

# 3.30 National Ownership and National Institutions in DDR

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# 3.30 National Ownership and National Institutions in DDR

## Summary

The UN recognizes that national ownership of DDR processes is important for successful implementation and to achieve the peacebuilding and sustaining peace goals of DDR. Wherever possible, the UN must nurture and support genuine, effective and broad national ownership of all DDR processes.

National ownership implies that DDR processes align with the national approach to prevention, peacebuilding and conflict recovery. It means that there is buy-in to DDR from a broad selection of domestic actors at the national, provincial and local levels. Wherever possible, the UN will provide front and centre support to national institutions to lead DDR. This approach is embedded in the integrated strategic planning as well as the design of DDR processes.

National DDR institutions are those institutions with responsibility for DDR processes in line with the roles and responsibilities designated by domestic provisional orders, decrees, laws or other policy instruments. The architecture of national DDR institutions will vary depending on the political, institutional and conflict context in which they are created. However, they can include national political bodies; national technical, planning and coordination bodies; national agencies with remit for one or more DDR processes; and line ministries. At times, there will be a combination of national DDR institutions in a given country. Where there are multiple national institutions, to ensure coherence DDR should be coordinated by a lead national body.

The mandates and legal frameworks of national institutions will vary according to the DDR process being implemented, the approach to implementation, the division of responsibilities with international partners and the administrative structures found in the country. In both mission and non-mission contexts, it is important to ensure that national and international frameworks and mandates for DDR are clear and coherent, and that a clear division of labour is established.

National DDR institutions should reflect the multifaceted nature of DDR and should ensure that the planning and implementation of DDR processes align with and are informed by other domestic peacebuilding interventions as well as other strategies and programming. This includes those peace-building interventions targeting stabilization, conflict transformation, poverty reduction, gender equality and post-conflict reconstruction. National DDR institutions should collaborate with other domestic conflict recovery, economic recovery, social protection, human security and security institutions.

The presence of a national DDR institution does not necessarily mean national ownership, community buy-in or political buy-in into DDR processes. The design and monitoring of UN support should be delivered in full recognition of the distinction between national institutions and national ownership and the complexities of fostering political buy-in to DDR.

## 1. Module scope and objectives

This module provides UN DDR practitioners with guidance on supporting the national ownership of DDR processes. The scope of the module covers all DDR measures – jointly constituting a process – presented in IDDRS 2.10 on The UN Approach to DDR. These include DDR programmes, DDR-related tools and support to reintegration in all relevant contexts, including UN mission settings and non-mission settings, as well as in contexts where preconditions for DDR programmes do not exist. The module also provides guidance on how UN DDR practitioners can support national DDR institutions to lead DDR processes.

The objectives of the module are to:

- Provide guidance on how the UN should define its role, the scope of support it should offer to national structures and institutions, and capacity development;
- Sensitize UN DDR practitioners on the importance of national ownership of DDR, give them analytical tools for analysing the level of national ownership in a given context, and provide planning and response tools for enhancing national ownership where it is insufficient;
- Provide UN DDR policymakers and practitioners with a description of national ownership of DDR in mission and non-mission settings;
- Provide UN DDR policymakers and practitioners with a broad set of considerations regarding supporting national ownership, including, but not limited to, supporting the institutionalization of national ownership via national institutions or line ministries that have been designated with responsibility for DDR.

## 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 series of integrated DDR standards (IDDRS) 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.

A **national framework for DDR** denotes the political, legal, policy, programmatic and institutional parameters, resources and capacities established to structure and guide national engagement with DDR processes. The implementation of DDR requires multiple stakeholders; therefore, participants in the establishment and implementation of a national DDR framework shall include not only the Government, but also all parties to

the peace agreement (assuming there is one); civil society, including youth and women's civil society organizations; and all other national and local stakeholders where relevant (see also IDDRS 3.21 on DDR Process Stakeholders).

**National ownership** implies that DDR processes align with and inform the national approach to conflict transformation and conflict recovery when one is defined. It implies that there is buy-in from a broad selection of domestic actors. National ownership can have local and regional dynamics, depending on the nature of the conflict, the nature of the national approach to conflict transformation and the scope of the DDR processes being implemented in any given context. National ownership may involve balancing the interests of former opposing conflict actors and applying a tailored approach to engender buy-in.

**National DDR institutions** denotes the institutions with legally mandated responsibility for DDR processes in a given context. Such an institution may be a DDR commission, an agency, a line ministry or other appropriate national institution. The national institution must have broad support and local presence, such as through local offices or local DDR commissioners.

### 3. Introduction

To achieve sustainable national ownership of DDR, UN support may include a focus on sustainable capacity-building at the central, provincial and local levels.

National ownership of DDR processes is essential. DDR sits between stabilization and state-building, and contributes to both. DDR is both a technical process and one with complex peacebuilding, political, social, economic and institutional aspects that cannot be delivered in a sustainable manner without national ownership. National ownership is necessary for securing long-term impacts of DDR, particularly the successful political, economic and social reintegration of ex-combatants and broader peacebuilding goals of DDR.

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### 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 national, provincial and local ownership of DDR processes in both mission and non-mission settings.

