

Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program

Guidelines for National Programs¹

1. Guiding Principles

The national programs would be guided by the following principles:

- (i) *Support to national ownership of programs.* Most successful DDR programs have been based on strong national political will and ownership. The MDRP would support national programs tailored to the requirements of a given country. To optimize flexibility and to exploit emerging opportunities, the timing of national programs would be determined by national leaders in consultation with international partners;
- (ii) *Support to comprehensive programs.* Within each country, the MDRP would support the establishment of a single national program. Fragmentation and duplication of efforts would be discouraged. National programs would seek to address the needs of all ex-combatants of that country;
- (iii) *Beneficiary involvement.* Beneficiaries from all sides should be included in program design and implementation from the outset.
- (iv) *Participation.* The successful economic and social reintegration of former combatants requires the involvement of local authorities and communities. The participation of communities is important not only for program implementation but also for stability. The MDRP would encourage their participation, and also strengthen their capacities where needed;
- (v) *Coordination and partnerships.* The roles and responsibilities of international actors would be determined on a case-by-case basis for each national program. Partnerships with political and security actors, especially those involved in the crafting and implementation of peace agreements, would be critical; and
- (vi) *Links to economic reconstruction efforts.* DRPs would be implemented in the context of broader reconstruction efforts. They would be encouraged to coordinate and link closely with such efforts in order to benefit from associated employment opportunities and to contribute actively to local reconciliation and recovery efforts.

2. Program Components

National programs would generally contain six components: (i) disarmament; (ii) demobilization; (iii) reinsertion; (iv) reintegration; (v) support to special groups; and (vi) implementation arrangements. HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation measures would be included during both the demobilization and the reintegration phase. The actual composition of national programs would be determined by the specific sociopolitical context and the socioeconomic profile of ex-combatants.

¹ These guidelines apply irrespective of the source of funding and would, to the extent possible, also apply to special projects.

Disarmament. Procedures for disarmament would be adapted to the specific situations of soldiers and members of irregular forces. Soldiers would be disarmed by the national army before entering the demobilization process. The international community may observe this process to enhance confidence. Members of irregular forces would be disarmed in special disarmament centers before being transferred to demobilization centers. They would be expected to surrender all weapons and munitions and provide verifiable information relating to arms caches and/or inside working knowledge of their group. They would also surrender shared weapons when surrendering in groups. Disarmament of irregular forces would be undertaken by MONUC in the DRC or any other UN or regional body mandated with this activity. Each combatant would be given a receipt for the weapon(s) handed over. Arms would be destroyed as they are collected, although the government involved may choose to retain some of the weapons.

Demobilization. Demobilization would be expected to be undertaken over a period of 36 months for all countries. To the extent possible, demobilization procedures for regular soldiers and members of irregular forces would be similar. Demobilization would include the following activities:

- (i) assembly in discharge centers (cantonment);
- (ii) verification of ex-combatant status and provision of non-transferable ID cards;
- (iii) capture of socio-economic data;
- (iv) pre-discharge orientation for transition to civilian life;
- (v) health screening and voluntary HIV/AIDS counseling and testing (VCT);
- (vi) addressing the special needs of female and child ex-combatants; and
- (vii) facilitation of transport to areas of return.

Reinsertion. Depending on the specific context, a transitional safety net assistance would be provided to support ex-combatants for a limited period following their return to civilian life. National programs would finance its provision – monetary and/or in-kind – where necessary. The reinsertion assistance would typically be calculated to cover the basic needs of an ex-combatant household (e.g., rent of accommodation, medical care, food, children’s education, and basic household items) for a period of 6-12 months following demobilization. To encourage the appropriate use of the reinsertion assistance, the programs would provide extensive counseling prior to demobilization and after arrival in the community of settlement.

A robust ID system would be developed and a management information system prepared that links payments to the ID database. Monitoring surveys on the receipt and use of funds would also be undertaken. Where cash payments are involved, the capacity of the banking system would be assessed and alternatives identified when needed. In-kind support would be considered in the instance where program funding is constrained and a specific donor (for instance, WFP) would provide and oversee the delivery of a particular item (such as food).

