

Objectives

This module will:

- ✓ outline the UN approach to DDR, the reasons behind integrated DDR and its mandate;
- ✓ explain what DDR is and when it is appropriate; and
- ✓ identify the principles that guide the UN approach to DDR.

1. Introduction


The UN is increasingly engaged in complex DDR operations, both as a part of peacekeeping operations and in non-peacekeeping contexts. The increase in the scale, complexity, scope and type of the UN's work in DDR has required a change in the Organization's approach.

In the past, DDR programmes were often carried out in a disjointed, unintegrated way due to poor coordination, planning and support, and sometimes competition between and among peacekeeping operations, agencies, funds and programmes. As a result, national and international efforts to establish security were not adequately supported, weakening the chances of a successful peace process.

Box 2.10.1: Reasons behind and mandate for integrated DDR

The **Brahimi Report** of August 2000 stresses the importance of UN agencies, funds and programmes in the framework of UN peace operations all working towards the same goal. It recommends, among other things, that "Integrated Mission Task Forces (IMTFs), with members seconded from throughout the United Nations system, as necessary, should be the standard vehicle for mission-specific planning and support" (A/55/305; S/2000/809, para. 217).

The UN should no longer develop, initiate, support or carry out disjointed or inappropriate DDR programmes. The UN integrated approach to DDR has emerged from the joint effort and strong commitment of several UN departments, agencies, funds and programmes to work closely together to improve effectiveness in this vital area.

 **Are you familiar with the UN and international legal documents that guide DDR programmes? Annex B in IDDRS 2.10 provides an overview of both.**

Box 2.10.2: Who is a combatant?

Based on an analogy with the definition set out in the Third Geneva Convention of 1949 relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War in relation to persons engaged in international armed conflicts, a **combatant** is a person who:

- is a member of a national army or an irregular military; or
- is actively participating in military activities and hostilities; or
- is involved in recruiting or training military personnel; or
- holds a command or decision-making position within a national army or an armed organization; or
- arrived in a host country carrying arms or in military uniform or as part of a military structure; or
- having arrived in a host country as an ordinary civilian, thereafter assumes, or shows determination to assume, any of the above attributes.

2. 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 disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants together make up a complex process with political, military, security, humanitarian and socio-economic dimensions.

This process aims to deal with the post-conflict security problem that arises when combatants are left without livelihoods and support networks during the vital period stretching from conflict to peace, recovery and development. DDR also helps build national capacity to assist in the reintegration of ex-combatants and to support communities receiving ex-combatants and working for their peaceful and sustainable reintegration.

Through a process of comprehensively disarming combatants, preparing them for civilian life and providing them with opportunities for sustainable social and economic reintegration, DDR aims to support this high-risk group so that they become *stakeholders in the peace process*. DDR should therefore:

- be planned and coordinated within the framework of the peace process;
- be linked to broader security issues, such as the reorganization of the armed forces and other security sector reform (SSR) issues;
- take a comprehensive approach towards disarmament, and weapons control and management;
- be linked to the broader processes of national capacity-building, reconstruction and development in order to achieve the sustainable reintegration of ex-combatants;

Box 2.10.3: Definitions of disarmament, demobilization, reinsertion and reintegration

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 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 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 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.

Source: Note by the Secretary-General on administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of UN peacekeeping operations, 24 May 2005 (A/C.5/59/31)

- encourage trust and confidence in communities receiving ex-combatants, and deal with the root causes of the conflict in order to prevent a return to violent conflict; and
- be flexible and carefully adapted to meet the specific needs of a particular country (and region).

3. When is DDR appropriate?

DDR is essentially a politically driven process, and its success depends on the will of the parties to the conflict to demilitarize after conflict. This political will is usually reflected in a commitment by these parties to disarm and demobilize military personnel in formal armed forces or other armed groups, within the framework of a ceasefire agreement or comprehensive peace accord.

The UN is often called upon by the parties to provide assistance for the planning and implementation of DDR processes. The Organization supports the DDR of a combination of state armed forces and other armed groups through:

- *The demobilization of part of the state armies or regular armed forces:* Governments may ask for assistance to demobilize parts of their armed forces in order to adapt them to peacetime needs and free up human and financial resources for reconstruction and development. It is recommended that this exercise should be coordinated with a wider security sector review or reform process;
- *The disbanding of irregular or informal armed groups:* DDR may be also required to disband irregular or informal armed groups.

In both cases, women, youth and children may have participated in combat and/or support roles.

Moreover, DDR may be required in support of:

- *security sector reform*, which may involve, among other things, restructuring existing armed forces, creating new unified armed forces or merging existing ones; and
- *law enforcement* and the (re-)establishment of legislation controlling arms.

