

2.30 Community Violence Reduction

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2.30 Community Violence Reduction

Summary

Integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes increasingly include a community violence reduction (CVR) component as a direct contribution to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related deaths everywhere. As outlined in the United Nations (UN) approach to DDR, CVR is a DDR-related tool that directly responds to the presence of active and/or former members of armed groups, and is designed to promote security and stability in both mission and non-mission contexts (see IDDRS 2.10 on The UN Approach to DDR). CVR shall not be used to provide material and financial assistance to active members of armed groups.

In situations where the preconditions for a DDR programme exist, CVR may be pursued before, during, and after a DDR programme. Specific provisions for CVR may also be included in local-level peace agreements, sometimes instead of DDR programmes (see IDDRS 2.20 on The Politics of DDR). CVR may also be pursued when the preconditions for a DDR programme are absent. In this context, CVR can contribute to security and stabilization, help to make the returns of stability more tangible, and create more conducive environments for national and local peace processes.

There is no uniform or standard template for CVR, although all CVR programmes share the overarching goal of reducing armed violence and sustaining peace (see IDDRS 2.40 on Reintegration as Part of Sustaining Peace). CVR can be used for a variety of purposes, ranging from the prevention of (re-)recruitment to improving the capacities of communities to absorb ex-combatants and associated groups. CVR may also be used as stop-gap reinsertion assistance at the community level, while reintegration is still at the planning and/or resource mobilization stage.

Specific theories of change for CVR programmes should be developed and adapted to particular contexts. However, very often an underlying expectation of CVR is that specific programme activities will foster social cohesion and provide former combatants and other at-risk individuals with alternatives to joining armed groups. As a result, communities will become active participants in the reduction of armed violence. While CVR can achieve significant results, it is neither a short-term panacea nor a long-term development programme. Adequate linkages with recovery and development programmes are therefore key.

CVR programmes may complement other elements of the broader DDR process. For example, CVR can complement other DDR-related tools such as transitional weapons and ammunition management (WAM) (see IDDRS 4.11 on Transitional Weapons and Ammunition Management), and can be used as part of programmes for those leaving armed groups designated as terrorist organizations by the United Nations Security Council (see IDDRS 2.11 on The Legal Framework for UN DDR). In mission settings, CVR will be funded through the allocation of assessed contributions. Therefore, where appropriate, planning for CVR should ensure adequate linkages with support to the reintegration of ex-combatants and associated groups. In non-mission settings, funding for CVR will depend on the allocation of national budgets and/or voluntary contributions from donors. Therefore, in instances where CVR and support to community-based reintegration are both envisaged, they should, from the outset, be planned and implemented as a single and continuous programme.

1. Module scope and objectives

This module sets out the basic conceptual and strategic parameters of CVR and its place within integrated DDR processes. It also outlines the principles and programmatic considerations that should guide the design, planning and implementation of CVR.

2. Terms, definitions and abbreviations

Annex A contains a list of abbreviations used in this standard. A complete glossary of all the terms, definitions and abbreviations used in the IDDRS series is given in IDDRS 1.20. In the IDDRS series, the words 'shall', 'should', 'may', 'can', and 'must' are used to indicate the intended degree of compliance with the standards laid down. This use is consistent with the language used in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards and guidelines:

- a) 'shall' is used to indicate requirements, methods or specifications that are to be applied in order to conform to the standard;
- b) 'should' is used to indicate the preferred requirements, methods or specifications;
- c) 'may' is used to indicate a possible method or course of action;
- d) 'can' is used to indicate a possibility and capability;
- e) 'must' is used to indicate an external constraint or obligation.

CVR programmes may include different types of coordination mechanisms to guide CVR project selection, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Two common coordination mechanisms are:

- **Project Selection Committees (PSCs):** Community-based PSCs are established in selected areas, include a representative sample of stakeholders, and are responsible for selecting projects that are vetted by the PAC/PRC. (See below.) All project selection should comply with gender quotas of a minimum of 30% of projects benefitting women, and women's involvement in 30% of leadership and management positions.
- **Project Approval/Review Committee (PAC/PRC):** A PAC/PRC sets the overall strategic direction for CVR, vets and approves projects selected by PSCs, and helps to raise finances. The PAC/PRC should exhibit a high degree of clarity on its roles and functions. Such entities meet on a semi-regular basis, usually after a certain number of CVR projects have been presented (a minimum of a week in advance) to PAC/PRC members for consideration. The PAC/PRC should ensure all proposals comply with gender quotas.

3. Introduction

CVR is a DDR-related tool that directly responds to the presence of active and/or former members of armed groups in a community and is designed to promote security and stability in both mission and

non-mission contexts (see IDDRS 2.10 on The UN Approach to DDR). CVR shall not be used to provide material and financial assistance to active members of armed groups.

CVR programmes have a variety of uses.

In situations where the preconditions for a DDR programme exist – including a ceasefire or peace agreement, trust in the peace process, willingness of the parties to engage in DDR and minimum guarantees of security – CVR may be pursued before, during and after a DDR programme, as a complementary measure. Specific provisions for CVR may also be included in local-level peace agreements, sometimes instead of DDR programmes (see IDDRS 2.20 on The Politics of DDR).

When the preconditions for a DDR programme are absent, CVR may be used to contribute to security and stabilization, to help make the returns of stability more tangible, and to create more conducive environments for national and local peace processes. More specifically, CVR programmes can be used as a means to:

- De-escalate violence during a preliminary ceasefire and build confidence before the signature of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the launch of a DDR programme;
- Prevent at-risk individuals, particularly at-risk youth, from joining armed groups;
- Stop former members of armed groups from rejoining these groups and from engaging in violent crime and destructive social unrest;
- Provide stop-gap reinsertion assistance for a defined period (6–18 months), particularly if demobilization is complete and reintegration support is still at the planning and/or resource mobilization stage;
- Encourage members of armed groups that have not signed on to peace agreements to move away from armed violence;
- Reorient members of armed groups away from waging war and towards constructive activities;
- Reduce violence in communities and neighbourhoods that are vulnerable to high rates of armed violence, organized crime and/or sexual or gender-based violence; and
- Increase the capacity of communities and neighbourhoods to absorb newly reinserted and reintegrated former combatants.

CVR programmes are typically short to medium term and include, but are not limited to, a combination of:

- Weapons and ammunition management;
- Labour-intensive short-term employment;
- Vocational/skills training and job employment;
- Infrastructure improvement;
- Community security and police rapprochement;
- Educational outreach and social mobilization;
- Mental health and psychosocial support, in both collective and individual formats;
- Civic education; and
- Gender transformative projects including education and awareness-raising programmes with community members on gender, women’s empowerment, and conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention and response.

Whether introduced in mission or non-mission settings, CVR priorities and projects should, without exception, be crafted at the local level, with representative participation, and where possible, consultation of community stakeholders, including women, boys, girls and youth.