#### 4.1 Unconditional release and protection of children

When DDR programmes, DDR-related tools and reintegration support are implemented, children shall be separated from armed forces and groups and handed over to child protection agencies. Children will then be supported to demobilize and reintegrate

into families and communities (see IDDRS 5.30 on Children and DDR). The national ownership of the unconditional release and protection of children must be ensured and supported by the international community at political, policy and capacity levels. ).

#### **4.2 Gender responsive and inclusive**

Non-discrimination and fair and equitable treatment are core principles in both the design and implementation of DDR processes. There is considerable diversity in how individuals and groups understand, experience and express gender through the roles they take on, the expectations placed on them, their relations with others and the complex ways that gender is institutionalized in society. Gender issues and gender sensitivity must be mainstreamed across all aspects of DDR processes, including the support of national institutions and national ownership.

Integrating gender in DDR requires that DDR processes take account of the specific needs of girls, women, men and boys with respect to both biological/sex differences and sociocultural gender differences. All DDR processes, including support to national institutions and national ownership, should be designed in a manner that promotes gender equality and should be grounded in a rights-based approach.

All aspects of national institutions (such as policies, structure and staffing) should comply with gender responsiveness and gender inclusion. National institutions should be able to clearly distinguish between women's practical and strategic needs, including as they participate in conflict and DDR.

National DDR institutions should include central Government leadership; the parties to the conflict; and representatives of civil society (civil society organizations [CSOs], community-based organizations [CBOs] and non-governmental organizations [NGOs]), beneficiary communities and the private sector. Broad representation means that national DDR institutions include representatives of former opposing armed groups in compliance with any stipulations arrived at through negotiation and/or peace agreements. Inclusivity means that national DDR institutions shall understand local, provincial and national conflict contexts and shall be sensitive to local culture and aspirations in their DDR work.

The international community should play a role in supporting the development of capacities on gender issues as well as the protection of children, in Government as well as in other relevant stakeholders, so that they can effectively participate in DDR processes and institutions. See IDDRS 5.10 on Women, Gender and DDR, IDDRS 5.20 on Children and DDR, IDDRS 5.30 on Youth and DDR and IDDRS 5.80 on Disability-Inclusive DDR.

#### **4.3 Conflict sensitive**

As with DDR processes, the establishment and operationalization of the national institution for DDR shall be carried out in a conflict-sensitive manner. The principle of 'do no harm' shall be applied. National institutions should be transparent and make no false promises, and no individual or community should be made less secure by the establishment and operation of the national DDR institution or its strategy, policies or day-to-day work.

#### **4.4 Context specific**

National DDR institutions should work in a flexible and context-specific manner and be able to respond to and address local, national, regional and global realities.

#### **4.5 Flexible, accountable and transparent**

##### **4.5.1 Flexible, sustainable and transparent funding arrangements**

National DDR institutions should be supported by flexible and long-term funding arrangements, including, at some point, funding allocated from national budgets. National DDR institutions should have appropriate and proportionate investment in staffing, planning and programming and have access to sustainable sources of funding for the duration of the planning and implementation of the DDR process.

##### **4.5.2 Accountability and transparency**

Accountability and transparency engender trust and buy-in by parties to DDR, including beneficiary communities. They build confidence in DDR processes and contribute to the perceived legitimacy of DDR and of the institutional actors and implementing partners.

Accountability mechanisms shall be established for the monitoring, oversight and evaluation of DDR processes. National institutions should play a key role in ensuring these mechanisms are applied. DDR practitioners shall advocate for and provide technical support to mainstream these principles into national DDR strategies, policies and the functioning of national DDR institutions. These mechanisms shall align with international good practices and the UN approach to monitoring and evaluation in DDR (see IDDRS 3.50 on Monitoring and Evaluation of DDR).

Transparency should be supported through a broad communications strategy that raises awareness of the principles and details of DDR processes and of their intended and actual impact, including on the broader community (see IDDRS 4.60 on Public Information and Strategic Communication in Support of DDR).

## **5. Mandates, policy and legal frameworks for national DDR institutions**

The mandates and legal frameworks established for national DDR institutions will vary according to the nature of the DDR process, the approach adopted, the division of responsibilities (domestically and with international partners), and the administrative structures of the state or country. All stakeholders shall agree on the mandates and frameworks (see also IDDRS 3.21 on DDR Process Stakeholders).

### **5.1 Establishing clear and coherent national and international frameworks and mandates**

The national and international mandates for DDR should be clear and coherent. A clear division of responsibilities shall be established. This may be done through:

- Supporting national actors in the development of a national framework for DDR,

denoting the political, legal, policy, programmatic and institutional parameters, resources and capacities;

- Supporting international experts to provide technical advice on DDR to parties to the peace negotiations;
- Incorporating national authorities into inter-agency assessment missions to ensure that national policies and strategies are reflected in the Secretary-General's report and Security Council mandates for UN peace-support operations;
- Discussing national and international roles, responsibilities and functions within the framework of an agreed common DDR plan or process;
- Providing technical advice to national authorities on the design and development of legal frameworks, institutional mechanisms and national programmes for DDR;
- Establishing mechanisms for the joint implementation and coordination of DDR at the policy, planning and operational levels.

