Fresh Insights on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: A Survey for Practitioners

Tatjana Stankovic and Stina Torjesen
Reviewed by Robert Muggah and Cornelis Steenken

Foreword

This publication has a simple goal: to bring research on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) closer to practitioners. Much scholarly work on the topic is not always accessible or targeted at practitioners and others who engage with issues related to DDR. We want to promote the insights from a range of studies on DDR to a wider audience.

Our experience is that there is relatively little dialogue between researchers and practitioners. This lack of debate and exchange can lead to gaps in information and entry-points for practitioners and academics to advance both theory and practice. Could improving the information flow help improve practical programming as well as social science research?

Deeper exchange between the two groups has considerable potential. Assessments undertaken by project staff, such as monitoring and evaluation, will necessarily adopt a short-term approach. By contrast, scholars are in a position to take a longer-term perspective and can ask different questions than those involved in project evaluations. Might these differing perspectives help trigger creative thinking and innovations in project design?

To promote more active exchange between the research and practice communities, we have selected a sample of scholarly contributions on DDR. While far from constituting a comprehensive survey of the literature, the review can provide a sense of the direction in DDR studies. In several places, we also refer to relevant sections of the Integrated Standards on DDR. We hope this brief note can be a useful reading supplement to the IDDRS.

This publication forms part of a research project on DDR administered by the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) and the Centre for Peace Studies (CPS) at the University of Tromsø. It was funded by the Norwegian Council of Research. The organizers have benefitted from partnering with a number of other researchers and institutions, including the Small Arms Survey in Geneva.

The original idea for this publication came from Desmond Molloy – himself living proof that bridging academia with practice is both possible and fruitful. We are grateful for his advice and inspiration. Cornelis Steenken has also been a keen promoter and thorough reviewer of this publication, and we highly appreciate his constructive input and support. Finally, our special thanks go to Robert Muggah for his valuable inputs and substantial feedback.

The NUPI/CPS research project assessed how social, political or economic contextual factors shape DDR processes, arguing that attention to the historical and political economy context of a post-war country is central when developing DDR programmes. The future plan of this research initiative is to generate in-depth and comparative insights on processes of social, political and economic reintegration.

Happy reading,
Tatjana Stankovic and Stina Torjesen

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Introduction

Purpose and structure

The purpose of this publication is to enhance cooperation and the exchange of ideas between practitioners and social scientists working on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), and to make key academic findings on DDR more available to a larger audience.

The note presents research findings on fundamental issues (effects of DDR, the interaction between DDR programmes and post-war politics), organisational issues (sequencing, programme recipients), contextual issues (society, economics) as well as innovations in DDR programmes (community approaches and second generation DDR).

Table 1. The structure of the publication

Fundamental issues	• long-term effects of DDR
	• DDR as integral to political developments in post-war countries
Programming and procedures	• finding an appropriate sequencing for D, D and R
	• differentiating between top level, mid-level and foot soldiers in DDR
Innovations and broader issues	• interplay between society and DDR
	• community approaches and 'second-generation' DDR

This is not a comprehensive list of all relevant themes or keywords associated with DDR, but by focusing on these six themes we can present some of the central and most useful academic discussions on DDR in a concise publication. A comprehensive list of the relevant literature is presented at the end.

With this note we present some of the insights available in the scholarly literature on DDR – thereby, it is hoped, spurring creative thinking and further interest in the literature.

DDR has served as a cornerstone in peacebuilding for more than 20 years. Today it is an arena where much exciting and interesting innovations in programming are unfolding. This makes an enhanced sharing of insights, dialogue and cooperation between scholars and practitioners timely and important. The academic findings presented here may help scholars and practitioners alike look forward and take part in the current re-conceptualizations of DDR as well as peacebuilding more generally.

A final caution: there is still no overall consensus among scholars about what DDR is meant to achieve, or how it is best implemented and evaluated. In this little publication, we have tried to indicate some areas of consensus as well as disagreement. It is important to stress that the scholarly analysis of DDR is still comparatively modest and that it is only recently that ambitious and more robust empirical studies have emerged.

