

Lesson Report

Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)



UN peacekeeper assists with DDR in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).
Photo credit: UN / Martine Perret.
8 November 2006.



Ex-combatant receives new uniform for duty in the armed forces of the DRC.
Photo credit: UN / Martine Perret.
28 December 2006.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Two absolutely vital factors / processes for “stabilization and reconstruction” of conflict-affected countries are Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR).

SSR: “**Security Sector Reform** is the set of policies, plans, programs, and activities that a government undertakes to improve the way it provides safety, security, and justice. The overall objective is to provide these services in a way that promotes an effective and legitimate public service that is transparent, accountable to civilian authority, and responsive to the needs of the public. From a donor perspective, SSR is an umbrella term that might include integrated activities in support of: defense and armed forces reform; civilian management and oversight; justice; police; corrections; intelligence reform; national security planning and strategy support; border management; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); and/or reduction of armed violence.”

(Security Sector Reform, USAID, DOD and DOS, 12 March 2009, p. 3)

DDR: “Disarming and demobilizing ex-combatants is a highly visible process that can increase public confidence in the peace process. **Disarmament** involves collecting and destroying weapons. **Demobilization** involves dismantling military units and transitioning combatants to civilian life through orientation programs and transportation to their communities. Demobilization involves registering individuals and monitoring them in assembly camps while they await reintegration. ...**Reintegration** is a social and economic process in which ex-combatants return to community life and engage in alternative livelihoods to violence. Integrating ex-combatants into civilian life gives ex-combatants a stake in the peace and reduces the likelihood that they will turn to criminal activity or join insurgent groups to support themselves if they cannot find gainful employment. Reintegration activities include creating microenterprises, providing education and training, and preparing communities to receive ex-combatants.”

(Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction, USIP and PKSOI, Oct 2009, pp. 6-47 & 6-49)

Both processes are extremely time- and resource-intensive. Typically, they are also complex, challenging, and politically volatile.

Ideally these two processes – SSR and DDR – are worked hand-in-hand. Ideally, also, the host nation assumes “lead”/ownership of these two processes from the very outset – with help/support from key stakeholders. Lessons within this compendium bear this out.

In this report you will find lessons from a broad spectrum of SSR and DDR interventions – covering various countries of Africa, as well as Timor Leste. The report places a “spotlight” on DDR in the Lake Chad Basin region with a special section of contributions/lessons from personnel assigned to the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) – who bring to the fore the complexities of policies, plans, coordination, and execution. Closing out this report, the lead author offers an array of considerations and recommendations for SSR/DDR planners in the section titled “Key Points: SSR and DDR.” Finally, the document provides an annex of comprehensive references covering both SSR and DDR.

2. SSR LESSONS

“Haste Makes Waste” – Security Sector Reform in Timor Leste (Lesson #2697)

Observation:

Two international missions – UNTAET and UNMIT, as well as their United Nations Police (UNPOL) component – fared poorly in their efforts to reform the security sector of Timor Leste in the 2000-2008 timeframe. UNTAET focused its security sector reform (SSR) efforts on training and equipping the local police, but: neglected the work of institutional reform; failed to include key societal groups; failed to connect disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) to SSR; failed to give due diligence to vetting of recruits; rushed into security training programs without sufficient expertise or standards; and, gave little-to-no attention to local political influences and illicit/disruptive practices. Ultimately, the security sector collapsed in April 2006, with clashes occurring between military and police. UNMIT deployed several months later, repeated several mistakes made by UNTAET, and fared no better.

Discussion:

From the outset, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) rushed into security sector reform actions without a thoughtful strategy, after inheriting police reform efforts from the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET). “The mandates to conduct SSR were initially separated between UNTAET and INTERFET, where UNTAET focused on governance and oversight matters, while INTERFET attended to providing interim security and creating the Timor-Leste Police Service (PNTL) ... In 2000, UNTAET took control over INTERFET.” (Armstrong, p. 4)

In 2000, UNTAET adopted a plan proposed by King’s College to establish a defense force: the *Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor Leste* (F-FDTL). However, “UNTAET delegated the [recruitment] process completely to the former commander of *Forças Armadas da Libertação Nacional de Timor-Leste*, (FALINTIL), Taur Matan Ruak, and his staff. The recruitment process drew heavy public criticism from political observers for disregarding important steps of DDR, such as a thorough screening of recruits for their past crimes and lack of reliability and loyalty to the constitution. Eventually, the recruitment process was biased toward men from the eastern provinces of Timor-Leste” (Kocak, p. 352). In fact, women who had served in the FALINTIL and other resistance groups were excluded from the DDR process, despite their crucial role during the independence struggle.

While Ruak filled the F-FDTL primarily with former FALINTIL personnel, the UN – in stark contrast – built up the ranks of the PNTL with a high proportion of former *Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia* (POLRI) members. The POLRI had been the national police force during the Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste. By and large, the Timorese population was displeased with seeing former POLRI members filling the ranks of the PNTL. POLRI’s history was one of collaboration with the former occupiers, including use of repressive

tactics. Yet, the UN not only partnered with POLRI and heavily recruited POLRI into the PNTL, but also placed POLRI personnel into the higher/leadership positions of the PNTL/police corps. Along with the historical repression issue, there were also societal/ethnic issues involved in the formation of both military and police forces. Specifically, most of the FALINTIL (filling the military/F-FDTL) came from the *Firaku* ethnic group, while most of the POLRI (filling the PNTL/police) were *Kaladis* – people from the western provinces of Timor-Leste. As time progressed, these ethnic (and political) orientations hardened within both the F-FDTL and the PNTL, and the two organizations (with their ethnic/political biases) developed intense competition for authorities, responsibilities, resources, and power.