## 5.2 Policy frameworks and peace accord provisions

When parties to a conflict conclude a peace accord or political agreement, provisions should be included to inform the creation of a legal framework for DDR. Mandates and basic principles, institutional mechanisms, time frames and eligibility criteria should all be defined. Before DDR starts, institutional mechanisms and policies should be elaborated further through the adoption of national legislation or executive decree(s). Existing international commitments, including the women, peace and security agenda, shall be considered in tandem with the specific legal framework for DDR.

### 5.2.1 National and local dynamics

National-level frameworks and peace agreements may not always end local-level conflict or accommodate its resolution. Local-level conflict can be heterogeneous and require either local-level solutions and/or intervention from the national level (see IDDRS 2.20 on The Politics of DDR). Frameworks and mandates should take due consideration of local-level conflict and conflict actors. The process of formalizing frameworks, mandates and roles should be done in a manner that is inclusive of local needs and actors. It should contribute to fostering buy-in to national-level processes by local-level actors. Similarly, national-level agreements should take due consideration of local-level conflicts that may require tailored agreements and tailored DDR interventions.

## 5.3 National legislative framework

Government should develop legal instruments that establish the appropriate legal framework for DDR processes. These should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A letter of demobilization policy, which establishes the intent of national authorities to carry out a process of demobilization and reduction of armed forces and groups, indicating the total numbers to be demobilized, and a plan for the demobilization of women associated with armed forces and groups and children associated with armed forces and groups, for the latter how this process will be



carried out and under whose authority, and links to other national processes, particularly the reform and restructuring of the security sector (applicable in a DDR programme).

- Legislation, decree(s) or executive order(s) establishing the national institutional framework for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating DDR processes. This legislation should include articles or separate instruments relating to:
  - A national political body representing different parties to the process, ministries responsible for DDR, roles of broad civil society and community actors. This legal instrument should establish the body's mandate for political coordination, policy direction and general oversight of DDR processes. It should also establish the specific composition of the body, responsible authority (usually the prime minister or president), and reporting lines to technical coordination and implementation mechanisms.
  - A planning and coordination body responsible for the technical design and implementation of DDR processes. This legal instrument should specify the body's different technical units/directions and overall management structure and, if relevant, links to the national political body.
  - Operational and implementation mechanisms at national, provincial and local levels. Legal provisions should specify the institutions and international and local partners responsible for delivering various DDR processes.
  - An institution or unit responsible for the financial management and oversight of DDR processes, funds received from national accounts, bilateral and multilateral donors, and contracts and procurement. This unit may be housed within a national institution or entrusted to an international partner. Often a joint national-international management and oversight system is established, particularly where donor funds are being received.

DDR processes should be formally approved or adopted through legislation, executive order or decree. Principles and policies regarding eligibility criteria, definition of target groups, benefits structures and time frame, as well as programme integration within other processes, such as security sector reform (SSR), transitional justice and election timetables, should be identified through this process (see IDDRS 3.20 on DDR Programme Design).

#### **5.4 Integrated peacebuilding and recovery framework**

DDR is one element on a larger peacebuilding and conflict recovery continuum. It is one contribution to sustaining peace. Sustaining peace is a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict; addressing root causes; assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities; ensuring national reconciliation; moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development; and emphasizing that sustaining peace is a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by the Government and all other national stakeholders (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282 [2016]). DDR processes are more likely to make a sustainable impact if they are strategically and technically integrated into national, coherent and cohesive planning for interim and longer-term

peacebuilding. DDR strategy and processes should be devised in coordination with planning for domestic stabilization, conflict recovery and development strategies and programming and for international assistance to Governments (see IDDRS 3.20 on DDR Programme Design).

Where and when possible, DDR should be linked with other national initiatives and processes, including SSR, transitional justice mechanisms, the electoral process, and economic and social reconstruction and recovery. UN assistance around DDR should support Governments to achieve greater integration of DDR into planning and programming for peacebuilding and for national and regional social and economic reconstruction. See IDDRS 6.10 on DDR and Security Sector Reform, IDDRS 6.20 on DDR and Transitional Justice, and IDDRS 2.40 on Reintegration as Part of Sustaining Peace.

## 6. National ownership

National ownership is broader and deeper than Government ownership. It implies provincial and local ownership. National ownership is essential for the success and sustainability of DDR and DDR outcomes. Supporting national ownership implies supporting Government, local and regional participation in and ownership of DDR, including by local communities. National ownership implies that DDR aligns with the national approach to peacebuilding and conflict recovery. Very importantly, it also implies that there is buy-in from and participation of a broad selection of domestic actors, including armed forces and groups.

National ownership implies that the national government will lead DDR and that the UN will strengthen national ownership. The UN may do this by providing institutional capacity-building and through how it supports Government, national and local actors and communities during the design, implementation and assessment of DDR processes.

National ownership is broader and deeper than Government ownership. It implies provincial and local ownership.

National ownership has national, provincial and local dynamics. At all times it is the responsibility of the national Government to ensure that it is leading DDR processes to their completion, including during design and implementation. It is

the responsibility of Government to ensure that there is sufficient coordination within and between Government ministries and local Government, between Government and civil society, and between the Government and external partners. The UN may support Government in this regard. In contexts where state structures are weak, the principle of national ownership still requires that national authorities be involved in DDR with a view to progressively taking over responsibilities as their capacity develops. While the weakness of state structures might affect the nationally led implementation, upstream policy discussions and decisions shall be led by national authorities. National ownership implies that, at the appropriate time, DDR will be wholly or partially mainstreamed, most likely into national institutions and organizations. Eventually, national DDR institutions may be mainstreamed or wound up.