The limits of DDR and the importance of context

We begin with a basic declaration: DDR is effective – or not effective – not so much due to the organization and character of a given DDR programme, but due to a host of macro- and micro-factors in specific country contexts. Programming can help to navigate these factors, and potentially offer vital contributions to the stabilization process, but DDR programmes in and of themselves, no matter how well-executed, are unlikely to define the specific trajectories of post-war countries.

DDR practitioners are just one small part of the post-conflict picture, and often not the most important one. As for researchers, they need to see how DDR fits into the broader situation and strive to find a balance in their analyses of the workings of particular peacebuilding programme interventions on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the broader social, political and economic factors that shape developments in specific post-war situations.

Table 2. A typology of contextual factors at macro- and micro-levels shaping DDR

Macro	Causes, dynamics, duration and after-effects of armed conflict
	Nature of peace process including whether it was imposed (victor's justice), mediated, or a difficult stalemate
	Governance capacity/reach of the state and service-delivery capacities of public authorities
Micro	Community-level absorptive capacities, especially labour market opportunities and access to productive assets (property, capital)
	Character, cohesiveness and motivations of armed groups and receiving communities
	Security promotion entitlements or the mix of incentives such as monetary benefits, employment, area-based assistance or related basic services ranging from public safety and security to health and education.

Source: Based on Nat J. Colletta and Robert Muggah' Context matters: interim stabilization and second generation approaches to security promotion', Conflict Security and Development, Vol. 9, No. 4, 2009

Nat Colletta and Robert Muggah (2009: 426) outline many of the key social and political factors at 'national' or 'macro' levels as well as at 'local' or 'micro' levels (see Table 2). The shape of these contextual factors will vary from country to country, but it is the specific mix of factors in each individual country that is so important for how a DDR initiative will unfold.

Also important are factors like the standing of the post-conflict country in international politics and its ability to attract funds from donors. Further central determinant will include stability in the broader region and structural aspects within societies (such as ethnic composition, class, inequality patterns and human resources).

1. Effects of DDR

Key questions:

- **Do peace operations bring peace?**
- **Is DDR effective?**

Practitioners and researchers working on DDR often focus on different types of objectives, this means they may end up measuring different types of effects.

Practitioners generally assess short-term effects of DDR through a combination of assessments and monitoring and evaluation. Their focus is on outputs and outcomes, like reductions in the stock of arms, the number of ex-combatants formally demobilized, and the number of former fighters who have undergone reintegration training.

By contrast, social scientists tend to focus on longer-term effects. Their focus is on positive or negative changes in the dynamics of post-conflict violence, the structure and character of armed groups, the wider economic and political context of reintegration, and the implications of DDR for legitimate peacebuilding and statebuilding efforts. What do they find?

Textbox 1: DDR objectives

The objective of the DDR process is to contribute to security and stability in post-conflict environments so that recovery and development can begin. The DDR of ex-combatants is a complex process, with political, military, security, humanitarian and socio-economic dimensions. It aims to deal with the post-conflict security problem that arises when ex-combatants are left without livelihoods or support networks, other than their former comrades, during the vital transition period from conflict to peace and development.

1.10 2 Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards 14 December 2009

Let us start by looking at the track record of post-war peacebuilding and multidimensional peace operations. A simple question like 'do peace operations bring peace' is not easily answered. There is a sizeable literature on peace operations, but the conclusions are not always clear-cut.

While it appears that peace operations can improve the prospects for peace, the operation must have the right mandate and adequate resources. Doyle and Sambanis (2000:784) analysed 124 post-Second World War civil wars, and concluded that 81 peace operations were failures and 43 were successes. In their view, the likelihood of peacebuilding success (i.e. rebuilding stable polities and preventing war recurrence) depends on three factors: sufficient available international assistance, local capacities, and the depth of war-related hostility.

Further, according to Doyle and Sambanis, international capacities can substitute for weak local capacities if substantial resources are available. In such circumstances, multidimensional UN peace operations can make a positive difference when they contribute to reduced violence and institutional and political reform. Peacebuilding efforts seem to achieve the most success when they follow wars that were not fought over identity politics, that were not especially protracted or costly, and in countries with comparatively high development capacities (Doyle and Sambanis 2000: 795).