All CVR programmes should be underpinned by a clear theory of change that defines the problem to be solved, surfaces the core assumptions underlying the theory of change, explains the core targets and metrics to be addressed, and describes how the proposed intervention activities will address these issues.

Specific theories of change for CVR programmes should be adapted to particular contexts. However, very often an underlying expectation of CVR is that specific programme activities will provide former combatants and other at-risk individuals with alternatives that are more attractive than joining armed groups or resorting to armed violence and/or provide the mental tools and interpersonal coping strategies to resist incitements to violence. Another common underlying expectation is that CVR projects will contribute to social cohesion. In socially cohesive communities, community members feel that they belong to the community, that there is trust between community members, and that community members can work together. Members of socially cohesive communities are more likely to be aware of, and more likely to intervene when they see, behaviour that may lead to violence. Therefore, by fostering social cohesion and providing alternatives, communities become active participants in the reduction of armed violence.

By promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, CVR has the potential to directly contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals, and particularly SDG 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. CVR can also reinforce other SDG targets, including 4.1 and 4.7, on education and promoting cultures of peace, respectively; 5.2 and 5.5, on preventing violence against women and girls and promoting women's leadership and participation; and 8.7 and 8.8, related to child soldiers and improving workplace safety. CVR may also contribute to SDG 10.2, on political, social and economic inclusion; 11.1, 11.2 and 11.7, on housing, transport and safe public spaces; and 16.1, 16.2 and 16.4, related to reducing violence, especially against children, and the availability of arms.

CVR programmes aim to sustain peace by preventing the (re-)recruitment of former combatants and other individuals at risk of recruitment (see IDDRS 2.40 on Reintegration as Part of Sustaining Peace). More specifically, CVR programmes should actively strengthen the protective factors that increase the resilience of young people, women and communities to involvement in, or harms associated with, violence.

CVR shall not lead, but could help to facilitate, a political process (see IDDRS 2.20 on The Politics of DDR). Although CVR is essentially a technical intervention, the process of planning, formulating, negotiating and executing activities may be intensely political. CVR should involve routine engagement and negotiation with government officials, active and/or former members of armed groups, individuals at risk of recruitment, business and civic leaders, and communities as a whole; it necessitates a deep understanding of the local context and the common definition/understanding of an overarching CVR strategy.

4. Guiding principles

IDDRS 2.10 on The UN Approach to DDR sets out the main principles that guide all aspects of DDR processes. This section outlines how these principles apply to CVR:

4.1 Voluntary

Participation in CVR as part of a DDR process shall be voluntary.

4.2 Criteria for participation/eligibility

The eligibility criteria for CVR should be developed in consultation with target communities and, if in existence, a Project Selection Committee (PSC) or equivalent body. Eligibility criteria shall be developed and communicated in the most transparent manner possible. This is because eligibility and ineligibility can become a source of community tension and conflict. Eligibility for CVR does not mean that those who participate will necessarily be ineligible to participate in other programmes that form part of the broader DDR process – this will depend on the particular framework in place. Some frameworks may require the surrender of a weapon as a precondition for participation in a CVR programme (see IDDRS 4.11 on Transitional Weapons and Ammunition Management). Furthermore, when members of armed groups that are not signatory to a peace agreement are being considered for inclusion in CVR programmes, the status of these individuals and armed groups must be analysed and specified in order to mitigate any risks. If the individuals being considered for inclusion in a CVR programme have voluntarily left an armed group designated as a terrorist organization by the United Nations Security Council, DDR practitioners shall incorporate proper screening mechanisms and criteria to identify suspected terrorists (for further information on specific requirements for children refer to IDDRS 5.20 on Children and DDR and IDDRS 5.30 on Youth and DDR). Depending on the circumstances, the terrorist organization they are associated with and the terrorist offences committed, it may not be appropriate for suspected terrorists to participate in CVR programmes (see IDDRS 2.11 on Legal Framework for UN DDR).

4.3 Unconditional release and protection of children

Specific provisions shall be developed to ensure the protection, care and support of young people (15–24) who participate in CVR programmes (see IDDRS 5.30 on Youth and DDR). Where appropriate, children (under 18) may be included in CVR activities, but with relevant legal safeguards to ensure their rights and needs are carefully accounted for. Mental health and psychosocial support services as well as social services should be established, as appropriate, in consultation with relevant child protection units and agencies (see IDDRS 5.20 on Children and DDR).

4.4 In accordance with standards and principles of humanitarian assistance

CVR does not reward those who have engaged in violent behaviours for their past activities, but rather invests in individuals and communities that actively renounce past violent behaviour and that are looking for a productive and peaceful future. CVR shall not be used to provide material and financial assistance to active members of armed groups.

4.5 Gender-responsive and inclusive

CVR shall actively ensure a gender-responsive approach that accounts for the specific needs of men and women, boys and girls. This may include more proportional gender representation within DDR/CVR sections, among CVR project implementing partners, within PSCs (or equivalent bodies), and among individual and community beneficiaries. The inclusion of women across all aspects of CVR strengthens the overall legitimacy and credibility of the enterprise. Moreover, developing the agency of women, girls and youth will enhance their political and social influence in civic associations and their authority in relation to economic productivity, thereby reducing violence. CVR can also incorporate measures to challenge harmful notions of masculinity and engage with men and boys to promote behaviours and attitudes that value gender equality and non-violence.

In some settings, there may be strong sociocultural and economic constraints to expanding women's representation in PSCs or among project beneficiaries. To mitigate these challenges, DDR practitioners¹ have introduced quota systems requiring a minimum level of female participation (30%) in PSCs and among selected projects (30% of projects must directly support women's specific needs). These quota systems shall be discussed with national counterparts at the outset of UN engagement in CVR and explained to all personnel and partners working on CVR programmes at the subnational and local levels. All CVR projects should report on the gender and age dimensions of PSCs as well as on CVR projects themselves. Introducing gender- and age-specific quotas in CVR project tenders should also mitigate discriminatory practices. Likewise, DDR practitioners shall ensure that any public works projects selected for support are designed in a way that respects the rights and specific needs of every person.

CVR shall be inclusive to the extent that it focuses not only on former combatants, but also on at-risk children and youth (male and female) as well as a wide range of community members living in volatile areas and in need of assistance. CVR shall be aligned with a 'rights-based' approach, in that processes adhere to international human rights law and standards. For example, all community members in selected areas should benefit from interventions without discrimination.

CVR shall also be tailored to address distinct ethnic, religious and other groups to the extent possible. Specifically, training, education and outreach initiatives that promote civic education, life and parenting skills, and psychosocial support, education and counselling should reach across specific needs groups. By advocating for a plural caseload, CVR should help to promote more responsible civic engagement, a key feature of social cohesion.