At the local level, ownership implies buy-in from and participation in the objectives and implementation of DDR processes by local authorities, local communities, women's

groups, religious or faith leaders, and other local non-State actors. DDR should be implemented in coordination with initiatives that support local ownership and align DDR with local-level strategies for peacebuilding and social and economic recovery.

In mission settings where the framework of a ceasefire and/or comprehensive peace agreement exists, it may include guidance on engendering national ownership and/or the establishment and support of a national DDR institution. Such an institution may be a national DDR commission or some other institution designated through decree or through policy or a line ministry.

Government may exert national ownership by contributing its own national assets to DDR. Government should lead the engagement with national and international stakeholders, lead on DDR-related policy issues, contribute to building the capacity of its own national institutions, ensure coordination and division of responsibilities between the national and local Governments, lead in the monitoring and evaluation of external support to DDR processes, implement effective public information strategies, keep armed groups engaged and informed and create links to other peacebuilding and development initiatives. In this context, UN supports to DDR should include building the capacities of Governments, implementing partners, communities and participants to assist them as they take ownership of DDR processes.

## 7. National DDR institutions

This section considers national DDR institutions with responsibility for all or some parts of the DDR process in line with the roles and responsibilities designated by domestic provisional orders, decrees, laws or other policy instruments. These shall be in line with the normative frameworks of national constitutions or interim constitutions and international treaties on human rights and international humanitarian law.

National DDR institutions are part of the infrastructure necessary to ensure the sustainable impact of DDR as well as the efficient and coherent formulation and implementation of DDR strategies and processes. Where there are multiple national institutions with responsibility for different aspects of DDR, in order to ensure coherence DDR should be coordinated by a lead national body. This lead national body may already exist (for example, it may be a line ministry) or it may need to be created (as is often the case with national DDR commissions). In situations where the national institution with responsibility for DDR is a national DDR commission, it is usually under the authority of the presidency, prime minister or a line ministry. When establishing national institutions for DDR, the setup of national institutions should conform to their actional needs and not a standard organogram for a DDR institution or commission.

In some cases, a Government may decide to establish a body with responsibility for specific aspects of DDR, for example, an institution with responsibility only for reintegration or a dedicated institution with responsibility for overseeing the DDR process for children. In such instances, other aspects of the DDR process may be the responsibility of one or more line ministries or another body. In these scenarios, UN DDR policy and programme staff may need to liaise with one or more national institutions or line ministries. Where relevant, UN support should include advocating for a unique national institution that liaises with and empowers different national entities in line with their roles and responsibilities in the DDR process.

DDR practitioners may encounter a situation where coordination among line ministries and other institutional stakeholders in DDR is weak and where some institutions are reluctant to be actively involved in DDR. In such situations, it is important that the UN has one domestic institutional focal point and DDR interlocutor that is mandated to engender the participation and buy-in of other national stakeholders. Where the institutional context is fragmented, UN support to building national DDR institutions should be tailored to support the one domestic institutional focal point that can ensure participation of other domestic institutions, in accordance with its mandate under the roles and responsibilities designated by domestic provisional orders, decrees, laws or other policy instruments. In a non-mission context or prior to DDR, UN support may include assisting Government to formulate the roles and responsibilities such that the lead institution can best ensure participation by other domestic institutional stakeholders. This need should be identified during integrated assessment and strategic planning. In line with its own mandate, the UN can assist other national institutions to prepare for participation in DDR.

### **7.1 Integrated approach to building national DDR institutions**

Integration is a principle for UN support to DDR. National institutions should include broad representation across a number of Government ministries and have strong lines of communication with all relevant stakeholders, including other line ministries active in complementary areas of peacebuilding and socioeconomic recovery.

The typical functions of national DDR institutions include those related to decision-making and operations: strategy, policy, oversight and coordination. Structurally, the two key functions (decision-making and operations) should be clearly separated in any mandate and structure.

### **7.2 DDR national political body**

Where a national DDR institution is created, it should include a higher-level body with responsibility for strategy, policy and coordination. This is the body for political and strategic oversight of DDR. This national political body is sometimes identified as a DDR commission or DDR council, and normally it will be served by a technical secretariat or program management unit (PMU). United Nations staff and DDR practitioners shall advocate for, provide technical support to, and, where required, dedicate human resource to support the establishment of a gender department within the body. Typically, the roles and responsibilities of a DDR commission or council include but are not limited to:

1. Formulating and endorsing DDR policy and strategy;
2. Endorsing the objectives, beneficiaries, target groups, benefits and modalities of DDR;
3. Defining institutional, political and strategic issues pertaining to DDR, including the connections between DDR and SSR;
4. Approving specific actions to implement the aforementioned DDR policy and strategy;
5. Defining and overseeing the establishment of the technical secretariat or PMU;

6. Overseeing and ensuring the coherence of DDR communications and sensitization;
7. Overseeing and ensuring participation and inclusion of the diverse actors necessary for successful DDR;
8. Maintaining accountability for programming during DDR;
9. Coordinating with international partners, including the UN, on issues relating to DDR policy, strategy and project implementation;
10. Initiating and assuring the monitoring and evaluation of DDR processes, including impact assessment and feedback into policy, strategy and the refinement of DDR processes.

