

SECTION 6

DEVELOPING MULTI-ACTOR COORDINATION¹²

The need for coordination among the actors involved in DDR processes has been widely recognized. However, while an increasingly coordinated UN approach applies to peace missions in general, less coherence is found in actions focused on DDR. For many actors, DDR programming is limited to sectoral or project-oriented interventions.

In the past two decades, many UN agencies have gained considerable experience in DDR, and the current high profile of DDR programmes means that political support and donor resources are generally available. However, this also puts pressure on those planning DDR to deliver effective programmes.

Mechanisms for coordination

Currently the UN and its agencies lack the structure needed to plan, manage and monitor DDR operations. This has been the motivation for collaboration between the agencies to develop usable policies, guidelines and operating procedures for DDR.

Coordination between international, regional and national organizations is also essential for effective DDR to take place. The challenge is to ensure synergy and cooperation between various actors.

Key features of the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme:

- Joint Assessment Missions
- Multi-partner DDR technical committees
- Positioning national counterparts at the centre
- Drawing together of multiple funding sources
- Development of common strategy and programme

Advantages:

- Opens cooperation between UNDP and World Bank.
- Single Trust Fund creates coherence.
- Multi-agency cooperation aimed at quick responses

A sound basis for taking forward collaboration is provided in a paper by the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs on Harnessing Institutional Capacities in Support of DDR, which was published in July 2000. This paper confirmed that:

- DDR is complex and multidimensional;
- The UN system needs to be flexible enough to respond to a range of circumstances; and
- It is necessary to explore the contributions of partners outside the UN system.

The surge in DDR operations since 2000 has necessitated the re-examination of the UN's role. Thus UNDP is codifying policy and practice, UNDP and DPKO are agreeing to "integrated missions" (for example, in Haiti, Liberia and Sudan) and they are working on the development of UN-wide guidelines and operating procedures.

The new approach also recognizes that national ownership is the foundation of a successful DDR programme, including the support of the parties to the conflict. Too often, the role of national partners has been limited to technical management and service delivery. The hope is that eventually a national

organization, rather than an international organization, will take responsibility for the DDR process.

Time limits placed on mandates by the international community threaten continuity. It is more manageable for the international community to be involved in a mission for a short period, but the reality is that today's missions go beyond securing the peace to long-term rebuilding of collapsed states and economies.

There is nevertheless a need to sensitize donors to the fact that DDR cannot encompass everything or become a means of delivery for national recovery programmes. For example, with the focus on DDR, refugee issues have fallen off the map. There is a need to continue to engage the international community in ensuring that DDR planning and funding is linked to other issues of national recovery. There is a lot of donor resistance to mixed mandates. Though clear and limited mandates enable a clear point of exit, they also limit the impact and scope of international support due to the fact that complex emergencies that engage the UN today have multiple needs and challenges that go beyond traditional international engagement and funding.

Finally, NGOs should be considered as more active partners in coordination. For example, an NGO coordinating committee could become a way for a network of NGOs to engage with the UN and other actors on issues such as DDR. Individuals with specific expertise should also be included in assessment missions, including locals with specific country knowledge. However, it is equally important for NGOs to consider what value their work adds to DDR and to identify ways in which their contributions can be made sustainable for local communities and to engage local partners in projects.

Lessons from multi-actor coordination

There are many sources of information that can be used for DDR planning and these should be better identified and utilized. For example, often UN country teams are not brought into the DDR planning process but have valuable insights on the country concerned. Teams can also be brought from neighbouring countries to assist with DDR assessments, especially in regions such as West Africa where a large amount of DDR experience has been generated.

DDR strategies should be integrated into broader country strategies, especially the recovery strategies that are often being developed whilst peace missions are being planned and implemented.

Cooperation among actors should start early. For example, immense effort has gone into planning for Sudan, giving a much clearer understanding of the conflict, the challenges of DDR and the role of different agencies in implementing the DDR programme.

Consideration should be given to positioning DDR advisers or multi-actor teams in the field before the start of the DDR process to ensure that DDR is included in the peace agreement, provide technical assistance, prepare the ground for national ownership, undertake community sensitisation campaigns to gain local support for the peace process and identify opportunities for civil society to participate in planning and implementation.

It is easy for DDR to be thrown off track. This can be due to the peace process stalling, lack of funds, or simply bad weather. Better planning can overcome some of these hurdles. For example, funding for DDR should be better streamlined and budgets should be more flexible to allow for changes or amendments. In addition, securing funding for reintegration is critical – but

often difficult, as funding interest wanes after the threat posed by demobilizing ex-combatants disappears. Local level planning tools, such as Management Information Systems for registering and profiling ex-combatants and registering and maintaining stockpile locations of weapons should be more widely used.

DDR programmes need to be monitored and evaluated as a routine matter and the lessons learned fed back into policy development and planning processes.