4. What principles guide the UN approach to DDR?

Five overarching principles shall guide the UN approach to DDR. DDR shall be:

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

4.1. People-centred

The primary focus of any UN-supported DDR shall be on people. Non-discrimination and fair and equitable treatment of participants and beneficiaries are core principles of the UN approach to DDR. This means that:

- individuals shall not be discriminated against on the basis of sex, age, class, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political opinion, or other personal characteristics and associations; and
- there shall be differences in the support provided based on the specific needs of each sex and those of differing ages and physical abilities.



OG 2.30 on Participants, Beneficiaries and Partners

The principles of non-discrimination and fair and equitable treatment are important throughout the DDR programme cycle. However, these principles are parti-

Table 2.10.1: Guidance for applying the principles of non-discrimination, and fair and equitable treatment

DDR programme cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All actions shall be planned and carried out with the greatest respect for the individual participating in or benefiting from the DDR programme and his/her dignity. ■ The UN and its partners shall be neutral, transparent and impartial, i.e. they shall not take sides in political, racial, religious or ideological controversies, or give preferential treatment to one or more parties. ■ DDR programmes shall be clearly linked to local and international mechanisms for achieving justice and the rule of law.
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Specific measures shall be taken to ensure the participation of female combatants and supporters in DDR programmes.
Benefits and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Based on their specific needs, ex-combatants shall have access to the same benefits and opportunities regardless of which armed force, armed group or political faction they belonged to. ■ Special packages for commanders may be necessary to secure their buy-in to the DDR process, and to ensure that they allow combatants to join the process.

cularly important when establishing the eligibility criteria for people to participate in DDR programmes and/or determining who will be entitled to reintegration benefits and opportunities.



The UN and its partners shall:

- *NOT interpret neutrality as preventing them from protesting against or documenting human rights violations or taking other action in this regard; and*
- *NOT encourage the recruitment of children into armed forces and groups in any way, especially by commanders trying to increase the numbers of combatants entering DDR programmes.*



OG 5.10 on Women, Gender and DDR and OG 5.30 on Children and DDR

Box 2.10.4: Key questions for ensuring a people-centred approach to DDR

- Did your assessments gather the necessary information to prepare a locally appropriate DDR programme? Did they allow you to identify who participants and beneficiaries are? Did they ascertain the specific needs of different groups that make up participants and beneficiaries?
- Did you take the necessary precautions to avoid raising unrealistic expectations among participants and beneficiaries? Were DDR programme staff properly briefed and instructed on how

to handle and release information? Were national counterparts and institutions fully aware of the limitations of the DDR programme and the implications of their information campaigns?

- Do the DDR programme eligibility criteria take into account the different roles of those involved in armed forces and groups?
- Did you devise a mechanism to identify and include eligible women in the DDR programme?
- What measures were taken to ensure the unconditional release and protection of children associated with armed forces and groups as combatants or in other roles?
- Do reintegration benefits and opportunities respond to specific needs of different groups? Do these benefits allow for the involvement of families, particularly wives, of ex-combatants in reintegration?
- Did you consult and involve participants and beneficiaries in the planning and design of the DDR programme?

4.2. Flexible, transparent and accountable

The UN DDR approach shall be flexible, transparent and accountable:

- *Flexible:* While complying with the IDDRS, DDR programmes shall be adapted to suit the country or region in which they are being implemented, and easily adaptable to respond to highly volatile situations and unexpected circumstances;
- *Transparent:* DDR shall be carried out in such a way that information is available to, and broadly understandable by, participants, beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders, subject to reasonable limits needed to protect privacy and ensure security;
- *Accountable:* DDR programmes shall be accountable not only to international donors, but also to national partners, beneficiaries and participants. Mechanisms shall be established to ensure adequate reporting, monitoring and evaluation of all DDR operations and finances.



OG 3.41 on Finance and Budgeting and OG 3.50 on Monitoring and Evaluation of DDR Programmes

Box 2.10.5: Key questions for ensuring a flexible, transparent and accountable approach to DDR

- Did you carry out a holistic analysis of the conflict and security dynamics to ensure that the DDR programme is country and context specific?
- Did you plan for different scenarios? Do you have contingency plans? Do you have flexible funding mechanisms?
- Do you have a public information and strategic communication strategy for each target group (participants, beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders)?

- Did you establish a reporting and monitoring system? How will you demonstrate to each target group (participants, beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders) that the programme's objectives have been achieved?
- How will you involve participants, beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders in evaluation?

4.3. Nationally owned

The primary responsibility for DDR programmes rests with national actors; the UN's role is to support the process as a neutral actor. National ownership is, however, broader than exclusive central government ownership. Genuine national ownership requires the participation of a wide range of State and non-State actors at the national, regional and local levels, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs).