### 7.2.1 Typical institutional arrangements for DDR: national political body

Although the composition of a national council or commission for DDR will vary according to context, the following institutions are generally represented at the level of policy and planning of national DDR institutions:

- Representatives of the parties to the conflict;
- Relevant ministries and agencies;
- Relevant CBOs, CSOs, NGOs and INGOs, including women's groups and organizations;
- Representatives of religious congregations;
- Private-sector representatives;
- Community representatives not affiliated with CBOs, such as traditional authorities.

The national political body should have a regional presence so as to fully understand the decentralized nature of DDR and the unique peacebuilding and conflict recovery dynamics that may exist outside the country capital.

Donors, INGOs and international entities are not part of the national political body but may be present as observers or in an advisory capacity if so agreed with national authorities.

The DDR national political body supported by the DDR technical and planning body (see section 7.4) should be integrated into the wider network of actors involved in planning and implementing DDR. Where possible, it should have responsibility for oversight of the careful coordination of interventions between national and international actors across all phases and dimensions of DDR being planned and implemented in a given context (see IDDRS 3.10 on Integrated DDR Planning: Processes and Structures).

### 7.2.2 UN support to national DDR institutions and national political bodies

When providing support to national DDR institutions, the UN should help establish or strengthen the functional links with Government ministries, which will be responsible for longer-term national recovery. The UN should ensure a politically balanced and inclusive response, including by supporting and encouraging the broad participation of all parties to the DDR process and all parts of society in the national DDR structures. The UN should also ensure that women participate in DDR processes and in national DDR structures. The UN and its partners should always emphasize the links between

DDR processes and broader political, peacebuilding, sustaining peace and recovery strategies and imperatives, including the women, peace and security agenda.

Depending on whether a UN mission has been established, support is provided for the development of national policies and strategies through the offices of the UN Resident Coordinator, or upon appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General. When there is a UN Security Council mandate, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General will be responsible for the coordination of international support to the peacebuilding and transition process, including DDR. Coordination within the UN system is also important to ensure consistency in messaging, coordination of support, and synergies between UN interventions.

### **7.3 DDR institutions with limited responsibility**

National leadership is critical to ensuring that longer-term processes such as reintegration are integrated with all other aspects of DDR, from planning to implementation to monitoring and evaluation (see IDDRS 3.10 on Integrated DDR Planning: Processes and Structures). All aspects of DDR shall be planned, resourced and implemented in coordination with each other, and these efforts should be led by the national institution with overall responsibility. In some contexts, responsibility for particular aspects of DDR falls under the auspices of a dedicated agency. In the past, this has happened where an agency with responsibility for reintegration has been established by the national Government. In part, this may reflect the long-term nature of reintegration processes and the good practice of mainstreaming reintegration activities. Sometimes a reintegration agency combines strategic, planning and implementation activities under the supervision of the presidency, prime minister or a designated line ministry. In such cases, the reintegration agency coordinates national efforts for implementing the national policy on reintegration, and may deliver direct services to former members of armed forces and groups and their dependants and ensure that they are actively referred to state agencies and service providers.

### **7.4 DDR technical and planning body**

Put simply, if the national political body addresses the ‘who’, ‘what’, ‘where’ and ‘when’ of DDR, then at the operational level the national technical body addresses the ‘how’ and ‘with whom’. Typically, a technical body takes the form of a national DDR commission secretariat or PMU, but it may also constitute an institution with limited responsibility for particular DDR processes, such as a reintegration agency focusing only on political, social and economic reintegration.

The DDR national technical body should be present at national, provincial and local levels as relevant, and include representation from the gender department. This presence may contribute to ensuring buy-in by former members of armed forces and groups and conflict-affected populations. It may help ensure that DDR participants and beneficiaries receive appropriate interventions and referrals during DDR. Finally, it may help DDR actors, including UN DDR policymakers and practitioners, understand the unique reintegration, peacebuilding and socioeconomic recovery dynamics in the various locations where DDR is being implemented.

The main functions of the technical and planning body include:

1. Designing of DDR processes, including conducting assessments, collecting base-line data, and establishing indicators and targets;
2. Planning the implementation of DDR processes, including the establishment of management information systems and monitoring and evaluations procedures, and oversight of a joint implementation unit, where one has been established;
3. Coordinating and joint planning between national and international partners at the technical level;
4. Technical management of the DDR process in collaboration with domestic, regional and international partners;
5. Advising on specialized and cross-cutting aspects of DDR – including the protection and unconditional release of children associated with armed forces and groups, adolescents, youth, disability, gender, cross-border issues, food, health and HIV/AIDS – and integrating them into technical management of DDR;
6. Designing public information and community sensitization; monitoring and evaluation;
7. Establishing standards and procedures for financial management and accounting, contracts, and procurement of goods and services for DDR;
8. Mobilizing and managing national and international funds received for DDR;
9. Reviewing and approving budgets for DDR;
10. Establishing a reporting system and preparing financial reports and audits as required (see IDDRS 3.41 on DDR Budgeting and Financing).
11. Coordinating with national agencies, ministries or others to implement DDR activities;
12. Overseeing all ongoing activities to ensure coherence across regions and implementing partners to avoid programming gaps and overlap, and to ensure all implementing partners are operating in line with national DDR policies.