4.6 Conflict sensitive

In all cases, CVR shall do no harm. When projects and implementing partners are not adequately monitored and evaluated, CVR support can be channeled to one group at the expense of others. Moreover, communities in resource scarce and inaccessible areas that are not included in CVR may resent being left out. Some population groups may feel legitimately abandoned and resort to crime and banditry. In some cases, this may result in increases in interpersonal violence in the home, including domestic and child abuse, or increases in sexual or gender-based violence. Communities that are included in CVR programmes may also have unrealistic expectations and create problems if they feel they are not adequately benefiting from them. CVR should have a whole of community and equity focus, as the privileging of some geographic areas for CVR over others may result in disputes. Negative perceptions of exclusion and potential additional grievances should be anticipated and accounted for in DDR practitioners' conflict assessments.

4.7 Context specific

There is no single template for CVR, and the vast diversity of CVR programmes is by design: form follows function. As a practice area, CVR is continuing to evolve in both mission and non-mission settings. Whether implemented through the UN or through national and community-based non-governmental organizations, CVR can adapt and change over time, even in a single context.

4.8 Nationally and locally owned

CVR programmes are ultimately the responsibility of local, national and subnational governments and non-government partners. Yet in many settings, public and civil society capacities may be exceedingly weak. Where possible and appropriate, CVR should aim to reinforce the legitimacy, credibility and capacity of state and non-governmental partners. While guided by violence reduction imperatives, implementing partners and projects should also be selected on the basis of promoting local and national ownership. Leadership is required from government entities including, as appropriate, a national DDR commission (if one exists) or equivalent entity. In cases where government delivery of CVR is not feasible, DDR practitioners should seek to foster institutional capacities and representation. The goal in all cases must be to strengthen, not replace, state and non-state capacities.

Although typically short to medium term, CVR programmes shall be strongly aligned with national and community security priorities, based on needs assessment and tailored to local capacities. Defining what security means for a particular community should be part of the initial first steps. CVR should allow for direct dialogue, technical engagement, implementation and outreach with a wide array of stakeholders from the national to the community level. By working directly with affected communities and local governments, CVR can help lay the foundation for stabilization and allow for recovery and reconstruction. The sustainability of CVR projects during and after they are launched requires the formation of a strong partnership with public, private and non-governmental authorities. Strategies to embed state partners and private-sector and civil society groups in CVR project design, planning, implementation and monitoring are pathways to facilitate handovers.

CVR is bottom-up in orientation and should devolve decision-making, project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation to the local level. While the strategic direction of CVR programmes should be set by government personnel with support from the UN, decisions related to project selection and execution, and monitoring and evaluation, should be delegated to PSCs and local project implementers. PSCs are typically composed of local community members and leaders and should ensure representation of minority groups, women and youth. Subnational government, private-sector and civil society representatives may also be included. If alternate institutions already exist (such as local peace and development committees), then they should be harnessed (subject to the usual due diligence) and steps should be taken to ensure that they are representative of the broader society.

DDR practitioners should ensure that once selected, CVR projects are mediated, to the extent possible, by local counterparts – at the communal, county, municipal or neighbourhood level. CVR may build trust and confidence – and stimulate local economic activity – by recruiting implementing partners and engineering support locally. When drawing on local pools of talent and expertise, it is important to explore ways that CVR projects can continue after funding ends.

4.9 Integrated

CVR should strengthen a coordinated and integrated UN approach to addressing security threats in mission and non-mission settings. CVR can and should involve, where realistically possible, a range of UN agencies and international and national partners in the design, implementation and evaluation of specific activities. Because CVR exists at the intersection of a wide range of agendas and sectors, clear and predictable direction is essential.

CVR shall contribute to the UN “delivering as one”. At a minimum, CVR programmes should not compete with or duplicate other initiatives carried out by UN agencies, funds and programmes as well as those fielded by national and international partners. CVR programmes may often be implemented in contexts where development, humanitarian and peace actors and interventions co-exist. To maximize complementarity and coordination, CVR strategies shall be guided by a clear set of objectives and targets, as well as a theory of change. Where feasible and appropriate, partnerships should be pursued.

4.10 Well planned

CVR programmes shall aim to be data-driven and evidence-based. Monitoring and evaluation measures shall be prepared before CVR programmes are started and applied throughout the entire life cycle of the intervention (see IDDRS 3.50 on Monitoring and Evaluation). Relevant baseline assessments, the collection of gender and sex-disaggregated data on project participants, and mid- and end-term evaluations shall be anticipated and budgeted for by DDR practitioners well in advance. Data collection and retention policies for implementing partners and DDR practitioners shall also include privacy provisions, including procedures on data retention, sharing and disposal. The progress of CVR programmes shall be regularly analysed and communicated to relevant partners to ensure that core objectives are achieved, and that mitigation strategies are prepared when they are not.

5. The role of CVR within a DDR process

DDR practitioners should, at the outset of a CVR programme, agree on a common understanding of the role of CVR within the DDR process, including its possible relationship to a DDR programme, to other DDR-related tools (such as transitional WAM), and to reintegration support (see IDDRS 2.10 on The UN Approach to DDR). Achieving shared clarity of purpose between national and local stakeholders, the UN and the entities responsible for coordinating CVR is critical.

The target groups for CVR programmes may vary according to the context. (See section 6.4.) However, four categories stand out:

- **Former combatants who are part of an existing UN-supported or national DDR programme.** These typically include ex-combatants and persons formerly associated with armed groups who are waiting for support and could be perceived as a threat to broader security and stability. If reintegration support is delayed, CVR can serve as a stop-gap measure, providing temporary reinsertion assistance for a defined period (6–18 months) (also see IDDRS 4.20 on Demobilization).
- **Members of armed groups who are not formally eligible for a DDR programme because their group is not signatory to a peace agreement.** These groups may include rebel factions,

paramilitaries, militia groups, members of armed gangs or other entities that are not part of a peace agreement. This category may include individuals who voluntarily leave active armed groups, including those that are designated as terrorist organizations by the United Nations Security Council (see IDDRS 2.11 on The Legal Framework for UN DDR). The status of these individuals and armed groups must be analysed and specified to mitigate any risks associated with their inclusion in CVR programmes.

- **Individuals who are not members of an armed group, but who are at risk of recruitment by such groups.** These individuals are not part of an established armed group and are therefore ineligible to participate in a DDR programme. They do, however, exhibit the potential to build peace and to contribute to the prevention of recruitment in their community. This wide category of beneficiaries can include male and female children and youth (see IDDRS 5.20 on Children and DDR and 5.30 on Youth and DDR).

- **Designated communities that are susceptible to outbreaks of violence, close to cantonment sites, or likely to receive former combatants.** In some cases, CVR may target communities and neighbourhoods that are situated close to cantonment sites and/or vulnerable to high rates of political violence, organized crime, or sexual or gender-based violence. CVR can also be focused on a sample of productive members of a community to enhance their potential to absorb newly reinserted and reintegrated former combatants.

5.1 CVR in support of and as a complement to a DDR programme

CVR may be pursued before, during and after DDR programmes in both mission and non-mission settings. (See Table 1 below.)