The outcomes of peace support operations are moderately positive, but there appears to be less certainty in relation to DDR. What researchers find is an uneven record of effectiveness. On the one hand, there have been a few important examples of 'DDR effectiveness' in Central America (El Salvador), Africa (Ethiopia, Nicaragua and South Africa) and Southeast Asia (Aceh). On the other hand, there appears to be at least as much evidence of average or poor DDR outcomes in many of those same regions.

In a much-debated study, Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) question whether internationally funded DDR programmes actually make a difference as regards to the reintegration of individual fighters. Their analysis of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone indicates that combatants who did not participate in DDR programmes reintegrated as successfully as those who did. Similar concerns have been registered in the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Sudan and elsewhere.

Answering the question 'is DDR effective?' is difficult for many reasons:

1. **The attribution problem.** DDR activities are often carried out in parallel with other peacebuilding and statebuilding measures. This makes it difficult to determine the relationship between these activities, and whether the latter may reinforce, or weaken, the outcomes of the former. It is exceedingly difficult to isolate the effects of DDR and measure them separately.

2. **No consensus on the definition of success.** There is no consensus on what exactly constitutes DDR 'success'. Some argue that the specific criteria for success need to be adapted to each and every situation.

3. **Counting weapons not enough.** Most analysts agree that the number of collected weapons and demobilized armed groups is an insufficient indication of success or failure. There is no straightforward connection between the number of weapons collected and the likelihood of achieving a sustainable peace. Some authors put more emphasis on the symbolic role of disarmament in DDR: low rates of weapons handover not need rule out commitment to the peace process on the part of fighters. DDR enables warring groups to signal adherence to the process.

Key points:

- **DDR has an uneven track record: some programs have assisted countries towards long-term stability, others have had little impact**
- **Similarly, peacekeeping operations more broadly have an uneven record: a large-scale survey found that 81 operation had helped ensure stability while 43 had failed to do so**
- **There is major disagreement on how to measure the 'success' of DDR**

2. DDR: central to post-war politics

Key questions:

- **How does DDR help rebuild states and shape politics?**
- **DDR as spoiler management: how does a weak state face its opponents?**

DDR involves more than the technical disarmament and demobilization of former fighters and associated post-war reintegration support. DDR is also a symbolic, legal and political process that forms part of efforts to build an effective and credible state (Mukhopadhyay 2009).

A state will always seek to reduce the number of actors capable of acting violently against those operating on behalf of the state. Through DDR, the state attempts to acquire a full monopoly on the exercise of violence. Achieving a full monopoly of violence is a key marker of statehood, and secures the power of the country's political leadership. (See Textbox 2)

Textbox 2: Monopoly of violence

Monopoly of violence – a concept coined by Max Weber in his Politics as a Vocation (1918). According to Weber, the main defining feature of the state is that it can successfully claim the legitimate use of force within its territory. The legitimacy in exercising the monopoly of violence can be based on three principles: the authority of traditional rules, charismatic authority and the legality of agreed rules (Weber 1918).

The degree of political legitimacy of the national leadership matters for the effectiveness of DDR (Bhatia and Muggah 2009). A government attempting to achieve a monopoly of violence may have varying levels of support among the population and key political groups, and that influences the prospects for an efficient DDR process.

Corruption, and inability to provide security, welfare and social justice undermine the legitimacy of a government. And conversely, improved security, political representation, good governance and public sector capacities (including the reform of judiciary, police and defence sector) promote the legitimacy of a government, boosting its authority. Enhanced legitimacy and authority of a government increases the probability of DDR effectiveness.

Successful DDR requires a credible guarantor – which may be domestic security institutions or an international security force – simply because no armed faction will surrender its weapons in an insecure environment. However, states implementing DDR are usually weakened by long wars. How does a DDR process proceed in a weak state, where credible security institutions are absent and strong potential spoilers challenge the state?

Textbox 3: Spoilers

Spoilers are 'leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it' (Stedman 1997: Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes)

If a state is not able to fight off, marginalize or eliminate competitors within its territory, it may consider bargaining and making a political deal. Here we present two such courses of action, when a weak state is dealing with: (i) an informal powerholder (warlord); and (ii) a group of rebels. DDR becomes a form of spoiler management which does not lead to the elimination of spoilers, but to their partnership with the state.

