeholders?

3. Development of a strategic and policy framework

This involves establishing the initial organizational and institutional framework and the identification of other national and international stakeholders on DDR and their respective areas of engagement. The frameworks established should be harmonized—and integrated—with other United Nations and national planning frameworks.

4. Development of a programme and operational framework

This phase of planning will see the conduct of a more detailed field assessment, leading to the development of a detailed DDR programme and implementation plan, which should include provisions for monitoring and evaluation.

5. Development of a post-mission plan

A DDR programme does not end with the exit of the peacekeeping mission. It is therefore critical to ensure that the departure of the peacekeeping mission is planned with the United Nations country team as early as possible to ensure that capacities are sufficiently built up in the United Nations country team to meet the full financial, logistics and human resources requirements for the continuation of the longer-term aspects of the DDR programme. A second critical dimension is the building of national capacities to allow national partners to assume full responsibility for the DDR programme, which should begin from the inception of the DDR programme.

VI. Implementing DDR in integrated DDR processes and structures

Implementation of integrated DDR requires that appropriate structures and coordination mechanisms be established. These should include not only national structures but also United Nations teams and units. Within the United Nations system these teams should be considered at various levels:

Reintegration project for ex-combatants in Liberia. Photo from the Information and Sensitization Unit, Joint Implementation Unit of the Liberia DDDR programme, 2005



- **Integrated United Nations DDR units or teams** to plan and implement a DDR strategy and programme. This should include staff from the relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Given the important administrative and financial differences between United Nations entities, it is not possible to insist on complete operational and administrative integration. Instead, the goal should be complete integration at the planning level to ensure efficient and timely coordination of operations.
- **DDR task force in the United Nations country team.** To ensure effective and sustainable involvement of the United Nations country team in integrated DDR programming, a United Nations country team DDR task force (headed by the Deputy to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General [SRSG]) and technical working group should be established to manage and supervise the integrated approach. Members of the United Nations country team should ensure that their respective agencies, funds or programmes fulfil the responsibilities defined in the integrated DDR strategy.
- **Mission DDR steering group.** Within the context of peacekeeping missions, given the involvement of the different components of the mission in DDR or DDR-related activities, a DDR steering group should also be established within the peacekeeping mission to facilitate the exchange of information, joint planning and joint operations.

VII. Structures and functions of national DDR institutions

Depending on the context, a national commission on DDR may take the shape of either a policy body, or a technical body. The former should include government ministries and agencies responsible for components of DDR, representatives of parties to the peace accord/political agreement, representatives of the United Nations, representatives of the electoral authorities, regional organizations and donors, and representatives of civil society and the private sector. It should meet periodically to provide political coordination and policy direction for the national DDR programme and coordinate all government institutions and international agencies providing support to the national DDR programme.

In instances where a technical body is established, the national DDR commission may take greater responsibility for the design, planning and implementation of the DDR programme. Such an agency would include on its staff programme managers and technical experts (including those seconded from national ministries). International technical experts (these may include advisers from the United

Nations system and/or the peacekeeping mission's DDR unit) may provide support directly to this technical body in all aspects of the DDR programme.

When the United Nations has a mandate to support national DDR institutions, the SRSG or Deputy SRSG may be invited to chair or co-chair the national DDR commission, particularly if there is a need for neutral arbitration.

VIII. Resourcing DDR programmes

Technical resources

Technical and staff resources for a DDR programme can come from a number of sources including partner agencies, funds and programmes, international or national NGOs and, where appropriate, from within a peacekeeping mission (e.g., military or logistic support). In peacekeeping operations the military component should be able to contribute to a DDR programme in a number of ways, including through:

- logistic support;
- the provision of security;
- information gathering; and
- specialized ammunition and weapon expertise.

These tasks sometimes require specialized capacities and that DDR tasks be factored into the force structure when the concept of operations is written.

The ability of some partners to assist may be limited by their mandate (for instance, many humanitarian organizations cannot work with combatants until they are demobilized), and careful consideration should be given as to how best they may assist, while respecting their mandate and other factors that may limit their work.

Funding

In a peacekeeping context, funding for DDR comes from:

1. Peacekeeping-assessed contributions, which can be used to cover disarmament and demobilization (including reinsertion) operations; and
2. Voluntary contributions for reintegration, which must be raised from donors. In a non-peacekeeping context all funding must be raised from donors.

This diversity in funding sources has at times resulted in a gap between, on the one hand, disarmament and demobilization, which are relatively easy to fund, plan and implement, and on the other, reintegration, which is dependent on voluntary contributions and on expertise and conditions that are not always present in a timely manner in a post-

conflict environment. The gap in the process can be minimized if long-term reintegration programmes are properly planned—in close coordination with donors—and adequately resourced at the outset.

In a peacekeeping context, the inclusion of the reinsertion funding as a part of demobilization allows assessed contributions to be used to provide participants with transitional assistance for a period of up to one year.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING RESOURCES:

- What United Nations agencies, funds, programmes, NGOs and other international or national actors are able to assist with a DDR programme and to what extent?
- What are the modalities for involving these partners?
- Have DDR tasks been factored into the force structure of a peacekeeping mission?
- How can donors be engaged from the outset?
- How will resources be allocated among various United Nations agencies and aspects of the DDR programme?

IX. Conclusions

DDR is central to peacekeeping and peace-building efforts. Senior managers working in peace operations and recovery programmes that have a DDR component must take this process into account. The series of IDDRS lays out the United Nations approach to DDR and is an important tool for those involved in the management of such operations. In particular, managers need to:

- **Adopt the United Nations DDR approach:**
 - apply the United Nations approach to DDR, which is guided by the following six principles:
 1. people-centred,
 2. flexible,
 3. transparency and accountability,
 4. national ownership,
 5. integrated,
 6. well planned;
 - integrate project work and programming of United Nations departments, agencies programmes and funds.

Weapons being burnt during the official launch of the DDR process in Muramvya, Burundi, December 2004. © UN Photo/Martine Perret



- **Endorse an integrated long-term outlook:**
 - ensure that DDR programmes are planned and implemented along with other post-conflict peace-building programmes, including security sector reform, rule-of-law and economic development programming;
 - ensure that DDR programmes take into account and complement related programmes and efforts within the wider region;
 - start planning and fundraising for reintegration as early as possible;
 - match reintegration opportunities provided within the DDR programme with market demand.

- **Recognize the importance of political will:**
 - recognize that political motivations can make or break a DDR programme and ensure that these are taken into account in terms of both planning and executing a DDR programme.

- **Push for the inclusion of detailed provisions for DDR in peace agreements:**
 - ensure that these are in line with the United Nations policy on DDR and push for signatories to respect commitments they may make to be disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated.

- **Endorse national ownership:**
 - ensure that the DDR process is nationally owned, by ensuring the full engagement of national actors in the design, planning and implementation of DDR programmes;
 - work closely with national actors to build capacity from the earliest possible stage of the process.

Endnotes

- 1 Department of Disarmament Affairs, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Political Affairs, Department of Public Information, International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Development Fund for Women, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, World Food Programme, World Health Organization.
- 2 The Cape Town Principles and Best Practices (1997) define child soldiers as: "Any person under 18 years of age who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to cooks, porters, messengers and anyone accompanying such groups, other than family members. The definition includes girls recruited for sexual purposes and for forced marriage. It does not, therefore, only refer to a child who is carrying or has carried arms."

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UNDP
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WHO