TABLE 1. CVR BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER A DDR PROGRAMME

	Example goals	Possible target groups	Potential partners
Before DDR programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prevent ongoing recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signatory/non-signatory armed groups ▪ Individuals at risk of recruitment ▪ Women associated with armed forces and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UN mission ▪ UNCT/HCT ▪ International agencies ▪ National NGOs ▪ Community-based organizations ▪ Women’s organizations ▪ Youth organizations
Parallel with DDR programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Address non-signatory armed groups and keep them from spoiling/disrupting the DDR process. ▪ Strengthen the capacities of communities to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signatory and non-signatory armed groups ▪ Individuals at risk of recruitment ▪ Women associated with armed forces and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UN mission ▪ UNCT/HCT ▪ International agencies ▪ National NGOs ▪ Community-based organizations ▪ Women’s organizations, youth

	absorb former combatants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthen support to reinsertion. ▪ Prevent ongoing recruitment. ▪ Prevent and respond to protection risks for women and girls. ▪ Reduce tensions in communities near cantonment sites or where former combatants are returning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Affected community members 	organizations, government partners
Post-DDR programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limit resumption of instability through public works projects. ▪ Prevent re-recruitment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residual groups of ex-combatants ▪ Individuals at risk of recruitment ▪ Affected community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UN mission ▪ UNCT/HCT ▪ International agencies ▪ National NGOs ▪ Community-based organizations ▪ Women and youth organizations ▪ Government partners ▪ Business community

CVR may be undertaken prior to a DDR programme. Past experience has shown that military commanders can sometimes try to recruit additional group members during negotiation processes in order to strengthen their troop numbers and consequent influence at the negotiating table. Similarly, previous experience has shown that imminent access to a DDR programme may have the perverse incentive of encouraging recruitment. CVR can counter this possibility, by fostering social cohesion and providing alternatives to joining armed groups.

CVR may also be undertaken in parallel with DDR programmes. For example, CVR programmes can be implemented near cantonment sites for a number of reasons. Firstly, there may be community resistance to the nearby cantoning of armed forces and groups. CVR can respond to this while also showing community members that ex-combatants are not the only ones to benefit from the DDR process. CVR can also help to mitigate insecurity around cantonment sites, particularly if cantonment goes on for longer than anticipated.

Even in communities that are not close to cantonment sites, CVR can be undertaken parallel to a DDR programme in order to strengthen the capacities of communities to absorb former combatants and to reduce tensions that may be caused by the arrival of ex-combatants and associated groups. More specifically, over the short to medium term, CVR can equip communities with dispute mechanisms as well as community dialogue mechanisms to manage grievances and stimulate local economic activity that benefits a wider population.

CVR can also be used as a means of addressing armed groups that have not signed on to a peace agreement. The aim of CVR in this context would be to minimize the potentially disruptive effects that non-signatory groups can have on an ongoing DDR programme.

Parallel to DDR programmes, CVR can also play a critical role in strengthening reinsertion efforts and bridging the so-called ‘reintegration gap’. In mission settings, CVR will be funded through the allocation of assessed contributions. Therefore, if DDR programmes are unable to mobilize sufficient reintegration assistance, CVR may smooth the transition through the provision of tailored reinsertion assistance for ex-combatants and associated groups and the communities to which they return. For this reason, CVR is sometimes described as a stop-gap measure. In non-mission settings, funding for CVR and reintegration support will depend on the allocation of national budgets and/or voluntary contributions from donors. Therefore, in instances where CVR and support to community-based reintegration are both envisaged in a non-mission setting, they should, from the outset, be planned and implemented as a single and continuous programme. The distinctions between CVR and reinsertion as part of a DDR programme are outlined in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2. DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN REINSERTION AND CVR

	Reinsertion	CVR
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transitional safety allowances ▪ Food ▪ Clothes ▪ Tools ▪ Shelter ▪ Medical services ▪ Short-term education, training and employment ▪ Psychosocial support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Driven by community consultation and community engagement. ▪ May include educational assistance, vocational training, micro-grants support for projects, infrastructure development, psychological support, public works projects, and sexual and gender-based violence mitigation. ▪ May include specifically targeted group mental health and psychosocial support interventions that promote social cohesion and interpersonal group therapies.
Eligibility criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Former combatants and persons formerly associated with armed groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Former combatants and persons formerly associated with armed groups ▪ Individuals at risk of recruitment ▪ Community members
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multiple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Defined hotspot intervention areas
Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to one year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can be short and medium term (6–12 months), with clear partnerships and an exit strategy

CVR may also be appropriate after a formal DDR programme has ended. For example, CVR may be administered after a DDR programme in combination with transitional weapons and ammunition management (WAM) in order to bolster resilience to (re-)recruitment and to mop up or safely register and store any remaining civilian-held weapons (see IDDRS 4.11 on Transitional WAM and section 5.3 below). CVR may also provide a constructive transitional function, particularly if reintegration support is ended prematurely. Any plans to maintain CVR activities after a DDR programme should be agreed with relevant stakeholders.

5.2 CVR in the absence of DDR programmes

CVR may also be used in the absence of a DDR programme. (See Table 3 below.)

TABLE 3: CVR IN THE ABSENCE OF A DDR PROGRAMME

	Example goals	Possible target groups	Potential partners
In the absence of DDR programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ De-escalate violence and build confidence for the signing of peace agreements (both national and local). ▪ Implement the terms of a local-level peace agreement, e.g., a CVR agreement. ▪ Increase safety and security in hotspot areas through the reduction of armed group membership. ▪ Mitigation and response for women's and children's protection risks, including sexual and gender-based violence. ▪ Promotion of social cohesion at the community level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signatory and non-signatory armed groups ▪ Individuals at risk of recruitment ▪ Women ▪ Youth ▪ Criminal organizations ▪ Affected communities ▪ Those who voluntarily leave armed groups designated as terrorist organizations by the United Nations Security Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UN mission ▪ UNCT/HCT ▪ International agencies ▪ National NGOs ▪ Community-based organizations ▪ Women's organizations ▪ Youth organizations ▪ Government partners ▪ Business community

CVR can be used to build confidence between warring parties and to show the possible dividends of future peace. In turn, this may help to foster an environment that is conducive to the signing of a peace agreement.

It is possible that DDR processes will not include DDR programmes, either because the preconditions for DDR programmes are not present or because alternative measures are more appropriate. For example, a local-level peace agreement may include provisions for CVR rather than a DDR programme. These local-level agreements can take many different forms, including (but not limited to) local non-aggression pacts between armed groups, deals regarding access to specific areas and CVR agreements (see IDDRS 2.20 on The Political Dimensions of DDR).

Alternatively, in certain cases armed groups designated as terrorist organizations by the United Nations Security Council may refuse to sign peace agreements. Individuals who voluntarily decide to leave these armed groups may participate in CVR programmes. However, they must first be

screened in order to assess whether they have committed certain crimes, including terrorist acts that would disqualify them from participation in a DDR process (see IDDRS 2.11 on Legal Framework for UN DDR).

