

OG 3.30: National Institutions for DDR

Objectives

This module will:

- ✓ highlight the role of mandates and legal frameworks in the establishment of national DDR institutions;
- ✓ present a generic (typical) model of a national DDR institutional framework;
- ✓ illustrate the importance of coordination between national and international DDR structures and processes; and
- ✓ outline areas for UN support to national institutions during DDR.

1. Introduction

National institutions play a central role in ensuring the success and sustainability of DDR programmes. Their structures and functions vary according to the nature of the DDR programme and the political and institutional context in which they are created. Following a commitment by the parties to the conflict to establish an institutional framework for DDR in a peace agreement, national DDR institutions are usually established through national legislation, decrees or executive orders.

These institutions should reflect the security, social and economic dimensions of the DDR process in question by including broad representation across a number of government ministries, civil society organizations and the private sector. In addition, national institutions are usually designed at three different levels:

1. *the policy/strategic level*, through a national commission on DDR (NCDDR);
2. *the planning/technical level*, through the creation of a national technical planning and coordination body; and
3. *the implementation/operational level*, through a joint (national and UN) implementation unit and field/regional offices.

The success and sustainability of a DDR programme also depends on the ability of international expertise to support the national DDR process. A UN strategy in support of DDR shall therefore take into account the existing capacity of national and local actors to develop, manage and implement DDR.

2. Mandates and legal frameworks for national engagement with DDR

The mandates and legal frameworks established for national DDR institutions will vary according to the nature of the DDR process, the approach adopted and the division of responsibilities among international and national partners, and the administrative structures of the affected country itself. All stakeholders should agree to the establishment of the mandate and legal framework. The UN plays a vital role in ensuring that all stakeholders are brought into this process, including many who may traditionally be excluded from such decision-making (e.g. women, youth, children, and the disabled or chronically ill).



OG 2.30 on Participants, Beneficiaries and Partners

2.1. Mandates

The overarching framework for the DDR process included in peace agreements should consist of mandates and basic principles, the strategic approach, institutional mechanisms, time-frames and eligibility criteria. The national and international mandates for DDR shall be coherent (i.e. shall not contradict one another). Box 3.30.1 shows how this coherence can be achieved:

Box 3.30.1: Achieving coherence of national and international mandates

- Support international specialists to provide technical advice on DDR to parties during the peace negotiations.
- Incorporate national authorities into inter-agency assessment missions to ensure national policies and strategies are reflected in the Secretary-General's report and Security Council mandates for UN peace operations.
- Discuss national and international roles, responsibilities and functions within the framework of a common DDR plan or programme.
- Provide technical advice to national authorities on the design and development of legal frameworks, institutional mechanisms and national programmes for DDR.
- Establish mechanisms for the joint implementation and coordination of DDR programmes and activities at the policy, planning and operational levels.

2.2. Legal frameworks

In addition to the peace agreement provisions, national authorities should develop legal instruments that establish an appropriate legal framework for DDR. These should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *a letter of demobilization policy*, which establishes the intent of national authorities to carry out a process of demobilization and reduction of armed forces.

It should indicate the total numbers to be demobilized, how this process will be carried out and under whose authority, and links to other national processes, particularly wider review, reform and restructuring of the security sector; and

- *legislation, decree(s) or executive order(s)* establishing the national institutional framework for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the DDR process.

Legislation, decree(s) or executive order(s) should also establish the NCDDR, the technical planning and coordinating body, the operational mechanisms and the units responsible for financial management. The national DDR programme itself should be formally approved or adopted through legislation, executive order or decree.

Box 3.30.2: What are the roles and functions of different national institutions?

- *Who is represented on the NCDDR and what does it do?* Government ministries, representatives of parties to the peace agreement, representatives of the UN, regional organizations and donors, and representatives of civil society and the private sector are represented on the NCDDR. It provides political coordination and policy direction for the national DDR programme; coordinates all government institutions and international agencies in support of the national DDR programme; ensures coordination of the national DDR programme with other components of the national peace-building and recovery process; ensures oversight of the agencies responsible for the implementation of the national DDR programme; reviews progress reports and financial statements; and approves annual/quarterly work plans.

- *What are the main functions of the national DDR agency?* The national DDR agency designs the DDR programme, plans DDR programme activities and oversees the joint implementation unit (JIU) for DDR programme implementation.

- *How should the JIU be organized?* It may include sections dealing with disarmament and demobilization; reintegration; child protection, youth, gender; cross-border population movements; food aid, health and HIV/AIDS; public information and community sensitization; and monitoring and evaluation.

- *What is the independent financial management unit responsible for?* This unit is responsible for establishing standards and procedures for financial management, contracts and procurement; mobilization and management of national and international funds; reviewing and approving budgets and the establishment of a reporting system; and preparation of financial reports and audits.

