

OG 2.20: Post-conflict Stabilization, Peace-building and Recovery Frameworks

Objectives

This module will:

- ✓ describe the context in which DDR programmes are usually decided on, planned and implemented;
- ✓ situate DDR within the transition from conflict to peace;
- ✓ highlight links with other security, humanitarian, peace-building and recovery programmes; and
- ✓ outline transitional and recovery planning frameworks relevant to DDR.

1. Introduction

DDR programmes usually take place in complex and multidimensional environments during the transition from conflict to peace. As such, they are often part of larger post-conflict stabilization, peace-building and recovery frameworks, which require broad-based national and international cooperation across a range of issues.

DDR practitioners shall therefore have a thorough understanding of:

- the various aspects of the post-conflict context – political, social, economic and security – since they influence and shape the decision-making process during the planning and implementation of DDR programmes;
- the transition from conflict to peace, to be able to identify specific and appropriate DDR interventions during this transition; and
- the main transition and recovery planning frameworks within which DDR is situated, to be able to help establish and strengthen the necessary links between them.

2. DDR in context

Although every context is unique, there are some common characteristics that post-conflict countries share. Such countries often have weak governance institutions, lack social services and cohesion, have poor or malfunctioning economies, and are confronted with insecurity and lawlessness, including high levels of human rights abuse. Understanding these features of post-conflict countries is essential for designing and implementing DDR programmes.

2.1. The political environment

DDR is usually carried out in highly unstable political environments. A ‘no war but no peace’ situation often exists despite the signing of a ceasefire or peace agreement. Although the parties to the conflict have usually committed themselves to settling the conflict peacefully, the war mentality and effort may still be widespread in the country, especially when small arms and light weapons (SALW) are widely available. The armed forces and groups are usually powerful, and the political elites (i.e. leaders) are often unfamiliar with democratic governance. State institutions may also be weak, and irregular armed groups may control large parts of the State territory. In this context, DDR is unlikely to start without the *firm commitment* of the political elites within and outside State structures and military commanders, as Box 2.20.1 shows:

Box 2.20.1: Determining readiness for DDR

- *Do the parties to the conflict reject violence as a way to achieve political objectives?* The parties must demonstrate that violence is no longer an acceptable political tool. At the highest level, this commitment is most often demonstrated in a ceasefire and/or peace agreement in which the parties undertake to carry out the DDR of ex-combatants.
- *Do the parties agree to redirect their political and organizational structures to pursue peaceful, development-related priorities?* A broad and long-term policy shift must be made to redirect previously militarized resources towards peaceful reconstruction.



Apart from understanding the in-country political environment, DDR practitioners shall also:

- *understand the politics of the region and how they affect broader conflict and stability;*
- *measure the level of commitment of international donors to long-term support for DDR; and*
- *understand the extent to which the UN can exert influence over potential ‘spoilers’ within a country, a region and internationally.*

2.2. The social environment

Armed conflict causes enormous loss of human capital, and destroys societies. Widespread population displacement disrupts community networks and traditions, creates and reinforces inequalities, and increases the transmission of disease (particularly HIV), especially through increased levels of violence by men against women.

Rebuilding the social fabric is a complex, delicate and time-consuming process. Besides restoring essential social services, such as education, health, water and sanitation, it requires individuals and entire communities to overcome traumas and find constructive ways of dealing with past violations and atrocities through non-violent means. Impunity for human rights abuses, especially sexual violence, needs to be urgently dealt with.

Fundamentally, DDR programmes should contribute to rebuilding the social fabric and restoring social cohesion rather than further undermining them. Because the return of displaced populations to communities already puts tremendous pressures on these communities' scarce resources, the return of ex-combatants should be carefully planned with the involvement of community leaders, civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Box 2.20.2: Factors that should be taken into account when encouraging reintegration and social cohesion

- *How will the return of ex-combatants reinforce rather than undermine social cohesion and reconciliation?* Ex-combatants often display anti-social behaviour within their families and communities, may be addicted to alcohol and drugs, and are often known to have been perpetrators of violence and atrocities. This should be taken into account when planning their reintegration.
- *How will the DDR programme use the knowledge and experience of local communities, civil society and the private sector?* Local communities and civil society (particularly women's groups) have often developed alternative coping mechanisms and strategies to solve conflict and fulfil important needs. Their knowledge, experience and support are extremely valuable to DDR planners.
- *How will information and sensitization campaigns be used to assist the return of ex-combatants and their families?* The media are a powerful means of shaping ideas and encouraging behavioural changes. They can help communities understand their role in DDR and build their confidence in the process, so that they become active supporters of the process.