5.3 Relationship between CVR and weapons and ammunition management

CVR may involve activities related to collecting, managing and/or destroying weapons and ammunition. Arms control initiatives and potential CVR arms-related eligibility criteria should be in line with the disarmament component of the DDR programme (if there is one), as well as other arms control initiatives running in the country (see IDDRS 4.10 on Disarmament and 4.11 on Transitional Weapons and Ammunition Management).

While not a disarmament program per se, CVR may include measures to promote community or locally led weapons collection and management initiatives, to support national weapons amnesties, and to collect, store and destroy small arms, light weapons, other conventional arms, ammunition and explosives. The collection and destruction of weapons may play an important symbolic and catalytic role in war-torn communities. Although the return of a weapon is not typically a condition of participation in CVR, voluntary returns may demonstrate the willingness of beneficiaries to engage. Moreover, the removal and/or safe storage of weapons from individuals' or armed groups' inventories may help reduce open carrying and home possession of weaponry – factors that can contribute to violent exchanges and unintentional injuries. Even when weapons are not handed over as part of a CVR programme, it is beneficial to collect information on the weapons still in possession of those participating in CVR. This is because weapons in circulation will continue to represent a risk factor and have the potential to facilitate violence. Expectations should be kept realistic: in settings marked by high levels of insecurity, it is unlikely that voluntary surrenders or amnesties of weapons will meaningfully reduce overall accessibility.

DDR practitioners may, in consultation with relevant partners, propose conditions for the submission of weapons as part of a CVR programme. In some instances, modern and artisanal weapons and ammunition have been collected as part of CVR programmes and have later been destroyed in public ceremonies. Weapons and ammunition collected as part of CVR programmes should be destroyed, but if the authorities decide to integrate the material into their national stockpiles, this should be done in compliance with the State's obligations under relevant international instruments and with technical guidelines.

6. CVR programming

The legitimacy and effectiveness of CVR begins and ends with community engagement. CVR programmes should not be limited to a small number of partners, but rather include a wide-ranging and representative sample of community stakeholders. Selected partners should be included at all stages of the programming cycle – project submission, design, development, implementation, communications, and monitoring and evaluation – in order to help build local capacities and achieve maximum impact. Where counterpart government capacities are weak or compromised, community-level partnerships should be pursued to promote buy-in, to reach difficult-to-access areas, and to help CVR interventions thrive after funding cycles come to an end.

At a minimum, CVR strategy and programming shall be aligned with wider national, regional and international stabilization objectives. While the overall strategic direction is determined from above,

DDR practitioners should work closely with local intermediaries to ensure that community-driven priorities are front and centre in project selection. This is because community buy-in and local norms and sanctions are critical to limiting the prevalence of violence and helping regulate violence once it has broken out. Local ownership is not an incidental by-product – it is absolutely essential to CVR effectiveness. CVR programmes are less beholden to a predetermined design than many other stability measures, and they should take advantage of this by incorporating community demands while also ensuring a comprehensive strategy for community security.

6.1 CVR Strategy and Coordination Mechanisms

In both mission and non-mission settings, CVR programmes should be based on a clear, predictable and agile CVR strategy. The strategy shall clearly specify core goals, targets, indicators, and the theory of change and overall rationale for CVR. The strategic plan should spell out the division of labour, rules and responsibilities of partners, and their performance targets.

CVR programmes are not static and, when political and security dynamics change, shall be regularly adjusted to reflect the new set of circumstances. All updates should be informed by comprehensive conflict and security analysis, consultations with national and international counterparts, and internal mission and United Nations Country Team (UNCT) priorities. Changes in CVR programmes should also ensure that revised targets meet basic results-based practices, are aligned within budgetary constraints, and are informed by high-quality data collection and monitoring systems.

While CVR shall be a short-to-medium-term measure, longer-range planning is essential to ensure linkages with broader security, rights-related, gender and development priorities. These future-looking priorities – together with potential and actual bridges to relevant UN and non-UN agencies – should be clearly articulated in the CVR strategy. CVR programme and project documents should highlight partnerships to facilitate sustainability. The longer-term potential of CVR should also be noted in the mandate of the National DDR Commission (if one exists) or an equivalent body as well as relevant international and national development frameworks. Preparing for the end of CVR early on – and including national government and international donor representatives in the planning process – is essential for a smooth and sustainable exit strategy.

Strategically embedding CVR in national and subnational development frameworks may also generate positive effects. While CVR is not a development activity, integrating CVR into a UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and/or national development strategy can provide stronger impetus for coordinated and adequately resourced activities. DDR practitioners should therefore be exposed to national, regional and municipal development strategies and priorities. At the subnational level, selected CVR projects should be strongly aligned with state, municipal and neighbourhood development priorities where possible. Representation of line ministries, secretaries and departments in relevant planning and coordination bodies is strongly encouraged.

A number of different coordination mechanisms may guide CVR project selection, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Two possible mechanisms are highlighted below. However, if alternate representative institutions already exist (such as village development committees), then they could be harnessed (subject to the usual due diligence) and steps should be taken to ensure that they are representative of the broader society.

Two commonly utilized CVR coordination mechanisms are:

- Project Selection Committees (PSCs): Community-based PSCs are established in selected areas, include a representative sample of stakeholders, and are responsible for selecting projects that are vetted by the PAC/PRC (see below). All project selection shall comply with gender quotas of a minimum of 30% of projects benefitting women, and women’s involvement in 30% of leadership and management positions.
- A Project Approval/Review Committee (PAC/PRC): A PAC/PRC sets the overall strategic direction for CVR and vets and approves projects selected by PSCs. The PAC/PRC should exhibit a high degree of clarity on its roles and functions. Such entities meet on a semi-regular basis, usually after a certain number of CVR projects have been presented (a minimum of a week in advance) to PAC/PRC members for consideration. The PAC/PRC may request changes to project proposals or ask for additional information to be provided. The PAC/PRC shall ensure all proposals comply with gender quotas.

When the two aforementioned coordination mechanisms exist, individual CVR projects will typically be developed by the PSC, reviewed by the PAC/PRC, and then sent back to the PSC for revision and sign-off. PSCs should also proactively ensure alignment between project activities and (actual or planned) regional and municipal plans and priorities. While a short-to-medium-term focus is paramount, CVR projects that directly and indirectly stimulate development dividends (alongside violence reduction) should be favourably considered.

PSCs (or equivalent bodies) may conduct a number of different tasks: identifying prospective partners, developing projects, communicating tender processes, vetting project submissions, monitoring beneficiary performance and quality controls, and trouble-shooting problems as and when they arise. PSCs are typically composed of local community members and local leaders and should ensure representation of minority groups, women and youth. Subnational government, private-sector and civil society representatives may also be included, as may representatives of armed groups. PSCs should meet on a regular prescribed basis and serve as the primary interlocutor with the UN mission (mission settings) or UNCT (non-mission settings), and where relevant (such as in refugee settings) the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). Representatives of DDR/CVR sections (in mission settings) and of the UNCT (in non-mission settings), should, where practical and appropriate, participate in the PSC.