A state that cannot neutralize a warlord (informal powerholder) may allow him to become a formal power holder. This means that the warlord obtains a formal position within the government, negotiated on the basis of his strong coercive capacity.

Despite his new position, such a warlord will often continue to derive informal power from leadership over his armed faction, as its submittal to disarmament does not automatically imply the dismantlement of the network, leadership, rules and identities associated with being a combatant. In this way, the power that the warlord could have used against the state is now used to advance the interests of the state.

Dipali Mukhopadhyay (2009), discussing the post-2001 situation in north Afghanistan, argues that the partnership between a fledgling state and a warlord with strong coercive capacity may yield several visible dividends – most importantly, improved security and thereby better conditions for economic development. This alliance, Mukhopadhyay points out, is not ideal – but, given the capacity of the state, it may be the best available alternative.

Rebel integration into state military structures is a related strategy. This can potentially provide both credible security guarantees to rebels who fear that the government will renege on its promises once they are disarmed (because this strategy allows rebels to retain self-defence capabilities), as well as employment to rebels, thereby creating economic disincentive for war. This DDR strategy is expected to increase the likelihood for peace in countries emerging from civil war.

Glassmayer and Sambanis (2006) examine whether the rebel–military integration is an effective peacebuilding strategy. Empirical analysis reveals that signing and implementing such an agreement does not automatically improve the changes for viable peace: agreements may be badly structured and incomplete, and implement may be poor.

Rebel–military integration may be more effective when a proper peace treaty has been signed or UN mission deployed, as well as in a situation of power sharing and strong local capacities. Their study also reveals that this particular DDR strategy is more common in poor countries, often serving an economic function rather than helping to build trust.

The authors, however, stress that these conclusions may be uncertain because: i) rebel–military integration is not a standardized process but encompasses a wide array of policies; and b) it is difficult to isolate its specific effects as integration is implemented simultaneously with other peacebuilding measures.

Key points:

- **DDR helps national political leaders gain a monopoly of violence on a country's territory**
- **The effectiveness of a DDR programme depends on the extent to which the implementing government is seen as legitimate**
- **The track record is mixed when it comes to including warlords into government and rebel units into national armies**

3. Sequencing and scope of DDR

Key questions:

- **Can DDR become too ambitious?**
- **Should D, D and R always follow a specific order?**

Many studies of DDR have focused on the following question: should DDR programmes take a short-term security-focused perspective, or a long-term developmental approach? (See Specker 2008, Jennings 2008, Muggah 2009). The perspective selected has important implications for choosing a target group and designing the reintegration phase.

- Should a DDR programme target ex-combatants only? or should it include the communities who receive them as well?
- Should the reintegration phase be conceived of so as to enhance security and consolidate peace through the management of ex-combatants? or should it have long-term humanitarian and developmental objectives?

Clearly defining DDR objectives is crucial, as emphasized in the Stockholm Initiative. As Jennings (2008: 6) points out, each DDR programme must reflect local conditions and available resources and will therefore vary according to circumstances. Nevertheless, there seems to be overall agreement that larger macro-economic concerns, however important, lie beyond the scope of objectives and abilities of a DDR programme. Ensuring sustained economic recovery and income for ex-combatants requires more enduring interventions than DDR can offer (Specker 2008: 7).

Linear sequencing. DDR was originally conceived of as a continuum: disarmament first, demobilization beginning when disarmament has been accomplished, and finally, reinsertion and reintegration starting when disarmament and demobilization were nearing completion. DDR processes are still commonly implemented in this order, primarily due to security issues – disarmament and demobilization are the most urgent security concerns in a post-conflict environment – but also because of the availability of funds. Many multilateral and bilateral development donors cannot or will not finance combatants until they have been demobilized, because of legislation that forbids it or long-standing agency practices (Specker 2008: 15; Muggah 2004).