- *What are the regional/field offices responsible for?* These offices are responsible for supporting disarmament and demobilization and regional centres; developing regional reintegration strategies; coordinating DDR information and sensitization campaigns in the areas of intervention; establishing information, counselling and referral systems; establishing and maintaining networks and databases of local implementation partners; and establishing management and reporting systems for programme funds.

3. Coordination of national and international structures and processes

While the basic functions of national DDR institutions will be similar in most cases, the organization of institutional structures and their relation to international actors will vary a great deal from country to country. Table 3.30.1 describes a *generic* (or typical) model of a national DDR institutional framework. It also shows how the coordination between national and international DDR structures and processes can be improved at the policy, planning and implementation levels.

Table 3.30.1: Coordination of national and international structures

| Levels | National and international structures, and functions of national institutions | Actions for national and international coordination |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Policy/strategic level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An NCDDR (policy body) is the main national body. ■ Either the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) (if there is no UN mission) or the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) (if there is one) will be responsible for the coordination of international support to the transition process, including DDR. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure stakeholder participation in UN assessment and planning. ■ Ensure international support for the establishment of an NCDDR. ■ Ensure UN coordination of bilateral and multilateral actors. |
| 2. Planning/technical level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A national technical planning and coordination agency is the main body. ■ The staff of the national DDR agency should include national and international technical specialists. ■ An international technical coordination committee provides a forum for coordination and joint planning between national and international partners. ■ A project approval committee (PAC) can be established to ensure transparency in the use of donor resources for DDR. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure coordination between national DDR programme and programmes of UN mission and agencies. ■ Ensure coordination on the technical level and with bilateral partners and NGOs. |

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| 3. Implementation/ operational level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The JIU is the operational arm of a national DDR agency under the direction of the national coordinator, and is responsible to the NCDDR. ■ Regional offices should report directly to the JIU. ■ An independent financial management, contracts and procurement unit for the national DDR programme should be established. It is recommended that it be housed within the national DDR institution or entrusted to an international partner. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure international and national coordination between the national DDR agency and UN through: (1) the establishment of a JIU with mixed national/international staff; (2) the provision of international technical assistance for implementation; and (3) the coordination of national and international implementing partners. |
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 **Section 6 of IDDRS 3.30 on National Institutions for DDR describes the functions of these institutions in more detail.**

Figure 3.30.1 illustrates links between national and international DDR mechanisms at the policy, planning and implementation levels (see page 83).

 **Annexes B–D in IDDRS 3.30 provide examples of national institutional frameworks from Haiti, Liberia and Sierra Leone.**

National DDR institutions should include broad representation, as Box 3.30.3 shows:

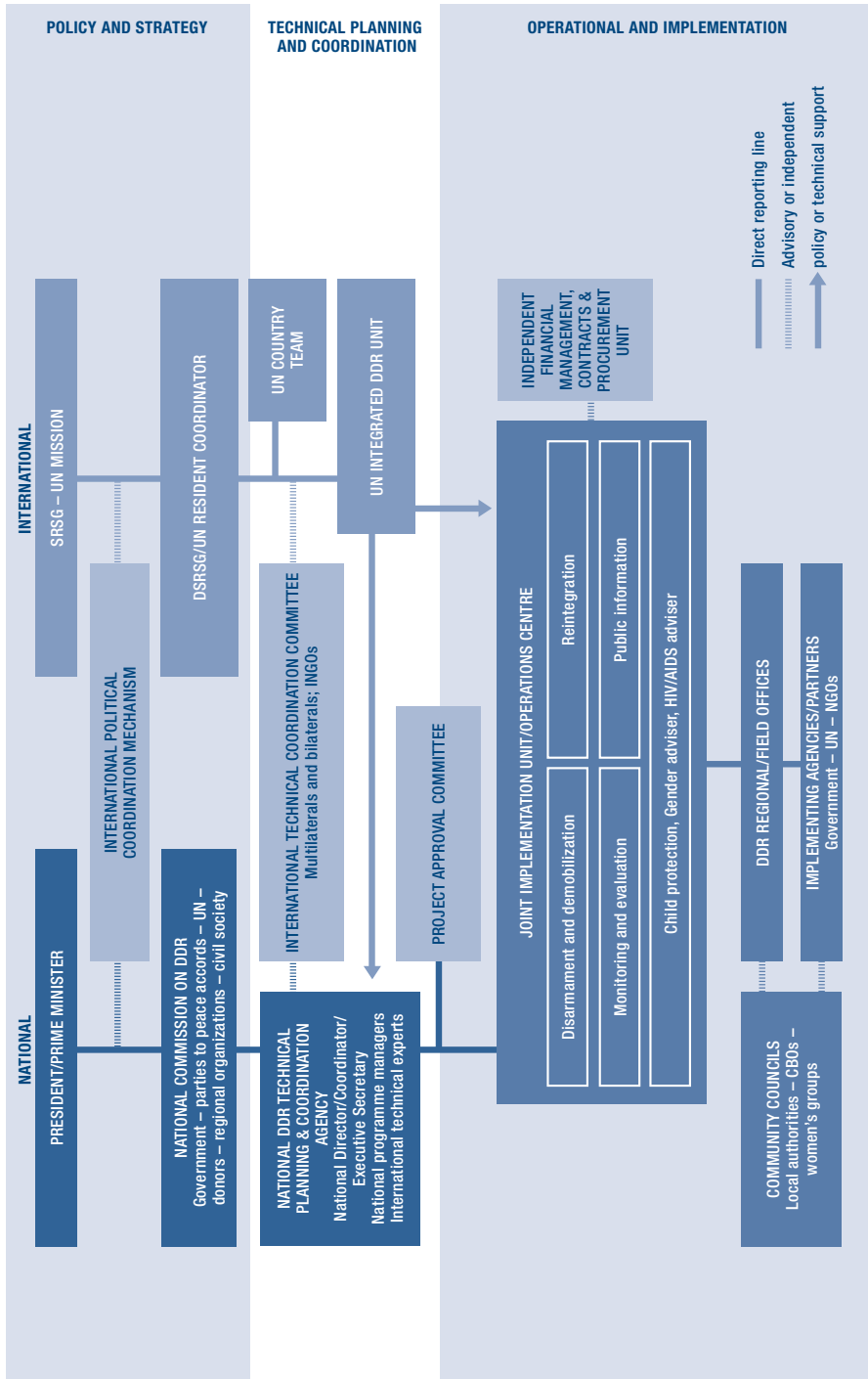
Box 3.30.3: Representation in national DDR institutions

