

# OG 4.30: Social and Economic Reintegration

4.30

## Objectives

This module will:

- ✓ explain the different approaches to reintegration, i.e. those focusing on short-term stabilization, or ex-combatants, or communities;
- ✓ highlight the importance of information, counselling and referral services for reintegration;
- ✓ outline economic reintegration opportunities; and
- ✓ show how social reintegration can best be supported.

## 1. Introduction

The sustainable disarmament and demobilization of combatants and those previously associated with armed forces and groups will depend on the availability of social and economic reintegration opportunities. Failure to reintegrate those who have been demobilized will undermine the achievements of disarmament and demobilization, placing the DDR programme at risk and increasing instability.

Reintegration presents a particularly complex challenge. When the demobilized and those formerly associated with armed forces and groups re-enter society, they are confronted with an unfamiliar situation and receiving communities that have also been significantly transformed by conflict. In some post-conflict countries, the demobilized and those associated with armed forces and groups will have no experience or memory of pre-war patterns of life. Reintegration is, therefore, in some cases the wrong word to use.

Community and family support is essential for the successful reintegration of the demobilized and their dependants, but their presence may make worse the real

### Box 4.30.1: Definition of 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.

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

or perceived vulnerability of local populations, who often have no capacity or desire to assist a ‘lost generation’ of former combatants.

With little education or training, few employment opportunities, war trauma and a highly militarized mindset, the demobilized and their dependants can become a major security threat to receiving communities. For this reason, reintegration aims to:

- provide information, counselling and referral on reintegration opportunities available to the demobilized;
- support the demobilized and their dependants to earn their livelihood by peaceful means and participate in the economic and social life of their communities;
- offer targeted support to groups in need of special support, such as women, children, youth and those with disabilities and/or who are chronically ill; and
- increase the capacities of receiving communities to integrate the demobilized and other returnees.

## 2. Approaches to reintegration

There are three broad approaches to reintegration that DDR planning teams can use to design a programme, depending on the nature and type of conflict, the way it was resolved and the post-conflict security and development priorities. Table 4.30.1 describes the purposes, objectives, main characteristics and key activities of each one of these approaches:

Approach	Purpose/Objective	Characteristics	Activities
1. Short-term stabilization (reinsertion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To draw ex-combatants away from fighting or criminality until a peace mission is deployed, or security sector or political reform is completed</li> <li>■ To provide rapid transitional support for resettlement and short-term income-generating opportunities to all potentially disruptive ex-combatants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Low cost per ex-combatant</li> <li>■ Short-term measure</li> <li>■ Applicable when ex-combatants are able to reintegrate through their own networks that exist outside of their military connections, and possess the means for their reintegration, such as social capital and access to land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Information, counselling and referral services</li> <li>■ Transitional support schemes (food, clothing, transportation, other)</li> <li>■ Short-term labour-intensive projects</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Only viable when ex-combatants do not represent a long-term security threat (in post-conflict environments, they usually do)</li> </ul>	
2. Ex-combatant-focused reintegration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To provide ex-combatants with specifically designed, individually focused sustainable solutions for long-term reintegration</li> <li>■ To engage ex-combatants in sustainable microprojects to reduce the long-term security risks they present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Higher cost per ex-combatant</li> <li>■ Can create feelings of unfairness within the community</li> <li>■ To be used when ex-combatants are a long-term threat to security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Information, counselling and referral services</li> <li>■ Microproject development through grants</li> <li>■ Training, technical advisory and related support services</li> </ul>
3. Community-based reintegration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To provide communities with tools and capacities to support the reintegration of ex-combatants, together with internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and other special groups</li> <li>■ To support ex-combatant reintegration as a component of wider, community-focused reconciliation and recovery programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Highest cost per ex-combatant</li> <li>■ May not deal with ex-combatants' concerns directly, but with needs of the community as a whole</li> <li>■ Most appropriate where ex-combatants are not a security threat to their communities, as in a war of national defence or liberation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Community projects with greater inclusion of all social actors</li> <li>■ Peace-building and reconciliation activities</li> <li>■ Activities to increase local security</li> </ul>

The specific country contexts and characteristics of armed forces and groups, and programme participants may require a mix of the above reintegration approaches. A reintegration programme may therefore combine short-term stabilization with ex-combatant-focused reintegration if the main objective is to deal with urgent threats to security. It may also combine ex-combatant-focused reintegration with an approach that deals with the priorities of the receiving communities, to increase their absorptive capacity.