2.3. The economic environment

The macro- and microeconomic dynamics of post-conflict communities also influence the outcome of DDR programmes. Armed conflicts badly affect national and local economies by reducing production, consumption, wealth and livelihoods. Human capital is reduced through population displacement and 'brain drain'. Infrastructure and public services, such as transportation, communications and electricity supplies, are often damaged or not functioning. As a result, markets collapse and unemployment becomes widespread.

The ending of hostilities alone is not enough to improve economic conditions, although a rapid increase in economic benefits, often seen as a 'peace dividend', is often expected by populations recovering from conflict. Economic recovery is also a long and complex process. DDR programmes should therefore be designed to reinforce economic recovery efforts and not to compete with them.

Box 2.20.3: Steps to encourage economic reintegration

- *What incentives can be created for ex-combatants to become assets rather than a burden for community members and families?* Ex-combatants have been deprived of education and employment. They are often seen as a lost generation, and are likely to experience difficulties in reintegrating into economic life. Specifically designed reintegration support is required to assist ex-combatants to return to education and/or find employment.

- *What type of support will be needed for community-based organizations, local business training centres, micro-grant facilities and local NGOs to offer training and create employment opportunities?* The integrated DDR approach argues that these organizations should be supported where they already exist, and established where they do not, to offer training and create employment opportunities.

2.4. The security environment

Violence in many forms will likely continue in post-conflict environments in most or some parts of the country. High rates of criminality often result from the widespread availability of SALW, and a lack of employment or livelihood options. Violations of human rights are also common, and impunity for such violence remains a concern, as civilian police and other law enforcement institutions may not be functioning. Peace support operations are designed to fill this security vacuum, so that DDR and other peace-building measures can take place.

Box 2.20.4: Security concerns that should be dealt with before starting with DDR

- *Have armed hostilities nearly or completely stopped?* Parties to the conflict are unlikely to start with DDR if the armed conflict is still ongoing in some parts of the country.
- *What other security issues remain after the signing of the ceasefire or peace agreement?* Parties are unlikely to participate in DDR if they do not feel secure.
- *Has the peace operation that has been put in place been relatively successful in maintaining law and order?* Parties are unlikely to disarm their combatants and release them if there is a breakdown of law and order and high levels of armed violence.



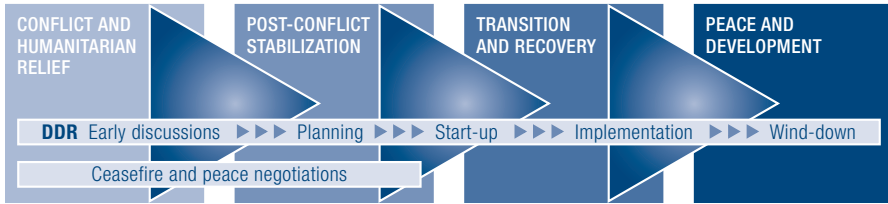
Besides understanding common features of post-conflict situations, DDR practitioners should ensure that proper assessments are carried out to have a better understanding of the specific situation in the country they are supporting.



OG 3.20 on DDR Programme Design provides guidance on how to carry out assessments.

3. Situating DDR within the transition from conflict to peace

DDR should be planned and implemented within the transition from conflict to peace. It is recognized that the stages of this process often do not occur neatly one after the other. In reality, each stage of the transition often overlaps or runs parallel to others, and setbacks and reversals often occur. Sometimes opportunities emerge that will also affect DDR. Figure 2.20.1 illustrates the best-case scenario for the transition from conflict to peace, and the role DDR will play within this transition:

Figure 2.20.1: Implementing DDR during transition

DDR interventions may be explored with the parties while conflict and humanitarian relief are still ongoing. Most DDR planning and design will take place during the post-conflict stabilization period, whereas implementation will usually occur during transition and recovery. The transition and recovery phase will end when both national and international partners are finally able to focus on longer-term development goals.

The socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants and their families is a long-term process. While an exit strategy for DDR needs to be clearly defined and agreed upon during the planning and design phase, measures should be taken to support and monitor the reintegration of ex-combatants and their families as part of the wider recovery and development process.