National institutions should include broad representation across a number of government ministries. The following are generally represented at the level of policy and planning of national DDR institutions:

- the executive (the presidency and/or prime minister’s office);
- the ministries of defence and the interior (national security);
- the ministries of planning and finance;
- the ministries of labour, employment and industry;
- the ministries of agriculture and resources;
- the ministries of social welfare, the status of women and the protection of children; and
- representatives of human rights and national reconciliation agencies.

As well as representation of the various agencies and ministries of government, it is essential to include representatives of civil society and the private sector in DDR policy and strategic coordination mechanisms. In the cases of informal armed groups, some means of ensuring their representation in line with peace agreements should be decided on.

Figure 3.30.1: Model for a national DDR institutional framework



4. Areas of UN Support

The UN recognizes that genuine, effective and broad national ownership of the DDR process is important for the successful implementation of the disarmament and demobilization process, and that it is vital for the sustainability of ex-combatant reintegration. The UN should encourage and support genuine, effective and broad national ownership in all phases of the DDR programme wherever possible.



The national stakeholders and the UN should establish a letter of agreement where the government and relevant national stakeholders outline their respective roles and responsibilities, establish commitments to DDR according to international standards, establish links to security sector reform (SSR) (including plans for future military size and budget, military unification and restructuring, where relevant), and outline humanitarian activities and recovery efforts.

UN support to national efforts is provided in the areas shown in Table 3.30.2:

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| Political/strategic | ■ Providing an assessment of the dynamics of both the conflict and post-conflict period. |
| Institutional capacity development | ■ Providing technical assistance, establishing partnership arrangements with national institutions, and providing training and capacity-building to local implementing partners. |
| Establishment of legal frameworks | ■ Providing international expertise to support the elaboration of legal frameworks for DDR and related processes of SSR and small arms and light weapons (SALW) control. |
| Technical assistance | ■ Providing direct support to the development of national DDR policy and programmes. This assistance should include partnership or mentoring arrangements that allow for knowledge and skills transfers to national staff. |
| Implementation/financial management | ■ The UN system may be called upon, either by the Security Council or national authorities, to provide direct support for the implementation of certain DDR programme components. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) should be established between the UN and national authorities that defines the precise areas of responsibility, mechanisms for coordination with local partners and clear reporting responsibilities. |
| Material/logistic support | ■ Providing material and logistic support to national DDR institutions and implementing agencies, particularly in the areas of: information and communications technology and equipment; transportation; rehabilitation; design and management of DDR sites, transit centres and other facilities; establishment of information management and referral systems; and procurement of basic goods for transitional assistance. |

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| Training programmes for national staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Capacity development through the provision of training. There are a number of different training methodologies, including the provision of courses or seminars, training of trainers, on-the-job or continuous training, and exchanges with specialists from other national DDR institutions. |
| Local capacity development and community empowerment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In order to build local ownership, international agencies can help to build local capacities for participation in assessment and planning processes, project and financial management, reporting and evaluation. |

5. Summary of key guidance on national institutions for DDR

- ✓ National DDR institutions should encourage and support accountability and transparency to help build confidence among the parties and ensure continued financial and technical support from international actors.
- ✓ National and international mandates for DDR should be coherent, and a clear division of labour should be established.
- ✓ Coordination between national and international DDR structures and processes should be ensured at the policy, planning and operational levels.