Reintegration. The national programs would provide economic and social reintegration assistance to help ex-combatants establish sustainable livelihoods. Several guiding principles would apply for reintegration assistance: (i) it would seek to minimize market distortions and maximize beneficiary choice; (ii) it would strive to provide assistance that leads to sustainable

livelihoods, (iii) it would seek to involve communities of settlement and foster reconciliation; and (iv) to the extent possible, it would be provided in such a way that it would benefit the wider community.

- (i) *Economic reintegration.* Ex-combatants would be afforded an opportunity to obtain assistance to help them attain sustainable livelihoods. Ex-combatants would be equally eligible irrespective of rank or former military affiliation, and they would be allowed to choose their reintegration destination freely. In principle, the programs would give preference to reintegration assistance that also benefits the ex-combatant's community of return.

Reintegration support would build on existing capacities rather than create new structures although in instances where capacities are severely limited, the establishment of new structures would be considered. The absorption capacity of the local economy and labor market of several of the countries concerned is generally weak and therefore deserves specific attention.

Reintegration assistance would be offered in different forms, including the following: provision of information, counseling and referral services; micro-projects (including agricultural and non-farm income-generating activities); provision of access to vocational training, formal and informal apprenticeship schemes and educational opportunities; employment; housing; provision of seeds and tools; and facilitation of access to land.

- (ii) *Social reintegration.* Where necessary, social reintegration assistance would seek to foster reconciliation between ex-combatants and civilians in their communities of settlement. Specific activities to be carried out under this rubric could include: (i) information and sensitization of ex-combatants, communities and society-at-large through outreach services, including training of counselors; (ii) specialized counseling; (iii) strengthening of community services; and (iv) public awareness and sensitization campaigns.

Special target groups. Special groups include those ex-combatants who are female, children, disabled or chronically ill.

- (i) *Gender.* Given experiences of other DRPs, national programs would provide targeted support for the social and economic reintegration of female ex-combatants. Specific measures would, for example, include: ensuring that the special needs of female ex-combatants are taken into account in the demobilization centers; ensuring that all benefits for ex-combatants are equal for and equally accessible to men and women; encouraging implementing partners to ensure that their reintegration support measures facilitate the participation of female ex-combatants; encouraging female ex-combatants to participate in existing women's associations; and monitoring the impact of the program on partners of ex-combatants and women in communities of return and bringing emerging problems to the attention of the respective authorities.

- (i) *Disabled ex-combatants.*² National programs would provide assistance to disabled ex-combatants depending on the degree of disability. Where necessary, they would reinforce relevant medical facilities to provide systematic prosthetic and physiotherapy services, including maintenance of prosthetic devices. In addition, they would seek to provide specialized economic reintegration assistance, to help disabled ex-combatants attain sustainable livelihoods. In cases where ex-combatants are too disabled to pursue economic activities themselves, national programs could permit the deferral of program benefits to a family member identified by the ex-combatant.
- (ii) *Chronically-ill ex-combatants.* National programs would also seek to address the medical needs of chronically ill ex-combatants. The program would endeavor to ensure to the extent possible, access to medical care and counseling for chronically ill ex-combatants for a limited period of time after demobilization. In cases where ex-combatants are too ill to pursue economic activities themselves, national programs could permit the deferral of program benefits to a family member identified by the ex-combatant.
- (iii) *Child ex-combatants.* Child ex-combatants among irregular forces would likely represent a significant target group for national programs under the MDRP.^{3,4} Under the MDRP demobilization process, children would be afforded priority assistance. Within the framework of national programs, demobilization would be a civilian exercise conducted by child protection agencies and specialized NGOs in collaboration with the respective governments. Child ex-combatants would be identified through a specific screening procedure. They would be separated from adult ex-combatants and from the military environment as soon as possible.

Reintegration support for children would address the long-term prospects of a child's livelihood and would be family-friendly and community-oriented. Assistance would be based on a medium-term commitment rather than remain focused on an immediate reward.⁵ Assistance would include, in consultation with the child, family tracing and reunification, community reintegration, trauma counseling and psychosocial care, and facilitation of access to education (formal as well as non-formal) and vocational training in communities of settlement.

If reintegration support created the perception that child ex-combatants are receiving special or privileged treatment, it might unwittingly entice large numbers of children to join the military. Reintegration assistance would therefore seek to meet the particular needs of child ex-combatants without engendering fear or resentment on the part of their communities and society in general.