*It is vital to acknowledge the specific and urgent needs of ex-combatants without transforming them into a privileged group within the community. Allowing ex-combatants to continue to see themselves as a special group will only slow down their effective reintegration into local communities and create resentment among these communities, and will increase rather than decrease insecurity.*

### 3. Specific planning considerations

The programme design of the reintegration component should be based on detailed assessments of participants' profiles, likely areas of return and resettlement, and reintegration opportunities and services already available. Without this information, it will be impossible to design timely and effective reintegration programmes, i.e. reintegration support that begins immediately after the discharge of combatants from armed forces and groups. Moreover, these assessments should lead not only to the collection of information needed to design the reintegration programme, but also to:

- the establishment of key indicators of success in terms of the socio-economic reintegration of former combatants and an overall improvement in security;
- the identification of the relevant baseline information for these indicators; and
- the development of contingency plans.

Without baseline information and indicators, it will be impossible to evaluate the results of the reintegration programme.



#### OG 3.50 on Monitoring and Evaluation of DDR Programmes

Table 4.30.2 describes key areas in which detailed assessments should be carried out:

Table 4.30.2: Key detailed assessments for reintegration programmes	
<b>Pre-registration participant survey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The registration of combatants during the demobilization phase will give a picture of their expectations, capacities and resources. However, by the time this registration takes place, it is already too late to begin planning reintegration.</li> <li>■ A profile of the target group should therefore be developed before disarmament and demobilization begin.</li> <li>■ <i>Consider:</i> Demographic composition, background, education and qualifications, special needs, areas of return, expectations and security risks.</li> </ul>
<b>Areas of return and resettlement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Based on the information gathered from the pre-registration participant survey, an assessment should be made of the economic and social potential of the areas of expected return or resettlement.</li> <li>■ This assessment should take into account the availability of natural resources, the economic infrastructure (such as access to markets, and availability of communications and services) and the security situation.</li> <li>■ This should also assess the perceptions of the local communities, and their willingness to accept ex-combatants.</li> <li>■ <i>Consider:</i> Demand, services and perceptions of other target groups.</li> </ul>

### Reintegration opportunities and services

- Expectations can best be managed if programme managers have a clear understanding of the actual economic opportunities available to those being reintegrated.
- DDR programme planners should prioritize the development of a countrywide systematic mapping to identify existing and potential employment opportunities, whether in existing enterprises, in self-employment and/or through the creation of microenterprises that are prepared to employ ex-combatants.
- As early as possible, programme managers should map relevant education, training and microcredit services, other employment and business development services, other development programmes (both existing and planned) within the national recovery effort and other social support services.
- *Consider:* Economics, infrastructure, services and training providers.



### Section 2 of OG 3.20 on DDR Programme Design for more information about detailed assessments

*Detailed individual profiling* will be necessary in order to ascertain individual aptitudes and the most appropriate reinsertion assistance. This profiling is carried out during registration generally with the support of a management and information system.



**Do you need a DDR software? Software entitled *Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and SALW Control MIS (DREAM)* is available from UNDP free of charge (<http://www.undp.org/bcpr/>).**

*Reinsertion assistance*, which is meant to provide former combatants and their dependants with a means to subsist while waiting for reintegration assistance to result in reliable and sustainable income generation, is part of demobilization.



### Section 7 of OG 4.20 on Demobilization for information about reinsertion assistance

## 4. Information, counselling and referral

The backbone of any reintegration programme should be the information, counselling and referral system, which provides briefing and orientation for former combatants, preparing them for a return to civilian life. This process starts during demobilization through awareness and sensitization, but information, counselling and referral services should be provided throughout the lifespan of the reintegration programme.


Information, counselling and referral services should build upon existing national employment services, which normally fall under the ministry of employment. In