However, linear sequencing is not always the most useful option. Initiating the R phase only after the DD phases have been completed may mean significant delays in the reintegration process. In some cases, demobilized ex-combatants have had to wait several months to enter a reintegration programme (see, for example, Kathleen Jennings' (2007) work on Liberia). In a sensitive post-conflict environment, such delays lead to a range of security concerns for implementing actors and threaten to jeopardize a fragile peace process. Ideally, preparations for the R phase should start before the DD programmes have been completed.

'Combatants may only want to disarm and dismantle their armed groups once they have gradually resumed civilian life' (Specker 2008: 13). The DD and R phases may be carried out in parallel, reverse or even in cyclical order. DD may vary in pace in different areas within the same country. Some authors advocate delinking DD from the R phase (Jennings 2008; Pugel 2009).

RDD in Tajikistan. Tajikistan offers an example of a DDR process that was implemented contrary to conventional wisdom on DDR: instead of linear sequencing, reintegration was prioritized over disarmament and demobilization. Stina Torjesen and S. Neil MacFarlane (2009:312) argue that ignoring the poor disarmament rates created comparatively high levels of trust among the former fighters and commanders in Tajikistan. Incentives – such as amnesties, governmental positions and economic assets – were quickly provided, creating stakes in the peace process. This greatly facilitated the peace process and created stability.

Key points:

- **DDR processes do not need to be linear: the DD and R phases may be carried out in parallel, reverse or even in cyclical order**
- **Sequencing must reflect local conditions and available resources: DDR programme design and timing will vary according to circumstances – not least, the nature of the post-war settlement**

Textbox 4: Reinsertion

Reinsertion is the assistance offered to ex-combatants during demobilization but prior to the longer-term process of reintegration. Reinsertion is a form of transitional assistance to help cover the basic needs of ex-combatants and their families and can include transitional safety allowances, food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short-term education, training, employment and tools. While reintegration is a long-term, continuous social and economic process of development, reinsertion is short-term material and/or financial assistance to meet immediate needs, and can last up to one year

IDDRS 1.20 Glossary and Definitions

Textbox 5: Reintegration

"Reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open time-frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country and a national responsibility, and often necessitates long-term external assistance"

IDDRS 1.20 Glossary and Definitions

4. Differentiation: top-level, mid-level and foot soldiers

Key questions:

- **Is paying off commanders a good idea?**
- **Is it necessary to differentiate among commanders and combatants?**

Not all ex-combatants are alike. Nevertheless, many DDR programmes have treated ex-combatants as a homogeneous group. Practice strongly challenges this notion and calls for DDR programmes to differentiate between different types of combatants and between top-level, mid-level and foot soldiers.

Commanders play an important role in the implementation of DDR programmes because they can persuade people to abandon violence. In addition, commanders may sometimes use their influence to determine who are to be demobilized and receive a share of reinsertion payments (See Textbox 5)(Specker 2008; Guistozzi 2009). For that reason, lucrative benefits (political power, military positions in the state army, special training programmes) have been offered to persuade commanders to comply with DDR.

Some international actors have been reluctant to pay commanders who may have criminal backgrounds; however, many DDR processes target senior commanders by offering them extensive and valuable benefits. In Afghanistan, for instance, the Commander Incentive Programme (CIP) has been applied – but has a mixed record of success (Specker 2008).

Short-term versus long-term considerations: Giving commanders extensive benefits enables power structures and hierarchies from the conflict to persist in the post-conflict period, and that runs contrary to the professed DDR goal of transforming these very structures. On the other hand, short-term stability is created, encouraging commanders to abandon their illicit activities and engage in legal pursuits. However, there is also the danger that long-term stability may be jeopardized, and that a DDR package of rewards may help those illicit pursuits by providing those already involved in criminal activities with more capital to fund their continuation (Jennings 2008).

Although many DDR programmes target senior commanders, they have an undifferentiated approach to mid- and low-level commanders (Bhatia and Muggah 2009: 134). As Alden (2002) has shown in the case of Mozambique, the 'men in the middle, those above the rank of foot soldiers but insufficiently high ranking to be accommodated as elite spoilers – can be among the most difficult group to accommodate'.