PAC/PRCs (or equivalent bodies) are often responsible for reviewing and approving CVR project submissions, and for asking for changes/further information from the PSC when necessary. PAC/PRCs may be composed of senior representatives from the DSRSG (in mission settings) or senior representatives of the UNCT (in non-mission settings), alongside government officials and other representatives from relevant UN entities.

These two aforementioned coordination entities are intended to properly vet project partners and ensure a high degree of quality control in project execution. In all cases, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) shall be developed to help clarify overall goals, structure and approaches for CVR, particularly the nature of PAC/PRCs, PSCs, target groups and criteria for projects. These SOPs shall be regularly adapted and updated in line with realities on the ground and the priorities of the mission or the UNCT in non-mission settings.

TABLE 4. CVR PROJECT SELECTION AND APPROVAL PROCESSES

	Composition	Responsibilities	Approval process
Project Selection Committee (PSC)	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local community members ▪ Local community leaders ▪ Relevant DDR practitioners ▪ Representatives of local government ▪ DDR/CVR section (in mission settings) ▪ Women’s associations ▪ Youth groups ▪ Business associations ▪ Faith-based entities ▪ Armed groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appraises potential projects. ▪ Selects those that will be sent to the PAC/PRC. ▪ Identifies prospective implementing partners ▪ Communicates tender processes. ▪ Vets project submissions. ▪ Monitors beneficiary performance. ▪ Assists in troubleshooting on the ground. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports revision of project proposals as and when requested by the PAC/PRC.
Project Approval/Review Committee (PAC/PRC)	<p>May include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Senior representatives from the DSRSG/RC (in mission settings) ▪ Senior UNCT representatives (in non-mission settings) ▪ Government officials ▪ Other representatives from relevant UN entities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meets periodically to revisit overall strategy. ▪ Ensures alignment between project activities and broader strategic priorities ▪ Reviews finalized CVR project submissions. ▪ Recommends changes ▪ Makes approvals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Receives CVR proposals. ▪ Appraises CVR proposals. ▪ Requests changes. ▪ Sign-off subject to budget.
DDR/CVR section project support (mission contexts only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designated DDR practitioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify implementing partners with capacities to work in identified hotspot sites. ▪ Support proposal development. ▪ Finalize submissions for PAC/PRC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support revision of project proposals as and when requested by the PAC/PRC

6.2 CVR in Mission and Non-Mission Settings

If the priority is for rapid delivery or if local government and non-government capacities are weak, then agreed-upon CVR responses should be administered directly by the UN. However, the UN may also work indirectly, by supporting local partners.

6.2.1 Mission Settings

In mission settings, CVR may be explicitly mandated by a UN Security Council and/or General Assembly resolution. CVR will therefore be funded through the allocation of assessed contributions.

The UNSC and UNGA directives for CVR are often general, with specific programming details to be worked out by relevant UN entities in partnership with the host government. In mission settings, the DDR/CVR section should align CVR strategic goals and activities with the mandate of the National DDR Commission (if one exists) or an equivalent government-designated body. The National DDR Commission, which typically includes representatives of the executive, the armed forces, police, and relevant line ministries and departments, should be solicited to provide direct inputs into CVR planning and programming. In cases where government capacity and volition exist, the National DDR Commission may manage and resource CVR by setting targets, managing tendering of local partners and administering financial oversight with donor partners. In such cases, the UN mission shall play a supportive role.

Where CVR is administered directly by the UN in the context of a peace support operation or political mission, the DDR/CVR section shall be responsible for the design, development, coordination and oversight of CVR, in conjunction with senior representatives of the mission. DDR practitioners shall be in regular contact with representatives of the UNCT as well as international and national partners to ensure alignment of programming goals, and to leverage the strengths and capacities of relevant UN agencies and avoid duplication. Community outreach and engagement shall be pursued and nurtured at the national, regional, municipal and neighbourhood scale.

The DDR/CVR section should typically include senior and mid-level DDR officers. Depending on the budget allocated to CVR, personnel may range from the director and deputy director level to field staff and volunteer officers. A dedicated DDR/CVR team should include a selection of international and national staff forming a unit at headquarters (HQ) as well as small implementation teams at the forward operating base (FOB) level. It is important that DDR practitioners are directly involved in DDR strategy development and decision-making at the HQ. Likewise, regular communication between DDR field personnel is crucial to share experiences, identify best practices, and understand wider political and economic dynamics. The UN DSRSG shall establish a DDR/CVR working group or an equivalent body. The working group should be co-chaired by lead agencies, with due consideration for gender equality, youth and child protection, and support to persons with disabilities.

The DDR/CVR section, and particularly its field offices, could create a PSC and PAC/PRC. In this event, the PAC/PRC (or equivalent body) should liaise with UNCT partners to align stability priorities with wider development concerns. It may be appropriate to add an additional support mechanism to oversee and support project partners. This additional support mechanism could be made up of members of the DDR/CVR section who could conduct a variety of tasks, including but not limited to support to the development of project proposals, support to the finalization of project submissions and the identification of possible implementing partners able to work in hotspot sites.

Whichever approach is adopted, the DDR/CVR section should ensure transparent and predictable coordination with national institutions and within the mission or UNCT. Where appropriate, DDR/CVR sections may provide supplementary training for implementing partners in selected programming areas. The success or failure of CVR depends in large part on the quality of the partners and partnerships, so it is critical that they are properly vetted.

6.2.2 Non-Mission Settings

In non-mission settings, the UNCT will generally undertake joint assessments in response to an official request from the host government, regional bodies and/or the UN Resident Coordinator (RC). These official requests will typically ask for assistance to address particular issues. If the issue concerns armed groups and their active and former members, CVR as a DDR-related tool may be an appropriate response. However, it is important to note that in non-mission settings, there may already be instances where community-based programming at local levels is used, but not as a DDR-related tool. These latter types of responses are anchored under Agenda 2030 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), and have links to much broader issues of rule of law, community security, crime reduction, armed violence reduction and small arms control. If there is no link to active or former members of armed groups, then these types of activities typically fall outside the scope of a DDR process (see IDDRS 2.10 on The UN Approach to DDR).

In non-mission settings where there has been agreement that CVR as a DDR-related tool is the most appropriate response to the presence of armed groups, the UN RC shall establish a DDR/CVR working group or an equivalent body. The working group should be co-chaired by lead agencies, with due consideration for gender equality, youth and child protection, and support to persons with disabilities.

In non-mission settings there may not always be a National DDR Commission to provide direct inputs into CVR planning and programming. However, alternative interlocutors should be sought – including relevant line ministries and departments – in order to ensure that the broad strategic direction of the CVR programme is aligned with relevant national and regional stabilization objectives.