 **OG 4.30 on Social and Economic Reintegration provides guidance on the socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants.**

Each stage of the transition from conflict to development will require different types of UN action and different types of DDR interventions, as Table 2.20.1 shows:

Table 2.20.1: Key UN actions and DDR interventions during the transition from conflict to development

Stages	UN action	DDR intervention
Conflict and humanitarian relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Humanitarian relief operations ■ Diplomatic efforts to broker peace ■ Sanctions, arms embargoes, tracking of weapons and natural resources flowing to and from conflict areas, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exploring options and providing technical advice and support to the parties to the conflict ■ Early assessments ■ Preliminary planning ■ Preliminary design of resource mobilization strategies

<p>Post-conflict stabilization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Joint assessments for integrated peacekeeping ■ A concept of operations for integrated peacekeeping ■ Deployment of troops, key mission staff and resources ■ Joint post-conflict needs assessment (PCNA) ■ Preparation of recovery strategies and programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assessment and planning ■ Design of DDR programmes ■ Early sensitization of political and military leaderships ■ Sensitization and coordination of roles within the peacekeeping mission and among various UN agencies ■ Preliminary public information campaigns ■ Implementation of emergency/pilot DDR activities for special groups (children, abducted women and the disabled)
<p>Transition and recovery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Coordination and implementation of recovery strategies ■ Preparation of an interim poverty reduction strategy paper (I-PRSP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implementation of DDR programmes ■ Coordination with broader community reintegration and recovery programmes ■ Monitoring and evaluation of DDR programmes ■ Planning, design and implementation of community disarmament/weapons management and reduction programmes
<p>Peace and development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on longer-term development goals (e.g. Millennium Development Goals) ■ Preparation of UN development assistance frameworks (UNDAFs) and PRSPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implementation of community disarmament/weapons management and reduction programmes ■ Support and monitoring of longer-term reintegration of ex-combatants and their families within the context of recovery programmes ■ Preparations for wind-down

Different political, social, economic and security objectives will be discussed and agreed upon between the parties to the conflict during this stage. The UN often plays an important role in assisting the parties to define a comprehensive vision of the transition and peace-building process. During this stage, the UN also supports the parties to define the mandate and goals of DDR. *This support should be provided through the early deployment of technical advisers within the framework of a preparatory assistance project.*

Box 2.20.5: Key roles for DDR technical advisers during ceasefire and peace negotiations

- *Orientation:* DDR should be used as a means of building trust and confidence in the peace process, and supporting the transition from conflict to peace and development.
- *DDR policy and strategy:* Policy and strategy options should be discussed with the parties. Overarching political, legal and institutional frameworks for DDR should be included in the text of the peace agreement. When possible, specific principles should be agreed upon, such as the recognition of special groups (women, children and the disabled), the verification of the numbers of ex-combatants by an independent body and the eligibility criteria for entry into the DDR process.
- *Broad representation:* Advisers should support the participation of civil society and, in particular, women's and other groups that are traditionally excluded from peace talks.
- *Implementation schedules and methods:* The parties often need assistance to develop realistic implementation schedules and methods. Positive but realistic expectations about DDR should be discussed.

4. Linking DDR to other security, humanitarian, peace-building and recovery programmes

DDR is a key component of national and international efforts towards establishing a secure environment, without which reconciliation and long-term development will not be achieved. Links should therefore be established *from the start* among DDR and other security, humanitarian, peace-building and recovery programmes, as shown below:

- *Security:* DDR should be adequately linked to other security-related interventions, such as mine action, SALW control and reduction, and security sector reform (SSR);

Box 2.20.6: What are the links between DDR and SSR?

- SSR reforms the security system so that it can function in a way that is more consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of good governance. SSR does not involve only armed forces, but all security-related organizations (paramilitary forces, police, secret and intelligence services, and criminal justice systems).
- SSR lays the foundation for DDR within legal frameworks that specify the legal status and entitlements of former members of armed forces and groups in the post-conflict period. Justice, truth and reconciliation commissions, in particular, affect individual eligibility for DDR, since they decide how to treat those who have committed war crimes.
- SSR allows for the granting of amnesty for both weapons possession and participation in armed conflict to those who voluntarily disarm and demobilize, which increases participation in DDR. However, the UN upholds principles of international law, and cannot support processes that do not properly deal with serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law.