#### 7.4.1 Recommended institutional arrangements for a technical and planning body

The composition of a technical and planning body responsible for the operationalization of DDR will vary depending on the depth and breadth of its role, as well as the complex and dynamic nature of national, local and regional political, social and economic contexts.

In general, provincial coordination should be facilitated through the establishment of field offices. Typically, field offices are responsible for:

- Supporting activities linked to DDR processes and regional centres;  
Developing local and regional reintegration strategies;
- Coordinating DDR information and sensitization campaigns in areas of intervention;
- Establishing information, counselling and referral systems;
- Establishing information/communication networks and a database of local implementation partners;
- Maintaining the database and monitoring reintegration projects and opportunities;
- Establishing management and reporting systems for finances at the provincial level.

Advisory mechanisms at the provincial level may also be established by the lead DDR institution in order to ensure the broad participation of all stakeholders in the design and delivery of provincial strategies.

At the local level, the national DDR institution should establish DDR advisory structures to ensure community participation in identifying reintegration opportunities, designing programmes and facilitating the reintegration of former members of armed forces and groups, including child-sensitive reintegration programs for children released from armed forces and groups and dependants within the community. These councils or committees may include representatives of local and traditional authorities; women leaders; CBOs, CSOs and NGOs, including women's organizations; children's rights groups; youth-led organizations; representatives of ex-combatants, including female ex-combatants; women associated with armed groups and forces; children associated with armed forces and groups; persons with disabilities; and dependants.

### **7.5 Risks pertaining to national ownership and national DDR institutions**

The UN approach to fostering national ownership and supporting the development and operationalization of national DDR institutions in whatever configuration suits the particular context should be informed by an understanding of, at minimum, the following risks:

- **Mistakenly equating national DDR institutions with national ownership and national leadership of DDR.** The presence of a national DDR institution does not necessarily mean national ownership, community buy-in, political buy-in or the political will to lead on DDR. Similarly, delivering support for the establishment and operationalization of a national institution for DDR does not necessarily mean that UN support will foster national ownership. The design and monitoring of UN support should be delivered in full recognition of the distinction between national institutions and national ownership and the complexities of fostering political buy-in to DDR.
- **Failure of national institutions to be fully inclusive.** National institutions may not be sufficiently inclusive, which may prevent broader ownership and buy-in. This is a particular risk where there is local conflict and instability, which may exacerbate divisions and create conditions suitable for a resumption of violence. In such situations, some armed groups may be excluded by the national institution. Even where inclusivity is achieved, at the institutional level some voices can be accidentally or purposively marginalized. Inclusivity also refers to gender, which may have been successfully advocated for in the policy framework, but operationally may face challenges due to the lack of a gender department or the marginalization/exclusion of that department from key decision-making at the national or local level. UN support should be delivered with cognizance of ongoing monitoring of risks that impact upon inclusivity.
- **Failure of coordination between headquarters and local offices of national DDR institutions.** National DDR institutions operate in complex and dynamic contexts. As a country moves to consolidate peace and embark on economic and social reconstruction, disparities between the centre (capital), provinces and local areas can widen. A national DDR institution may find it challenging to ensure



that there is sufficient coordination between headquarters and local offices. The institution may lack capacity to appropriately initiate and maintain coordination, delegation and feedback loops that ensure DDR is relevant to local needs and that national needs do not elide those in regional or local communities, particularly where there may be additional security concerns (for example, in border zones or ongoing conflict zones). It may also lack the basic infrastructure to ensure digital or telecommunications connectivity.

- **Fraud and corruption.** The UN has a zero-tolerance policy towards fraud and other corrupt practices that are inconsistent with the UN Standard of Conduct or involve a loss of funds. The UN has anti-fraud policies that apply to all activities and operations of any UN agency and any project funded by the UN, including support to national institutions. In conflict and stabilization, the risk is often high of procurement fraud, corruption and bribery, theft and embezzlement, entitlement fraud and misuse of resources. National institutions must manage finances and resources in accordance with the highest levels of accountability and transparency and shall provide opportunities for bringing to light any misconduct or wrongdoing by any individuals working for or doing business with the national institution or with the UN agencies supporting the national institution. People reporting wrongdoing should be afforded the choice to share their contact information or remain anonymous. The national institution shall protect people reporting wrongdoing, including from workplace retaliation or threats.
- **Negative impact of capacity and resource limitations and the risk of dependency.** For national DDR institutions, limitations in capacity can take many forms. Over time, what may appear to be early-stage institutional capacity limitations can develop into chronic deficits. Depending on how the UN and other international partners deliver assistance, that assistance itself can foster dependency and stymie institutional development. Institutional capacity-building should be delivered in line with an understanding of the principles of developing capacities in complex contexts, and their subsequent use, management and retention. UN support to national DDR institutions should not underestimate the negative impact of basic resource limitations, such as insufficient cash flow for salaries or fuel to power generators for light and communications. UN support should ensure that when national Governments are deciding on contributions to the establishment and maintenance of national DDR institutions, basic resource requirements and logistics are not overlooked.
- **Mainstreaming and exit strategies for national DDR institutions.** Where national institutions for DDR are created, there is a risk of insufficient emphasis on the gradual mainstreaming of services delivered as part of DDR and of the institution itself. This can be a particular risk in contexts of prolonged instability, where the State is failing to deliver services and/or social protection to conflict-affected populations, and where the State is not engaging in SSR where reduction in armed forces has financial implications for pensions and benefits to members of the armed forces. In such situations, DDR can be extended to partially compensate for deficiencies in these other aspects of Government and Government services. Sometimes national DDR institutions are established parallel to other public-sector agencies. In these contexts, the salaries and benefits to staff in the DDR institu-