Many in the mid-level group, disappointed 'by being lumped in with soldiers they felt superior to and disaffected by a reintegration package they felt was too stingy for people in their position, used their organisational skills and wartime networks to proceed with criminal economic activities' (Jennings 2008: 40). In Afghanistan as well, the lack of attractive remuneration for mid-level commanders meant less incentive to participate in DDR, and increased their willingness to work with private security companies (Bhatia and Muggah 2009: 134).

In deciding whether to differentiate DDR benefits according to rank, one might consider the following two points: the involvement of low- and mid-level commanders in criminalized wartime economies; and the degree of buy-in to the peace agreement (Jennings 2008: 40). These issues will have to be decided on a case-to-case basis.

Key points:

- **All combatants are not alike**
- **Accommodating commanders may increase the effectiveness of a DDR programme.**
  – on the other hand, it helps to preserve war hierarchies and power structures
- **DDR programmes tend to accommodate only senior commanders: disregard for mid- and low-level commanders may make DDR programmes less efficient**

5. Society and the economy: interplay with DDR

Key questions:

- **What is the interplay between society and DDR programmes?**
- **How does context matter for DDR?**

Textbox 6: No terrus nullis

'Post war contexts are not terrus nullis upon which discrete technical solutions are readily grafted' (Colletta and Muggah 2008: 431).

A myriad of social, political and economic factors will shape how any DDR unfolds. Every DDR programme is distinct, and so is every context in which DDR is implemented. This makes it difficult to generalize about how the economy and society interact with DDR activities. To provide some illustrations, we highlight here some studies that explore different societal and economic aspects and their relevance for DDR.

Family: Lebanon. Kari Karame (2008) has identified three contextual factors that shaped social and economic reintegration of the Lebanese Forces' combatants: (i) the type of war, (ii) the size of the country, and (iii) social networks. In Lebanon, because of the rhythms of the war, with periods of combat alternating with periods of calm, and the small size of the country, many fighters could go back and forth between the frontlines and home, between life as a combatant and life as a civilian. They were able to maintain close contacts with their family and friends, as well as to continue to work or study.

The extent to which combatants managed to preserve close contact with civil society during the war proved to be a crucial determinant of their successful reintegration into post-war society. Karame found that the support of the combatants' own families played a key role, as well as the combatant network established during their time in the militia. Family (especially mothers) served as an important agent of social integration, whereas the network of veterans (especially males) was important for economic reintegration.

Traumas, experiences and motivation: Comparing Sierra Leone and the USA. The experiences of ordinary combatants during war have important implications for the post-conflict environment and ensuing DDR process. This is argued by David Keen (2008), who, drawing on his study of the civil war in Sierra Leone and the US invasion of Iraq, highlights two points: the sense of deception, and tensions between civilians and combatants.

The sense of deception. For ordinary soldiers, participation in a war often ends with disillusionment and a sense of betrayal. Expected war benefits rarely materialize, while the costs of participation tend to be higher than anticipated. On the other hand, many do profit from wars – often their own commanders. Such uneven distribution of costs and benefits makes low-level fighters dissatisfied and disappointed, which in turn may shape their motivation for the participation in a DDR programme. Assuming that post-war benefits are just like war benefits ('more advertised than actualized'), low-level fighters may be reluctant to join a programme.

Tensions between civilians and combatants. Wars often create hostility between civilians and combatants, especially in insurgencies where combatants are difficult to distinguish from civilians. Civilians abhor soldiers' abuses and blame them for war; soldiers fear civilians who, although unarmed, 'have killed so many just by pointing' – passing on information to various armed groups. Such civilian–combatant tensions are of key relevance for DDR as they make the reintegration of former fighters into civilian life extremely difficult.

Village, identity and security: Afghanistan. Bhatia and Muggah (2009) argue that factors influencing mobilization must be taken into account when DDR programmes are designed. The effectiveness of a DDR project, its success or failure, depends on the extent to which mobilization patterns and social characteristics of combatants are considered. Factors influencing mobilization must be more broadly conceived than ideology, greed and grievance.