**Table 4.30.3: Information, counselling and referral: Purpose and services offered**

	Purpose	Services
Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To ensure that individual ex-combatants understand the reintegration process and the opportunities available to them</li> <li>■ To help manage ex-combatants' expectations</li> </ul>	<p>Information collected during the pre-registration survey and registration process on each former combatant and those formerly associated with armed forces and groups and dependants is cross-referenced with reintegration opportunities and support services mapping. This should provide the reintegration programme with information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ education and training opportunities and services, and potential obstacles to getting access to these;</li> <li>■ job opportunities and referral to prospective employers;</li> <li>■ other economic reintegration opportunities; and</li> <li>■ business support services and their providers.</li> </ul> <p>This information should be kept continuously updated to ensure its usefulness.</p>
Counselling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To help individual ex-combatants identify and extend the range of opportunities available to them, to assist in a smooth transition from military to civilian life</li> </ul>	<p>Counselling services during demobilization should offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ specialized counselling on reintegration options for each ex-combatant, based on his/her age, sex, physical ability, skills, experience and expectations, and the identified reintegration opportunities in the proposed community of return. Counselling should be available for spouses or families where appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>In the selected resettlement community, these services should offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ transitional support services;</li> <li>■ access to social services, particularly health and education;</li> <li>■ problem-solving assistance;</li> <li>■ support to ex-combatants to develop their individual reintegration strategies/business plans; and</li> <li>■ ongoing counselling links between the ex-combatant and the supervisory and monitoring services of the reintegration programme.</li> </ul>

Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To refer ex-combatants to support services – either within the reintegration programme or externally</li> </ul>	<p>Referral within the DDR programme to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ health screening and support services;</li> <li>■ reintegration assistance grant-approval mechanisms; and</li> <li>■ advisory and monitoring services.</li> </ul> <p>External referral to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ social services: health, education, pensions;</li> <li>■ job opportunities;</li> <li>■ community support structures;</li> <li>■ business development services; and</li> <li>■ education, training and technical advisory services.</li> </ul>
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countries where these services are weak or non-existent, the reintegration programme should support the initiation or strengthening of these national services. Parallel temporary structures should be avoided whenever possible, as using national structures will ensure sustainability of an essential structure that will be needed in the future for the whole of the civilian population.

 **Section 8.2 of IDDRS 4.30 on Social and Economic Reintegration for more information about information, counselling and referral**

## 5. Economic reintegration

Large-scale armed conflicts have a devastating impact on economies, productive capacities and livelihoods, leading to the impoverishment of much of the population. The ending of hostilities does not automatically result in an improvement of economic conditions. The release into the labour market of thousands of ex-combatants and other returnees such as refugees and IDPs means that there is a serious shortage of job opportunities.

In such circumstances, ex-combatants may be tempted to use violence to make their living, engaging in banditry, theft, crime and other forms of criminal activity. Providing support for the reintegration of former combatants is therefore essential to help to develop alternatives to violence-based livelihoods. This support can have an immediate positive effect on security, and contribute to the improvement of overall economic conditions.

### 5.1. Education and training

Many ex-combatants have missed opportunities for basic and further education, and as a result are disadvantaged in the competition for jobs and opportunities,

since they have no skills. Provision of literacy classes, education, and technical and vocational training is important to improve the skills of DDR participants, and to reorient them to civilian ways of earning a living.

Training should generally be regarded as a tool for reintegration and not as reintegration itself. It should be practically oriented, and should be designed mainly to respond to the requirements of the informal sector, which is where most micro-enterprises will start up. Table 4.30.4 presents several types of education and training that may be made available to the demobilized:

<b>Table 4.30.4: Education and training options for ex-combatants</b>	
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Young ex-combatants, especially those aged under 15, should be reintegrated into formal education, to prevent them becoming trapped in lifelong poverty. Emphasis should be placed on 'catch-up' education. However, when they are already heads of households, education should be offered together with livelihood and income generation options.</li> <li>■ Particular attention shall be paid to assisting girls (including girl mothers) to return to school, while taking into account their family responsibilities.</li> <li>■ Resources must be available for the full duration of ex-combatants' education.</li> </ul>
<b>Vocational training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The focus should be on providing new and marketable skills to ex-combatants.</li> <li>■ Such activities can also help break down military attitudes and behaviour, and develop values and norms based on peace and democracy. Training should include DDR participants and civilians.</li> <li>■ Such activities need to be linked with studies of the local labour market and its business opportunities.</li> <li>■ Certification of training must be provided.</li> </ul>
<b>Apprenticeships and on-the-job training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These are useful for applying newly acquired skills after completing a vocational training course.</li> <li>■ They can themselves be a particularly effective form of training.</li> <li>■ They can be an excellent means of social reintegration and reconciliation.</li> </ul>
<b>Life skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Training in life skills is a necessity, not a luxury.</li> <li>■ Life skills include non-violent conflict resolution, civilian social behaviour and career planning, but also an understanding of what employers expect in terms of behaviour, etc.</li> <li>■ Life skills training should complement the various other forms of educational and/or training services provided.</li> <li>■ Education should be provided on political rights and responsibilities, especially in countries undergoing significant governance reform.</li> <li>■ Life skills for youth on managing a family and other basics should also be provided.</li> </ul>

Skills acquired by ex-combatants during education and training should help increase their chances of finding future employment and alternative livelihoods.