tion can be favourable when compared to those in other domestic public-sector agencies. This can lead to a disincentive to mainstream the institution into a line ministry once the main work of the agency is done. It may also disincentivize closing the institution. Sometimes the long-term nature of reintegration activities can be utilized to justify the persistence of the institution even when this may not be in the best interests of economic and social recovery or efficient public-sector operation. Where possible, UN support to national DDR institutions shall include support to plan for the mainstreaming of services delivered centrally and locally as well as the eventual mainstreaming of the national institution itself where relevant. Financing through budgetary allocations by national Governments of national DDR institutions may be understood as national ownership and as a contribution to mainstreaming, so long as allocations are made strategically.

## 8. Coordination of national and international DDR structures and processes

Where not already in existence, national, regional and international DDR structures and processes should, as far as possible, be jointly developed and coordinated at the policy, planning and operational levels. A key factor in close coordination is the early consultation of national authorities and parties to DDR processes during UN assessment missions and mission planning. International DDR expertise, political support and technical assistance should also be available from the earliest point in the peace process through the establishment of national institutions and until the completion of DDR processes.

### 8.1 Coordination at policy/strategic level

Coordination of national and international efforts at the policy/strategic level will vary a great deal, depending on the dynamics of the conflict, the parties to the peace process, and the role/mandate of the UN in support of peacebuilding and recovery and DDR. Coordination (and, where possible, integration) of national and international efforts will be essential at the following points:

- Ensuring national and local stakeholder participation in UN assessment and mission planning exercises (see also IDDRS 3.10 on Integrated DDR Planning: Processes and Structures). National stakeholders should be consulted and, where possible, participate fully in the initial planning phases of international support for DDR.
- Ensuring effective delivery and uptake of technical assistance concerning national institutions and national ownership.
- Coordinating bilateral and multilateral actors.

### 8.2 Planning and technical levels

Coordination of national and international efforts at the planning and technical levels is important to ensure that DDR processes and UN support for DDR operations work

together in an integrated and coherent way. It is important to ensure coordination at the following points:

- National DDR process and programme development;
- The development of DDR processes implemented by UN mission and agencies;
- Technical coordination with bilateral partners and NGOs.

### **8.3 Implementation/operational level**

Coordination between the DDR technical and planning body and the UN mission/system at the operational level should be accomplished through the following:

- The establishment of a joint implementation unit with mixed national/international staff;
- The provision of international technical assistance for implementation;
- The coordination of national and international implementing agencies/partners.

### **8.4 Coordinating implementing agencies/partners**

There will generally be a range of national and international partners engaged in the implementation of different DDR processes. These will vary significantly depending on the presence and capabilities of Government agencies, local authorities, CSOs, CBOs, UN agencies, and national and international NGOs located near DDR operations. The activities of implementing partners should be coordinated by regional/field offices of the national DDR institution.

## **9. The role of international assistance**

The UN recognizes that national ownership of DDR processes is important for successful implementation and to achieve the peacebuilding goals of DDR. Wherever possible, the UN must support and encourage genuine, effective and broad national ownership of all aspects of DDR.

### **9.1 Considerations in defining the role of the UN**

The UN approach to fostering national ownership and supporting the development and operationalization of national DDR institutions in whatever configuration suits the particular context shall be informed by the following factors:

- **Strength and legitimacy of Governments:** Governments and their attendant bureaucracies may vary widely in terms of their strength, effectiveness, transparency, accountability and sustainability; their legitimacy in the eyes of the population; the perceived neutrality or bias vis à vis the fighting parties; the level of existing capacities for programme development and management; the territorial extent and scope of Government authority; and the degree to which the State has a monopoly over the means of violence in its territory. Taken together, these will

affect the degree to which a given Government can take effective ownership of and responsibility for DDR and the depth and breadth of assistance that will be required of the UN.

- **Capacity limitations:** Even when Governments are legitimate and capable, they may lack capacity in some areas. There may be capacity limitations in strategizing and planning DDR processes and integrating that planning into the wider peacebuilding and socioeconomic recovery frameworks. There may be capacity limitations in designing the legal and policy environments for the establishment of DDR institutions and in financial management or managing donor contributions. There may be capacity limitations in integrating gender perspectives in DDR processes. Also, there may be capacity limitations in public information and communications. Finally, there may be institutional capacity limitations throughout Government, line ministries and DDR institutions. The UN role shall be informed by a comprehensive capacity assessment in any area where there will be assistance.
- **Participation of civil society:** The representation of civil society at all levels in the body politic is essential, and the UN shall support the participation and engagement of civil society in DDR wherever possible. Roles may include involvement in the policy development process; assistance with the identification of people associated with armed groups and forces, especially women, youth, adolescents and children; and implementation (particularly focusing on the involvement of local communities) and monitoring of the effectiveness of DDR processes. CSOs can be important partners for monitoring the impact of DDR at the community level and have the potential to provide real-time feedback to the national DDR institution.