- *Humanitarian assistance:* Humanitarian assistance, such as food aid and health screening, has often been an important component of DDR programmes, particularly where cantonment or assembly areas are used.¹ Humanitarian assistance in DDR should therefore be coordinated and aligned with humanitarian assistance offered to other returnees. This is necessary in order to prevent the perception that ex-combatants are being favoured or privileged in some way;
- *Peace-building:* DDR encourages peace-building and prevents a return to conflict. It can therefore help create an environment in which national dialogue and reconciliation more easily take place, and can support local capacities to manage the interactions and relations between receiving communities and ex-combatants;
- *Recovery:* DDR is only one component of wider recovery. DDR should therefore strengthen recovery efforts rather than undermine them. For example, depending on the specific situation, the best approach may be to reinforce the capacity of existing reintegration initiatives for returnees and only refer ex-combatants to them. In countries where an early recovery cluster has been formed (see Box 2.20.7), DDR should contribute to strengthening such work.

Box 2.20.7: The early recovery cluster approach

Early recovery is recovery that begins in a humanitarian setting and is guided by development principles.

- The Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER) has been established at UN Headquarters together with eight other key 'clusters' as part of the ongoing humanitarian reform process led by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).
- An early recovery cluster or network can then be established for a particular country in need of recovery assistance.
- In its role as cluster leader at the global level, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has the responsibility to bring together a wide range of both UN and non-UN partners from humanitarian and development communities to strengthen system-wide technical capacity and preparedness for early recovery.
- Where a cluster is active at the country level, early recovery cluster members are expected to work with relevant actors, including governments, and to strategically plan, prepare for and implement early recovery programmes.
- More information on the CWGER, including background on the cluster approach, lessons learned from early recovery experiences in the field, and early recovery tools and methodologies can be found at <http://www.undp.org/bcpr/iasc>.

5. DDR in planning frameworks

DDR is situated within multiple and overlapping frameworks for peace-building, recovery and development that involve various national and international actors

and stakeholders. This can make thorough coordination and planning very difficult. It is, nevertheless, essential that DDR is adequately taken into account in each of the following planning frameworks:

- *Post-conflict needs assessments (PCNAs) and transitional results matrices (TRMs)*: PCNAs are multilateral assessment exercises that lead to the identification of short-term and potentially mid-term priorities, as well as defining their financial implications on the basis of an overall long-term vision and goal. PCNAs ideally lead to the preparation of a TRM (also called a transitional results framework or TRF), which is a planning, coordination and management tool used to prioritize necessary actions;
- *National recovery strategy*: This is a national planning tool covering a period of between two and five years, and is designed to establish goals and measure achievements in a range of sectors during post-conflict reconstruction;
- *Common country assessments (CCAs)/UN development assistance frameworks (UNDAFs)*: The CCA is the UN system's common instrument for identifying the major development issues facing a particular country, with a focus on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It provides a rationale for UN assistance. Based on the CCA, the UNDAF is the common strategic framework for the operational activities of the UN system at the country level;
- *Poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs)*: Originally conceived by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a necessary requirement for external debt relief under the highly indebted poor country (HIPC) initiative, PRSPs have been increasingly adopted by countries as their central national poverty reduction plan. Interim PRSPs (I-PRSPs) are often created in post-conflict countries before the launch of a full PRSP.



Do you want to know about PCNAs and TRMs/TRFs in more detail?

Please refer to the *Practical Guide to Multilateral Needs Assessments in Post-conflict Situations* and the *Operational Note on Transitional Results Matrices: Using Results-Based Frameworks in Fragile States*, which can be found at the UN Development Group (UNDG) Web site (<http://www.undg.org>).



Do you need more information on CCAs and UNDAFs? This can be also found at <http://www.undg.org>. What about PRSPs? Information on these can be found at the IMF Web site (<http://www.imf.org/external/np/prsp/prsp.asp>).

6. Summary of key guidance on post-conflict stabilization, peace-building and recovery frameworks

- ✓ Planning and implementing successful DDR require an understanding of the complexity of post-conflict environments and the specific country situation.
- ✓ It is vital to *take the time to assess* the environment in which DDR will take place and the different people it will affect.

- ✓ Understanding where DDR is situated in the transition from conflict to peace helps to identify what the most appropriate DDR interventions will be.
- ✓ It is essential to become familiar with existing planning frameworks (national recovery strategies, PCNA reports, TRMs/TRFs, CCAs, UNDAFs). DDR should contribute to the larger peace-building and recovery effort.