6.3 Assessments

In both mission and non-mission contexts, CVR programmes shall be preceded by regularly updated assessments, including but not limited to:

- A security and consequence assessment accounting for the costs and benefits of conducting selected activities (and the risks of not conducting them).
- A comprehensive and gender-responsive baseline assessment of local violence dynamics. This assessment should take note of factors that may contribute to violence (e.g., harmful use of alcohol and drugs) as well as the impact that violence can have on mental health and well-being (e.g., acute stress, grief, depression and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). It should also explicitly unpack the threats to security for men, women, boys and girls, and analyse the root causes of violence and insecurity, including their gender dimensions.
- Conflict context analysis.
- A detailed stakeholder mapping and a diagnostic of the capacities, interests and cohesiveness of communities and national institutions.

- An assessment of local market conditions.
- The dynamics of eligible and non-eligible armed groups – their leadership, internal dynamics, command and control, linkages with elites and external support.

Importantly, the privileging of some geographic areas for CVR over others may result in disputes that should be anticipated and accounted for in conflict assessments. While information supplied by security and intelligence units is essential, there is no substitute for grounded diagnostics and mapping by UN field offices, implementing partners and third-party researchers. Assessments can be cross-sectional or ongoing, and should be conducted by national or international experts in partnership with UNCT. Assessments should identify prospective beneficiary groups; assess government, private and civil society capacities; and review the causes and consequences of organized and interpersonal violence. These assessments are critical for the design of project proposals, setting appropriate benchmarks, and monitoring and evaluation.

6.4 Target groups and locations

The selection of CVR target groups and intervention sites is a political decision that should be taken on the basis of assessments (see section 6.3), and in consultation with national and/or local government authorities. The identification of target groups and locations for CVR should also be informed through:

- The priorities of the host government and, if in a mission context, the mandate of the mission; and
- Consultations with UN senior management.

DDR practitioners can, where appropriate, adopt broad categories for target groups that can be applied nationally. In some cases, the selection of target groups is made pragmatically based on a list prepared by a PSC (or equivalent body) and/or implementing partners. Prospective participants should be vetted locally according to pre-set eligibility criteria. For example, these eligibility criteria may require former affiliation to specific armed groups and/or possession of modern or artisanal weapons (see section 4.2).

Clear criteria for who is included and excluded from CVR programmes should be carefully communicated in order to avoid unnecessarily inflating expectations and generating tension. One means of doing this is to prepare a glossary with specific selection criteria that can be shared with implementing partners and PSCs. In all cases, DDR practitioners shall ensure that women and girls are adequately represented in the identification of priorities and implementation strategies, by making sure that:

- Assessments include separate focus group discussions for women, led by female facilitators.
- Women’s groups are engaged in the consultative process and as implementing partners.
- The PAC/PRC (or equivalent entity) is 30% female.
- A minimum of 30% of CVR projects within the broader CVR programme directly benefit women’s safety and security issues.
- The entire CVR programme integrates and leverages opportunities for women’s leadership and gender equality.
- Staffing of CVR projects includes female employees.

Additional target groups, assessed as having the potential to either amplify or undermine broader security and stability efforts in general, or DDR in particular, may be identified on a case-by-case basis. For example, CVR may be expanded to include newly displaced populations – refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) – that are at risk of mobilization into armed groups or that may unintentionally generate flashpoints for community violence. There may also be possibilities to extend CVR programmes to particular geographic areas and population groups susceptible to outbreaks of violence and/or experiencing concentrated disadvantage. The flexibility to adapt CVR to target groups that may disrupt and impede the DDR process is critical.

6.5 Types of projects

There is tremendous heterogeneity in the types of CVR projects that are implemented as part of CVR programmes, both within and between countries. However, there are also commonalities. All CVR programmes generate interactions with state authorities and/or stimulate inter- and intra-community dialogue. These communication exchanges not only help to ensure better identification of the types of CVR projects to support, but they can also contribute to the more effective design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of CVR. DDR/CVR partners should be aware that some prospective implementing partners shall require support in preparing project proposals. Appropriate support mechanisms should be introduced in advance to offer support in relation to proposal writing and reporting processes so as to avoid major delays.

A wide array of technical sectors are included in CVR interventions. These include commercial-based projects (e.g., grocery retail, bakeries, tailors, mechanics, salons, agricultural production, livestock and animal husbandry activities), social projects (e.g. the construction and maintenance of youth centres, civic education, community reconciliation), infrastructure initiatives (e.g., the construction of roads, bridges, clinics, schools and other labour-based activities involving training, apprenticeship and paid work for ex-combatants and at-risk groups), security and corrections measures (e.g., community-oriented policing, lighting systems, prevention of gender-based violence and corporal punishment), and weapons and ammunition management activities (e.g., collection, storage, management and destruction). Table 5 below provides a summary of possible CVR projects.

TABLE 5. GENERIC TYPOLOGY OF CVR PROJECTS

Commercial projects	Grocery retail including kiosks and market stalls
	Bakeries including for wholesale and retail
	Tailoring collectives and services
	Mechanical repairs for transport and industry
	Electronic repairs for appliances
	Hair salons and other beautification services
	Abattoirs and ritual slaughterhouses
Agricultural	Small and medium-sized farms, nurseries and related services
	Animal husbandry and related services
	Veterinarian training, centres and mobile clinics
	Digital services and training in new techniques
Social welfare	Community centres servicing at-risk youth

	Sexual and gender-based violence prevention education and awareness raising
	Primary, secondary and vocational education services
	Health centres and mobile clinics for specific needs, including group-oriented mental health and psychosocial support interventions
	Sexual and gender-based violence response support (training, supplies, sensitization) for doctors/nurses/midwives/health technicians, reproductive health services, supplies and training, etc.
	Early childhood centres and day-care facilities
	Transitional and restorative justice initiatives
Infrastructure	Primary, secondary and tertiary roads
	Sexual and gender-based violence mitigation infrastructure priorities (e.g., wells closer to community, firewood accessibility issues, lighting, etc.)
	Small and medium-sized bridges and canals
	Water and waste facilities (including renewables)
	Energy and electricity facilities (including renewables)
	Apprenticeships and cash for work for selected target groups
Security	Community policing units and neighbourhood watch*
	Prisons, jails and corrections facilities*
	Specialized units for violence against women and girls
	Lighting systems in designated areas (including solar)
	Regulation and control of weapons and ammunition

* In mission contexts, these activities should take place in close coordination with mission components and specialized UN agencies, funds and programmes.

The selection of CVR projects shall be informed by political, climatic and demographic factors as well as the merits of individual project proposals. PSCs and PAC/PRCs (or equivalent entities) may prioritize CVR projects according to the stage of the peace process (e.g., contingent on the short-term emergency to medium-term recovery needs), geographic location (e.g., water wells and animal husbandry in dry climates and information and communications technology (ICT) training and business apprenticeships in urban settings) and social and identity-related dynamics (e.g., projects tailored to specific religious or ethnic groups). The sequencing and timing of financial support for CVR projects should not be arbitrary, but should account for the specific types of projects approved. For example, financing for agricultural projects may require more rapid disbursement (in line with seasonal imperatives) than other initiatives. It is also critical that implementing partners are equipped with the appropriate technical capacities to meet project timelines – the lack of engineering support, for example, can generate delays and hinder maintenance. DDR practitioners should prioritize project development and financing accordingly.