² Disability is defined here as the functional limitation within an individual caused by physical, mental or sensory impairment.

³ "A child soldier is any person under eighteen years of age who is part of any regular or irregular armed force or group. This includes those who are forcibly recruited as well as those who join voluntarily. All child or adolescent participants regardless of function – cooks, porters, messengers, girls used as "wives," and other support functions – are included as well as those considered combatants" (UNICEF, 1999).

⁴ Child soldiers would benefit under the MDRP either through existing national programs, or otherwise through special projects.

⁵ Contribution by UNICEF and the Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict to UNDPKO, 2000.

- (iv) *Dependents.* Dependents of ex-combatants returning as refugees or internally displaced would follow the provisions of the relevant repatriation program. Close links would be established between programs for ex-combatants and returning refugees and IDPs to avoid targeting errors.

HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation measures. National programs under the MDRP would contain an HIV/AIDS component. The objective would be to provide sensitization and offer VCT to ex-combatants during demobilization as well as follow-up activities in communities of settlement. The MDRP would coordinate closely with the national AIDS programs or similar efforts to assume responsibility for counseling and treatment of ex-combatants and their families during the program's reintegration phase.

3. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

Although implementation arrangements may vary from country to country, their design would follow similar principles. A typical national DRP would include all or most of the following implementation arrangements:

- (i) A coordinating body at the highest level of government with participation from key national stakeholders. Such a body would usually develop the national DRP strategy and policies and oversee national program elaboration and implementation.
- (ii) A program implementation unit reporting to the coordinating body. The program implementation unit would be responsible for program design and management, the coordination of the implementation of individual activities, procurement and financial management, contracting of implementing partners, and monitoring and evaluation. It would be supported by a decentralized structure of field offices to bring the program closer to the beneficiaries.
- (iii) Implementing partners, including government entities, international organizations, civil society and private sector organizations, local and international NGOs as well as community-based groups. These partners would execute individual DDR activities that are consistent with the national program.

Each national program would be prepared by national authorities and stakeholders in collaboration with the international community. Preparatory activities would include, among others: a socioeconomic profile of ex-combatants; studies on the economic opportunity structure in the communities of settlement and on the needs of special target groups; and programs of pre-discharge orientation and community sensitization.

In each country, the program implementation unit would prepare a program implementation manual which would specify, among others, the detailed rules and processes for demobilization; the criteria, procedures and terms and conditions of reinsertion and reintegration assistance to ex-combatants; flow of funds to ex-combatants and verification of the use of such funds by ex-combatants for the intended purposes; and details of arrangements for procurement, financial management, disbursement and environmental and social monitoring.

In general, responsibility for country-level program coordination would be vested in the program implementation unit. To this end, it would establish a system to coordinate and monitor

implementation progress at all levels, according to agreed-upon performance indicators. It would also establish and chair a committee to coordinate donor assistance to the program.

Safeguards to ensure the proper use of funds. Safeguards would be built into each program to ensure that funds are utilized for the purposes intended:

- (i) Disbursement would be linked to national program performance as measured by key performance indicators;
- (ii) External audits would be undertaken at least annually to verify appropriate use of funds;
- (iii) A non-transferable photograph ID would be provided to each ex-combatant. This would be used to verify ex-combatants' eligibility for assistance;
- (iv) A management information system would be established to enable the program implementation unit to track program implementation at central and local levels;
- (v) Regular surveys of a representative subset of beneficiaries would track program delivery and use of funds by ex-combatants; and
- (vi) Semi-annual supervision missions would be carried out by donor and UN partners in collaboration with national authorities.

Institutional support and capacity building. Staff development at the central and local levels would be critical for effective program implementation. An assessment of local-level implementation capacity needs would be carried out and a training program developed accordingly. Staff at all levels would undergo training as necessary.

The program implementation unit would sub-contract the implementation of specific activities (for instance, HIV/AIDS VCT and child ex-combatants reintegration) and of decentralized reintegration activities to specialized international organizations, NGOs, community-based groups and local governments with a view to enhance program effectiveness. Targeted capacity-building of partner organizations, including local governments and communities, would be undertaken as required to attain the objectives of the national programs.