From their research on Afghanistan, the authors demonstrate that there is no consistently dominant motive for mobilization across time and space, as there is no 'typical' armed group or

combatant. Complex motives guide both individual and group behaviour. People may fight for many different reasons; and armed groups, depending on the type, use a range of assets to mobilize combatants. Community militia, for example, acquire combatants through communal institutions and by drawing on local legitimacy; strongmen, on the other hand, use force and incentives.

DDR programmes have failed to take into account the complex realities on the ground, and have disregarded complex dynamics of mobilization. In Afghanistan, demobilization programmes have focused on lessening the economic incentives for mobilization: but they thereby ignore the importance of family, tribal and customary institutions, the role of mobilization for family protection, as well as the prevalence of forced mobilization in the northeast. In general, conventional DDR has focused exclusively on the presumed economic motivations of combatants, treating all combatants as undifferentiated rational utility-maximizers.

Treating all combatants as a homogeneous category has also negative implications for the effectiveness of reintegration. Combatants are a heterogeneous category in terms of abilities, skills and education, capacities, opportunities and income streams, as Bhatia and Muggah's research demonstrates. Economic reintegration should not be seen as merely substituting one occupation (soldiering) by another singular occupation.

State assets and economic dynamics: Tajikistan. Stina Torjesen and S. Neil MacFarlane (2008) show how, in the case of Tajikistan, economic incentives for prominent political and military leaders created a significant stake in the peace process. Lucrative incentives – housing, apartment blocks, shopping centres, factories, cattle grazing areas as well as cotton fields and cotton-processing facilities – were offered to those who had facilitated and made possible the peace process. These assets were state property which could be transferred because the Tajik state had not embarked on large-scale privatization before the fighting broke out in 1992. This state asset base proved central for the success of DDR.

Key points:

- **Social networks shape and enable social reintegration: combatants' own families can be crucial agents of social reintegration**
- **War experiences shape post-war behaviour: fighters are often disillusioned and feel exploited by leadership – such distrust matters for DDR programming**
- **Tangible economic incentives are not the sole motivation for fighters to either mobilize or disarm: family, village and security issues are equally important**

6. New trends: DDR and community approaches

Key questions:

- **What are the new trends in DDR?**
- **What do researchers say about 'second-generation' DDR?**
- **Can communities facilitate and enable reintegration?**

Programmes and practitioners often innovate and expand upon the DDR concept when they are faced with complex ground realities. Many of these innovations involve an emphasis on local communities: programmes move away from focusing on combatants, and instead assess how conditions for reintegration and stability can be enhanced.

The new and very diverse innovations are often labelled 'second-generation' DDR. These activities focus not just on former combatants, but also on mitigating risk factors at the community level and constructing interventions on the basis of the needs of individual communities (Muggah and Colletta 2009; Muggah 2009; DPKO 2010). These interventions draw explicitly on local cultural norms rather than on rigid externally defined incentives; they focus on civilians and gang members rather than former soldiers, and draw on community-based leaders and associations rather than on national public institutions.

In practical terms, the emphasis is shifted from externally designed top–down interventions to more local-level designed and executed bottom–up approaches. Examples of second-generation security approaches include community security mechanisms and schemes focusing on youth and gangs, weapons-for-development activities, weapons lotteries, urban renewal and public health programmes. There has been relatively little research on the design and effects of second-generation DDR, but Colletta and Muggah provide a useful overview (2009: 444).

Textbox 7: The evolution of DDR 1980s-2010

DDR is now a central component of most large-scale peace operations, whether launched by the United Nations, the US Army or other regional organisations (Berdal and Ucko 2009). In its current form, DDR was introduced in the late 1980s and early 1990s. More than 60 programmes have been initiated since then, with 18 DDR programmes being implemented in 2007 and 2008.

Some DDR initiatives have attracted hundreds of millions of US dollars (Colombia, DRC); others have been sparsely funded (Haiti) (Torjesen forthcoming: 4). Approximately two-thirds of all DDR interventions have taken place in Africa, with the reminder in Latin America and the Caribbean, South Eastern Europe, Central and South Asia and the South Pacific. Over a million 'combatants' have participated in some aspect of DDR. (Muggah 2009: 3).