Precisely because CVR is short-to-medium-term, selected projects should also include a basic sustainability plan, including realistic commitments for monitoring and evaluation and details on when and how CVR activities will be handed over in full to the national government (see IDDRS 3.50

on Monitoring and Evaluation). Clear provisions for these activities should be included (and resources appropriately allocated) in final contracts. Implementing partner contracts should include clauses that specify the maintenance and management of specific assets, together with direction on how the initiative will be sustained after funding comes to an end. Likewise, contracts should specify the requirement to collect minimum qualitative and quantitative information on CVR project outcomes and impacts. Where implementing partners lack such capacities or where supplementary training may not be sufficient, DDR practitioners should explore opportunities to facilitate such activities with third parties.

6.6 Partnerships and implementation

CVR programmes should adopt a graduated approach to implementation. In many cases, it is advisable to start CVR initiatives with an experimental pilot phase of 6–8 months. Pilot projects are useful to assess local capacities, identify prospective partners and test out community receptivity. An incremental approach may help DDR practitioners sharpen their overall objectives and theories of change, while gradually building up strategic partnerships across government, host communities and international agencies that are essential for longer-term success. There are potentially strong demonstration effects from successful projects, and these should be advertised where possible.

Delays in CVR implementation – particularly in relation to project selection and project disbursements – may undermine the credibility of the intervention and generate risks for personnel. Bottlenecks are routine, yet in many cases avoidable. DDR practitioners, implementing partners and PSCs (or equivalent entities) shall set realistic timelines, manage expectations and ensure regular communication with project beneficiaries. DDR practitioners may also elect to introduce administrative procedures to speed up decision-making on project selection, reduce the number of tranches for projects and prioritize initiatives that are subject to seasonal effects (e.g., planting, harvest, transhumance, insect-borne disease), climatic factors (e.g., rainfall, flooding and droughts), and calendar years (e.g., schooling and holidays).

CVR projects should ensure a high degree of oversight and support to beneficiaries. Effective CVR is often a function of the quality of field personnel – including implementing partners – and their ability to apply a high degree of emotional intelligence. Experienced DDR practitioners should have a demonstrated ability to engage with complex social and cultural norms and their intersecting gender dynamics in order to build trust with beneficiaries and affected communities. This engagement frequently requires a minimum competence in the local language(s) together with a developed capacity to empathize and communicate. DDR field practitioners should have the discretion and autonomy to craft inter-agency partnerships, rapidly solve problems in volatile settings, and innovate in moments of crisis.

CVR shall involve an array of implementing partners and a variety of coordinating mechanisms. The nature of these partnerships and coordination mechanisms shall depend on the national and local context, the extent of capacities on the ground and the resources available. CVR coordination and partnerships should be devolved as much as possible to the local level, and bureaucratic and administrative procedures should be kept to an acceptable minimum. Decisions on the particular form and content of partnerships and coordination will be informed by the CVR mandate; the peace agreement (if one has been signed); government, donor, and mission and UNCT capacities; and local dynamics on the ground. Partners and coordinating mechanisms may change over time.

6.7 Timeframes and budgeting

There is no fixed or standard timeframe for CVR. The length of CVR projects varies according to the nature of the context, including the funding source – whether an assessed budget, a dedicated trust fund, a voluntary contribution or some combination of these options. Specific CVR projects in mission contexts will be no more than one year, whereas this timeframe may be longer in non-mission contexts, particularly when it forms a single programme with reintegration support. Setting a temporal threshold is important to set expectations and to avoid an indefinite continuation of CVR projects. DDR practitioners should also set aside adequate time to undertake due diligence of partners, organize partnership modalities, transfer grants, monitor and evaluate interventions, and communicate results.

There are economies of scale that are associated with CVR. Specifically, there are advantages in investing in larger CVR projects with wider caseloads from capital expenditure (CAPEX) and operational expenditure (OPEX) perspectives. Specifically, the initial CAPEX in CVR – in personnel, transportation, logistics and large project outlays – can be high. This is because many CVR interventions are frequently pursued in challenging environments: large public works projects often require complex engineering support. The marginal OPEX implications of adding additional beneficiaries is comparatively low. CVR may at times be more cost-effective as the size of the caseload grows. There are risks, of course, in that CVR programmes may introduce biases by favouring projects and locations with larger prospective caseloads. In some cases, it may be preferable to explore mobile CVR teams for modest-sized target groups in hard-to-reach areas.

6.8 Communications

DDR practitioners should design a robust communications and sensitization plan to reach prospective and actual beneficiaries. The plan should be informed by the baseline assessment (see section 6.3) and by an assessment of how people take up information and what outlets and means are considered most legitimate. These assessments should be adjusted as conditions change on the ground. Outreach can be facilitated by UN representatives, implementing partners, PSCs (or equivalent entities) and project beneficiaries themselves. Public information and sensitization campaigns shall explain CVR objectives, project selection criteria and the timelines involved. The goal is to strengthen the self-selection of prospective participants while also shaping the expectations of individuals and communities. All communications, education and outreach campaigns and activities should be gender-responsive so as to reach women and girls and men and boys. Communications should also be gender-transformative and inclusive. This entails having a balance of voices and visual representations of men, women, boys, girls, minorities and other vulnerable groups, and their active involvement in leadership and implementation of outreach and education activities.

The communications plan for a CVR programme should have clearly identified objectives, core stakeholder groups and expected results. Such plans can be delivered through television, radio, print outlets, social media, direct SMS outreach and other platforms. Ensuring a minimum level of transparency in CVR measures is critical in order to manage stakeholder expectations, be they government counterparts, international and national partners, or beneficiaries. CVR communications activities in mission and non-mission settings should be aligned to wider UN security, stability and development priorities.

The communications plan can be administered in mission and country office settings through, where appropriate, a public sensitization and outreach (PSO) unit or equivalent body. All plans shall be

clear about the intended primary and intermediate audiences, the languages being used, the underlying behavioural shifts that are expected (theory of change), the particular approaches to addressing the needs of women and girls as well as the protection of children, the most appropriate methods and modes for delivering sensitization material, the training measures for staff and communicators, and the expected indicators to track outputs and outcomes. Communications strategies should support positive gender norms and the positive roles played by men and women.

Annex A: Abbreviations

CAPEX	capital expenditure
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CVR	community violence reduction
FOB	forward operating base
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HQ	headquarters
OPEX	operational expenditure
PAC/PRC	Project Approval/Review Committee
PSC	Project Selection Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGBV	sexual and gender-based violence
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UN DSRSG	United Nations Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UN RC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WAM	weapons and ammunition management

Endnotes

¹ In this module the term ‘DDR practitioners’ refers to individuals who work on CVR programmes in a setting of armed conflict. In mission contexts, these individuals may work in either UN mission DDR or CVR sections.