Local and/or expatriate technical assistance may be required for longer-term and short-term assignments throughout implementation. Consultancies may be required on an ongoing basis, especially for external audits and independent annual evaluations. Targeted technical assistance may also be needed for HIV/AIDS activities and the special target groups component (child ex-combatants, disabled ex-combatants). The program implementation unit may sub-contract activities, including for administration and management of funds, in part or as a whole to specialized implementers.

4. Supervision, Monitoring and Evaluation

Supervision. Because of their scope, financial requirements and regional dimension, national programs would require intensive supervision. Partner field offices would provide continual support and supervision at the country level. Staff covering the key fiduciary areas (financial management, procurement) would be permanent members of supervision teams and provide close support. Supervision of national programs would be conducted jointly by

supporting partners. Each operation would include frequent workshops and review exercises to ensure ongoing learning-by-doing.

1. *Monitoring and evaluation.* Effective measurement of DRP performance requires sustained and extensive monitoring and evaluation of a broad range of measures. This would also facilitate learning as well as program modifications based on lessons learned. National programs would invest substantially in establishing or strengthening local monitoring and evaluation capacity and a process of stakeholder and beneficiary assessments. Performance indicators for national programs would be tailored to the specific context and objectives.

2. Monitoring and evaluation of the national programs would consider the following elements:

- (i) Early indicators on program effectiveness would be needed in real time to improve service delivery;
- (ii) The emphasis on multi-sectoral approaches and multiple implementation channels would require more monitoring and evaluation at the community level;
- (iii) Beneficiary and stakeholder involvement would be enhanced if the monitoring and evaluation systems were complemented by a continuous process of social impact monitoring; and
- (iv) The monitoring and evaluation system would be organized as a management tool for all concerned stakeholders and operate on a network basis to facilitate sharing of lessons learned.

3. Independent evaluations of national programs would be carried out annually. These evaluations would focus on the timeliness and quality of assistance provided to ex-combatants, the impact on the allocation of national budgetary resources, and the contribution to the consolidation of regional and national stability. An analysis of the databases and existing administrative records and reports would establish to what extent the program as such as well as the individual components have achieved their objectives. As the integration of ex-combatants into communities is a major factor for the long-term success of the program, a beneficiary assessment would also be carried out consisting of participant observation and key informant and focal group interviews. It would be directed towards the ex-combatants and their families as primary and the communities as secondary beneficiaries.

5. Environmental and Social Aspects

4. Continuous monitoring would be essential to assess the environmental and social impact of DDR operations on ex-combatants and their families and communities. The MDRP would ensure that national programs are processed and implemented according to standard safeguards policies and procedures. Each national program would be assessed as to its potential effects on the environment and the social fabric. Particular issues of concern are involuntary resettlement or displacement and potentially adverse environmental effects, such as from medical waste of HIV/AIDS testing materials or from small-scale infrastructure and income-generating sub-projects. Guidelines for identifying and mitigating possible negative impacts are included in Attachment D. These guidelines would apply to national programs as well as to special projects.

6. Risks and Mitigation Measures

5. The major *program-specific risks* are as follows:

- (i) Program resources are diverted toward defense spending. Appropriate safeguards with respect to financial management, procurement and disbursement would be developed to avoid any such misuse of program resources;
- (ii) Savings from demobilization do not translate into increased spending in the social sectors. Government expenditures would be carefully monitored by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in the context of their assistance programs;
- (iii) Ex-combatants are forcibly resettled or land is forcibly redistributed as a result of demobilization. Continuous social and environmental monitoring would be undertaken to examine settlement patterns and access to land. In case of forced resettlement or forced land distribution, a resettlement framework or resettlement action plan would be prepared and implemented;
- (iv) Given the limited human resource capacity in the public and private sectors, implementation is unsatisfactory. The programs would carefully monitor implementation progress and the reintegration experiences of ex-combatants. The program implementation units would be reinforced with qualified staff and/or external technical assistance, and the programs would invest in strengthening the capacities of local governments and local implementing partners;
- (v) HIV/AIDS spreads via the programs. The HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation measures included in the programs' design would mitigate this risk significantly; and
- (vi) Program activities cannot be carried out due to local insecurity. In this case, the possibility of alternative implementation arrangements would be explored, but project execution may need be delayed until the situation improves.