

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the past few years we have witnessed an evolution in the conceptualization and implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes by the wide range of actors who are drawn into such activities: broadly speaking the United Nations (UN) and its agencies, donors, technical assistance organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Africa in the past thirteen years has been a testing ground for new planning and implementation of UN-led DDR programmes. From Mozambique in the early 1990s to Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire today, the learning from each mission has influenced the outcome of the next. Some countries, such as Liberia, bear witness to earlier failures of DDR, as its current DDR programme attempts to not repeat the mistakes of the earlier ECOWAS and UN efforts at DDR ahead of the August 1997 elections. The commitment of the UN to learn from its implementation successes and failures was restated in the Brahimi Report of 2000. This thorough review of UN peace and security activities since the end of the Cold War questioned whether or not “traditional” peacekeeping had a future. While challenging, many of the report's recommendations have been adopted in peace mission planning at the UN. At the same time, a review of UN DDR operations was undertaken and issued as a report of the UN Secretary-General in 2000. This report argues for a targeted approach to DDR, with the former combatants the primary focus for interventions. The report suggests that DDR should be developed in concert with larger programmes for national recovery, but DDR itself should not become the societal vehicle for post-conflict peacebuilding.

Recent DDR efforts in Africa, led by UN peacekeeping missions such as UNAMSIL (Sierra Leone), UNMIL (Liberia), UNOCI (Côte d'Ivoire), MONUC (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and most recently ONUB (Burundi), have clearly benefited from the recommendations generated by these earlier reports. However, as DDR is viewed as beneficial, it has also become a delivery vehicle for more ambitious and wider interventions, often stretching the capacity of the UN mission, national agencies and donor support. Thus a key question arises: has DDR become a victim of its own success?

This report attempts to provide an accurate reflection of the discussion during the workshop of the need for DDR and the effective coordination of DDR efforts with other strategies aimed at assisting war-affected countries in their process of national recovery. Where general agreement among participants was clear on key areas these are noted, as are areas where there was not, perhaps, wide agreement but a strong recognition that further information and analysis are required.

The content from presentations and the outcomes of the discussion sessions are presented under the following six thematic areas:

- Trends in DDR in peacekeeping in Africa
- Planning and coordination in DDR programmes
- Disarmament and demobilization
- Reintegration
- Working with special groups
- Multi-actor coordination

The report aims to make a contribution to bridging the already narrowing gap between needs and realities in DDR and concludes with a few specific recommendations. These are summarized below.

Clarity of purpose

DDR can suffer from trying to be too many things to too many people. If DDR is too broad and tries to include everybody affected by the war it becomes impossible to implement.

DDR planning should take into consideration the extra-territorial dimension of flows of people, arms and resources in Africa.

Preparation and planning

Military intelligence and other forms of information and analysis need to be incorporated in UN missions in order to ensure proper communication and response to changes on the ground in DDR programmes.

DDR planners need to have proper knowledge of the history of the conflict, how it was fought, its politics, its ethnic dimensions and its probable impact on peace.

There is a need to move towards a new DDR framework that is based on human rights. DDR based on human rights will expose war criminals and ensure there is justice.

Spending money on planning is not futile. Greater support needs to be generated for this essential stage of the DDR process.

The UN should use “cross-cutting collaboration” to increase the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of programme delivery. This may include using local staff for core functions and bringing in more local organizations.

The reports of the UN Secretary-General should be used as a dynamic tool for monitoring the implementation of DDR and outlining specific roles and

responsibilities for UN agencies. These reports should also focus on presenting more indicator-based assessments of progress, including qualitative measurements for reintegration.

Reintegration and national recovery

National recovery must form a basic element of the peace agreement and be developed in concert with DDR and UN mission planning.

Peace processes, DDR and security sector reform are interlinked and support for security sector reform should be included as part of peace mission support. Donor constraints in supporting army or police reform need to be identified and addressed.

Activities that promote societal reconciliation and reintegration need to be emphasized.

Need for information and training

Consideration should be given to providing DDR-focused training for troops going to UN missions.

The work of the UN DPKO Best Practices Unit is valuable in evaluating UN missions. However more detailed monitoring and evaluation of DDR programmes would benefit the individual missions and provide valuable lessons for future programmes.

There is a paucity of information on reintegration and a need for more research into post-reintegration experiences of former combatants.

A database of NGOs working on DDR in Africa and the identification and documentation of successful NGO interventions would make a valuable contribution to the available information on DDR.