DDR evolved in parallel with developments in peace interventions (Muggah 2010: 1) As peace support operations (PSO) have expanded from its initial peacekeeping mandate toward multidimensional mandates and integrated approaches, DDR innovations followed up.

DDR have progressed from a minimalist (security first) approach toward maximalist (development-oriented) programmes, from spoiler management toward peace consolidation. Consequently, the target group (originally ex-combatants only) has expanded to include family members, as well as other vulnerable groups (children, women, disabled), refugees and internally displaced persons. DDR programmes have become longer and more expensive.

The following are key trends in DDR evolution from the late 1980s to the present:

- From external toward national ownership
- From a fixed blueprint toward a more context-sensitive approach
- From a national to regional or multi-country approach
- From a technical program to stabilisation and state building process
- Increasing reliance on private security companies, NGOs and quasi-UN agencies such as IOM for implementation
- Toward professionalization and standardizaation of DDR practice (UN-IDDRST)

As 'community' is re-introduced as a new buzzword in DDR programming, broader academic writings on community might prove useful. Researchers stress how communities are highly contested and heterogeneous concepts, both before and after armed conflicts. Likewise, war often generates profound changes for communities: armed conflict can represent both an empowering and a destructive event for individuals and societies alike (Keen 2009).

If war is a transformative event that alters individuals and communities, then this means that reintegration can never be a simple matter of returning combatant 'back into' their former lives . Fighters as well as their 'home' or 'host' communities will have undergone profound changes in the course of the war years. Importantly, fighters and communities may be traumatized – but they will also have acquired important new skills and networks. Some skills and networks may be profoundly destructive; others, however, could be key assets to draw on as societies transform from war to peace.

Communities can provide nurturing membership for groups of people: participation in its activities, concern for its past, present and future members, and protection of its resources –all these ensure continuity and intergenerational interconnectivity for the group (Marglin 2010). Joining in these groups can constitute meaningful reintegration for former combatants.

However, communities can also be important arenas of social exclusion. Frances Stewart (2006) has explored how patterns of social exclusion link with violent conflict. Within communities there are important hierarchies, barriers and sub-groups that may impede the prospects for reintegration (Mansuri and Rao 2004). Moreover, researchers and practitioners have discussed how combatants may have multiple identities, where the 'ex –combatant' status is not always the most central (NUPI/CPS - IAWG Discussion "Do we get community right when we do DDR", 01 July 2010)

Therefore, it is important not to think of communities as a readily available machinery that can be activated by programmes to ensure reintegration. Bottom–up, community-centred approaches may bring great benefits, but careful consideration of community dynamics is needed before community-based reintegration programmes are designed.

Key points:

- **Second-generation DDR moves away from focusing on combatants and instead assesses how conditions for reintegration and stability can be enhanced**
- **Second-generation DDR draws explicitly on local cultural norms and values rather than on methods and incentives from outsiders**
- **Communities change profoundly in the course of war, so fighters can seldom reintegrate back into their 'old lives'**
- **Communities may be helpful sites of inclusion and social resources – or problematic arenas of social exclusionThe Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)**

Reflections on the DDR literature

The study of DDR has expanded considerably over the past two decades. From an initial focus on the part of political scientists, DDR processes have attracted experts from other disciplines – development studies, security, econometrics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, human geography, public health etc. In addition, many practitioners have provided significant contributions to the literature, making DDR research a classic case of research–practice praxis (Muggah 2010: 9).

The DDR literature was initially 'prescriptive and policy-oriented in nature, tending to concentrate on the mechanics of DDR activities (how to best plan, organize, coordinate and fund what are often formidable logistic and technical challenges' (Berdal and Ucko 2009:2). Over time, critical and deep-delving assessments have emerged, from qualitative and case-specific to comparative and statistical studies that examine a large number of DDR interventions. As can be seen from the bibliography below, topics dealt with now include not only the core concepts of DDR, but also its relationship with transitional justice, security sector reform (SSR) and state-building processes.

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Notes

Further information available from:

UN DDR Resource Centre (IDDRS), www.unddrorg, email: iawg.ddr@undp.org
Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, www.nupi.no, email: info@nupi.no
Centre for Peace Studies University of Tromsø, www.uit.no, email: mail@peace.uit.no