The UN shall work to ensure DDR programmes are nationally owned. However, genuine national ownership is difficult to achieve, in particular at the early stages of post-conflict stabilization. National capacity tends to be weak, and the UN shall use every opportunity to systematically develop and strengthen it.

As an impartial actor, the UN shall also support the parties so that internationally accepted standards are observed in the process of ensuring national ownership of DDR programmes.

Box 2.10.6: Key questions for ensuring a nationally owned DDR programme

- How will you ensure that State and non-State actors at the national, regional and local levels, including civil society and NGOs, are fully represented in DDR decision-making bodies?
- What mechanisms are necessary to fully engage national actors in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of DDR?
- Did you carry out a capacity needs assessment of State and non-State actors, including NGOs and CSOs?
- What is your capacity-building strategy towards them? How will you supply policy advice, technical assistance, training and financial support to them?



OG 3.30 on National Institutions for DDR

4.4. Integrated

DDR programmes often combine peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building, recovery and development, and involve a variety of national and international military, police and civilian actors and institutions. This particular positioning of DDR requires an integrated approach, which in turn requires much more than simple coordination. The UN approach to DDR shall ensure:

- joint and coherent planning, programming and funding at Headquarters and country levels;
- adequate and appropriate links with related programmes, such as recovery or rule of law; and
- appropriate links with regional DDR initiatives.

Wherever possible, and in accordance with its mandate, the UN should establish an integrated DDR unit or team at the country level, which combines the comparative advantages of the mission and participating agencies, funds and programmes, on the basis of an agreed memorandum of understanding (MOU).



OG 3.42 on Personnel and Staffing offers guidance on integrated DDR units.

Box 2.10.7: Key questions for ensuring an integrated approach to DDR

- What key UN agencies, programmes and funds are likely to become involved? What are their comparative advantages? What roles are they likely to perform?
- Will integration take place at the programmatic level or institutional level or both?
- What links can be built between DDR and other programmes?
- How will the DDR programme be integrated or linked to relevant regional initiatives?



OG 3.10 on Integrated DDR Planning: Processes and Structures

4.5. Well planned

UN-supported DDR programmes shall be well planned to ensure quality in the delivery of services. Lessons from previous processes indicate that several problems should be avoided by paying particular attention to the following key issues:

- safety and security;
- coordination;
- assessment, monitoring and evaluation;
- information and sensitization; and
- a transition and exit strategy.

Table 2.10.2: Key issues to consider for designing well-planned DDR programmes

Safety and security

- Both risks and operational security and safety protocols should be determined before the planning and implementation of activities. This should be based on a comprehensive security analysis.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Security concerns should be included in operational plans, and clear criteria established for starting, delaying, suspending or cancelling activities and/or operations.
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Obstacles to effective coordination among the UN agencies, programmes and funds, and donors and national actors should be identified and dealt with. ■ Coordination efforts should focus on establishing a common strategic framework, a joint funding mechanism, and other common consultation and decision-making processes.
Assessment, monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Planning should be based on comprehensive assessments. ■ The collection of detailed and inclusive quantitative and qualitative data should be supported by information management systems. ■ Internal and external monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be established from the start.
Information and sensitization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An information and sensitization strategy should be prepared as early as possible. ■ The strategy should be adapted to suit the needs of different audiences, and should employ multiple and locally appropriate means of communication.
A transition and exit strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A transition and exit strategy should be defined as early as possible. ■ The transfer of programmes and services to government and/or national NGOs and/or development actors should be based on a capacity development strategy.

 **OG 3.20 on DDR Programme Design, OG 3.50 on Monitoring and Evaluation of DDR Programmes and OG 4.60 on Public Information and Strategic Communication in Support of DDR**

Box 2.10.8: Key questions for ensuring well-planned DDR

- What are the minimum operational security standards (MOSS) applying at your duty station? Are your staff familiar with them?
- Are you in contact with the UN Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD)? Are you collaborating with other national and international organizations on safety and security matters?
- What are your needs in terms of an information management system? What are the options?
- Will your partners be involved in collecting information? Did you adopt common standards for collecting and managing information to ensure compatibility?
- What behaviour changes will the information and communication campaign aim to achieve? What tactics and tools will be used?
- What are the key factors in deciding how long to remain and when to exit?

- Did you involve participants, beneficiaries, partners and stakeholders in the design of the transition and exit strategy?
- How will you keep your transition and exit strategy viable and useful?

5. Summary of key guidance on the UN approach to DDR

- ✓ The overarching goal of the UN approach to DDR is to increase security and stability in post-conflict situations so that recovery and development can begin.
- ✓ Integrated DDR is the way forward: UN missions, agencies, funds and programmes must combine their efforts to form one team working on a common strategy and using joint funding arrangements.
- ✓ Planning for integrated DDR requires vision, and has to start as early as possible during the peace process.