**Box 4.30.2: Key guidelines on education and training for ex-combatants**

- *Inclusiveness:* Education should be supplied within the context of its wider provision to the general population, not in colleges exclusively for former combatants, although they might have preferential access to colleges.
- *Practical application:* Training should be practically oriented and responsive to the demands of the labour market.
- *Cultural considerations:* Attention should be paid to existing economic cultures, including whether women and men will have equal access to all types of work.



**Section 9.2 of IDDRS 4.30 on Social and Economic Reintegration for more information about education, training and skills development**

**5.2. Livelihoods and income generation**

DDR planning teams may draw on several livelihood and income generation methods linked to public and private sector job creation, as well as micro- and small business start-ups. These are discussed in Table 4.30.5. These methods are particularly useful to support the ex-combatant-focused approach to reintegration.


**Table 4.30.5: Livelihoods and income generation methods for ex-combatants**

<p><b>Public works and public sector job creation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Such jobs should be based on a clear understanding of their temporary nature and lack of sustainability, which should be clearly communicated to ex-combatants to ensure they do not feel abandoned when a particular job comes to an end.</li> <li>■ Ex-combatants should be incorporated into the public service when economic circumstances allow for the expansion of public services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Private sector and business development services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Policies and programmes should be developed that support the creation and expansion of businesses.</li> <li>■ Government agencies should be encouraged to develop the appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks to stimulate private sector growth.</li> <li>■ Various actors, including businesses, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with experience in economic projects, para-governmental institutions and community groups, may be encouraged to provide business development services.</li> <li>■ Labour rights should be respected. No former combatant should become a ‘slave’ of the private sector.</li> </ul>

<b>Employment in existing enterprises</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Qualified ex-combatants should be referred to existing employment opportunities, as the risk of failure is lower than with the start-up of a new microenterprise.</li> <li>■ DDR programmes should help to expand the opportunities available to ex-combatants by offering wage, training and equipment subsidies.</li> <li>■ Wage subsidies should be partial and limited in duration.</li> <li>■ Newly hired ex-combatants should not displace existing labour.</li> <li>■ Employers should demonstrate a willingness to use the subsidies to support the expansion of their businesses, which will assure the sustainability of the ex-combatants' jobs.</li> </ul>
<b>Micro- and small business start-ups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These should be undertaken by ex-combatants with the guidance and support of the DDR programme.</li> <li>■ Specifically designed support should be provided according to the needs of individual businesses.</li> <li>■ Small business start-ups should be based on market surveys that identify businesses and services that are needed in a particular area, to maximize their chances of success.</li> <li>■ Grants, rather than credit, should be offered to ex-combatants.</li> </ul>

When carrying out income-generating programmes and training on livelihood skills, it is necessary to examine multiple options, combine different opportunities and target individuals according to their needs and experience. Each sector of society not only has a role to play, but must work in conjunction with other areas of operation.

 **Section 9.4 of IDDRS 4.30 on Social and Economic Reintegration for more information about livelihood and income generation**

 *Ex-combatants with disabilities can and should benefit from the same programmes and services made available to non-disabled ex-combatants. At the same time, they have special needs and require special care. Involvement of the families of disabled ex-combatants is a useful way to ensure greater sustainability and success in their economic reintegration.*

 **Section 8.3.3 of IDDRS 4.30 on Social and Economic Reintegration for more detailed information on disabilities**

## 6. Social reintegration

Most ex-combatants, like refugees and IDPs, wish to return to the places they have left or were forced to flee. Returning home, where this is possible for individuals, is often a key step in reintegration programmes. However, they may find their land or homes occupied by others, either spontaneously or as part of a planned strategy.

Within the context of conflict, often societal shifts occur in which land is redistributed, roles of women and other members of the community have shifted, traditional employment and means for livelihood creation have been disrupted, and community cohesion has adjusted to fit the needs of the conflict. Table 4.30.6 shows key issues that should be dealt with to facilitate the social reintegration of ex-combatants:

<b>Table 4.30.6: Key issues in the social reintegration of ex-combatants</b>	
<b>Land distribution, property rights and resettlement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Disputes over land and access to water or mineral resources are the root causes of many conflicts.</li> <li>■ Women in particular may be excluded from land ownership by land inheritance traditions.</li> <li>■ Lack of available land for resettlement can be an obstacle.</li> <li>■ It may be necessary to provide land resettlement and agricultural extension services.</li> </ul>
<b>Social cohesion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ex-combatants can be positive agents for change in their societies.</li> <li>■ The creation of social cohesion between ex-combatants and other community members is essential, but relations between them are usually anything but 'normal' at the end of a conflict.</li> <li>■ Ex-combatants should be actively engaged in actions designed to stabilize both their own socio-economic situations and benefit the community as a whole.</li> </ul>
<b>Reconciliation and peace-building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These should take place within war-affected communities if long-term security is to be firmly established.</li> <li>■ DDR can support reconciliation among different groups, not only through focused 'reconciliation activities', but also by introducing elements of reconciliation into all components of reintegration programmes.</li> </ul>
<b>Human rights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The problem of impunity for war crimes should be dealt with, and the DDR programme should be matched by efforts to strengthen and reform both the justice and the security sectors.</li> </ul>
<b>Re-education for civilian life</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This lies at the heart of reintegration programming, which should 're-educate' combatants into civilian life, prepare communities for the return of ex-combatants and help both parties anticipate, and thus better deal with, some of the difficulties they may encounter.</li> </ul>
<b>The problem of youth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Due to their specific needs and ambitions, young men and, increasingly, young women form a distinct group among ex-combatants, requiring specific interventions to help them adjust peacefully to civilian life.</li> </ul>

- Young men and women should be involved in all decision-making processes in reintegration programmes to ensure that their specific concerns are dealt with.
- Youth organizations can help the reintegration of young ex-combatants; youth centres and clubs can be focal points for training and employment activities.



## OG 5.20 on Youth and DDR

In post-conflict reintegration programmes it is important to maintain a working dialogue between communities and ex-combatants. Both ex-combatants and communities will have to adjust to the new social climate, and can work together to bring new skills and awareness to regions that have been affected by conflict. Reintegration is an opportunity for individuals and communities to work for peace and rebuild their society.

### Box 4.30.3: Key guidelines on social reintegration

- *Awareness:* Conduct information sessions on the possible shifts that may have occurred in societies during conflict, and inform both ex-combatants and community members of their rights and responsibilities in the post-conflict period.
- *Land issues:* Carry out land assessments and determine the availability of land and the rights that returnees and community members have in the acquisition and use of land.
- *Recognizing shifts in social structures:* Look at roles that individuals have taken during the conflict, and help communities understand these roles through information sessions and open dialogue.
- *Use of community leaders:* Work with community leaders to bridge gaps in reintegration and in community acceptance of reintegrated people.



## Section 10 of IDDRS 4.30 on Social and Economic Reintegration for more information about social reintegration



*Ex-combatants are highly likely to be involved in the growing problems of domestic violence, sexual abuse and other anti-social behaviour that often characterize a post-conflict community. To deal with such problems, communities shall be encouraged to work with the national police service, or other recognized bodies in the community where the national police service is not functioning properly. The UN Police (UNPOL) usually supports national police services to undergo special training on gender-based violence (GBV) towards women and children, as well as on other hidden social problems.*



## OG 4.50 on UN Police Roles and Responsibilities



*Psychosocial problems are common among ex-combatants, as many of them have been victims or perpetrators of horrendous violence, which may have left deep scars*

*resulting in depression, apathy or rage. Post-war trauma, especially in combination with substance abuse, is likely to affect reintegration processes, overstraining the capacity of receiving communities, limiting human rights-based social behaviour, and undermining possibilities for peaceful resolutions of conflicts.*

*Psychosocial problems are particularly bad among disabled ex-combatants. Information, counselling and referral services and reintegration programmes should support psychosocial activities to deal with trauma.*

 **Section 8.3.2 of IDDRS 4.30 on Social and Economic Reintegration on psychological and mental health care**

4.30

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REINTEGRATION

## 7. Summary of key guidance on social and economic reintegration

- ✓ Adequate and timely planning and budgeting are essential to ensure the successful reintegration of ex-combatants. DDR practitioners shall begin preparing for reintegration at the start of any future DDR intervention, and shall engage donors as early as possible.
- ✓ The success of reintegration depends on the joint efforts of ex-combatants, their dependants and families, and communities. Reintegration programmes shall be planned and designed through a participatory process that involves ex-combatants and communities (particularly women), local and national authorities, and non-governmental actors in planning and decision-making.
- ✓ The reintegration component of DDR should be focused on developing the capacity of national and local stakeholders and service providers through education and training, as well as technical and material assistance.