UN support to DDR shall be aware of how, in many post-conflict situations, civil society may have been repressed or marginalized and may lack access to political decision-making processes. DDR practitioners shall be aware of the varied roles of civil society during conflict and at different times in the peacebuilding continuum. These roles include but are not limited to protection from violence; monitoring of violence; undertaking peacebuilding initiatives and social and economic recovery; advocacy, including at times mobilization of communities and the general public; socialization, including towards democratic values and a culture of peace and reconciliation at local and national levels; and service delivery.

UN support of the participation and engagement of civil society shall be done with awareness of the factors that enable or restrict the ability of civil society actors to participate in DDR, peacebuilding and conflict transformation. These include the behaviour of the State, the level of violence and insecurity, the freedom and role of the media, the diversity and representativeness of civil society, the influence of conflict actors (including regional actors) on civil society, and the role of donors.

## 9.2 Areas of UN support

UN support to national DDR institutions may take place in the following areas. The extent of UN engagement should be determined on the basis of the considerations outlined above.

- **Political/strategic support:** For the international community to provide political support to DDR processes and to the establishment of DDR institutions, it is

essential that DDR practitioners understand the dynamics of the conflict and peace continuum. By carrying out a stakeholder analysis (as part of a larger integrated assessment process), it will be possible to better understand the dynamics among national actors, and to identify DDR supporters and potential spoilers (see IDDRS 3.11 on Integrated Assessments for DDR).

- **Institutional capacity development:** It is important that capacity development strategies are established jointly with national authorities at the start of international involvement in DDR to ensure that the parties themselves take ownership of and responsibility for the success of the process. The UN system should play an important role in supporting the development of national and local capacities for DDR by providing technical assistance, establishing partnership arrangements with national institutions, and providing training and capacity-building to local implementing partners.
- **The establishment of legal frameworks:** A key area in which international expertise can support the development of national capacities is in the drawing up of legal frameworks for DDR and related processes in SSR and weapons and ammunition management. The UN system should draw on experiences from a range of political and legal systems, and assist national authorities in drafting appropriate legislation and legal instruments.
- **Technical assistance for policy and planning:** Through the provision of technical assistance, the UN system should provide direct support to the development of gender-responsive national DDR policy and activities. This assistance shall be provided through partnership or mentoring arrangements that allow for knowledge and skills transfers to national staff, and avoid situations where international experts take direct responsibility for programming or project functions within national institutions. Specific areas for technical assistance shall be determined through assessment, but should always include gender. When several international institutions are providing technical assistance to national authorities, this assistance should be coordinated, consistent and coherent. If requested by the national authorities, the UN may assist in this regard.
- **Implementation and financial management:** The UN system may be called upon, either by Security Council mandate or at the request of national authorities, to provide direct support for the implementation of aspects of DDR processes, including the financial management of resources for DDR. A memorandum of understanding should be established between the UN and national authorities that defines the precise area of responsibility for delivery, mechanisms for coordination with local partners and clear reporting responsibilities.
- **Material/logistics resources:** National institutions may lack material and human resources. The UN system may provide material and logistics support to national DDR institutions and implementing agencies, particularly in the areas of information and communications technology and equipment; transportation; rehabilitation, design and management of DDR sites, transit centres and other facilities; the establishment of information management and referral systems; and the procurement of basic goods for transitional reinsertion assistance (see also IDDRS 4.10 on Disarmament, IDDRS 4.11 on Transitional Weapons and Ammunition Management, IDDRS 4.20 on Demobilization and IDDRS 4.30 on Reintegration).

- **Training programmes for national staff:** The UN system may support capacity development through the provision of training on a range of topics, including DDR programme planning (which encompasses monitoring and evaluation), DDR and gender, DDR and disabilities, DDR and health, public information and sensitization, etc. There are a number of training methodologies, including the provision of courses or seminars, training of trainers, on-the-job or continuous training, and exchanges with experts from other national DDR institutions. Although resource availability may limit the training options that can be offered, the approach chosen should build skills through a continuous process of capacity development that transfers skills to local actors.
- **Local capacity development and community empowerment:** The UN system may support local ownership of DDR processes through delivering local capacity development and community empowerment activities. Since the success of DDR depends largely on the reintegration of individuals at the community level, it is important to ensure that capacity development efforts are not restricted to assisting national authorities, but include direct support to communities. International agencies can help to build local capacities for participation in assessment and planning processes, project and financial management, reporting and evaluation.
- **Resource mobilization:** The UN may bring its own financing to DDR (for example, through the peacekeeping assessed budget), but it may also support national DDR institutions to identify other sources of finance, facilitate contact with donors and multilateral agencies, and assist with assessing various mechanisms for financing DDR.

## Annex A: Abbreviations

CBO	community-based organization
CSO	civil society organization
INGO	international non-governmental organization
NGO	non-governmental organization
PMU	program management unit
SSR	security sector reform

## NOTE

Each IDDRS module is current with effect from the date shown on this page. As the IDDRS is periodically reviewed, users should consult the UN DDR Resource Centre web site for updates: <http://www.unddr.org>.

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