Training of security personnel was rushed. The former POLRI members now filling the PNTL underwent only one month of training before assuming duties in the new police service. Pressures within the UN to establish a functioning local police force resulted in an approach of train-and-equip as soon as possible – rather than taking sufficient time to deliberately develop an effective and democratically-controlled police/security institution. Neither UNTAET nor its eventual successor (UNMIT) developed an officially published policy or strategy for SSR, nor did they pursue working closely with government ministries/committees/leaders to implement democratic oversight over the F-FDTL and PNTL. Essentially, the UN missions missed an opportunity to incorporate trusted and competent Timorese politicians into the SSR process, while others with self- and group-interests subverted the process.

Not only was training rushed and thoughtful partnering minimized, the UN missions and UNPOL elements themselves were not properly resourced or prepared to conduct comprehensive, professional training of police personnel:

“A further problem was UNPOL’s own heterogeneous composition. Most of the deployed international police officers had no experience instructing police recruits and also lacked the language skills to be effective. As a result, UNPOL officers relied on their individual policing experience in their home countries and tried to communicate them to the PNTL recruits. Since this ad hoc approach lacked any form of standardization, UNPOL’s police training created confusion, rather than a coherent understanding of professional police practice, among the local recruits.” (Kocak, pp. 354-355)

The security sector of Timor Leste essentially collapsed in April 2006, when clashes occurred between various PNTL and F-FDTL elements, joined by youth gangs and semi-organized groups of armed civilians. The incumbent administration was unable to establish public order. At the end of May 2006, an Australian-led stabilization force intervened (Operation ASTUTE) to end the violence. Then, in August 2006, the UN Security Council established/mandated the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) to rebuild and reform the institutions of the security sector, conduct and supervise rehabilitation of the PNTL, and provide security in Timor Leste with UNPOL.

Once again, however, the international mission (now UNMIT) did not devote sufficient planning, resourcing, or diligence to SSR actions: vetting was poor with insufficient investigations (e.g., although the F-FDTL was one of the main initiators of the violent clashes in 2006, UNMIT failed to subject the F-FDTL to any sort of robust vetting process); training &

mentoring for new recruits was conducted over a mere 8-week timeframe; partnering with Timorese ministries and officials was minimized (with various figures then obstructing the process); and, UNMIT and its UNPOL component were not adequately resourced with trainers/advisers possessing requisite professional expertise – nor were UN personnel provided sufficient cultural knowledge. In all these shortcomings, UNMIT was repeating the same mistakes made by UNTAET.

Timorese government officials, displeased with the lack of UN-ministerial partnering and the net results of the international interventions (i.e., a disjointed security sector), eventually took matters into their own hands. The opportunity for Timorese senior leaders to change course and assert their autonomy in security matters arose in 2008. After assassination attempts by rebels against the president and the prime minister in February, the Council of Ministers declared a state of emergency and the formation of a “Joint F-FDTL and PNTL Command.” This merger of the security organizations was not only a declaration of Timorese sovereignty, but also a rejection of the externally imposed design/formation of the security sector by international/UN missions and the repeated mistakes, namely:

- rushed actions to train-and-equip security personnel, rather than approaching SSR and DDR interventions with a long-term commitment
- neglect of the local sociopolitical and historical context (evidenced by partnering with, and empowering, certain actors who had inflicted grave harm on large segments of the population)
- failure to have an integrated approach (i.e., external actors working hand-in-hand with host nation ministries/officials) in planning, implementation, and oversight of SSR and DDR
- failure to “include” the voices of all former combatant groups/members – including women
- lack of due diligence in vetting recruits for the security forces

“...In the Timorese case, the recruitment of partisan former guerrilla fighters into the newly founded Timorese **military**, as well as UNPOL’s unobservant recruitment of former POLRI officers into the Timorese civilian **police**, laid the foundation of a **politicized and troubled Timorese security sector**. ... [and] in the **rush** to get military and policing boots on the ground, opportunities to create a culture of public service, accountability to the law, and professionalism may have been lost.” (Kocak, pp. 362 and 365)

Recommendations:

1. Utilize a holistic approach to SSR. SSR strategy should cover the entire security network within the host nation – local security actors (military forces, national police, local police, border security, etc.) and all relevant institutions (ministries of interior, defense, and finance; national parliament; parliamentary committees that deal with security matters; etc.).
2. Incorporate measures aimed at preventing illicit practices throughout the security network. Develop oversight mechanisms, objectives, and benchmarks for the purpose of eliminating corruption, abuse of office, etc. which could otherwise adversely affect reform efforts.

3. Understand the local historical and sociopolitical context. This will help external actors choose local partners for inclusion in various SSR activities. An in-depth knowledge of the local context is crucial to being able to identify stakeholders, attitudes, connections, etc. within the security sector and the affected communities.

4. Closely align SSR and DDR. Linking SSR and DDR items/issues/concerns from the outset in program design will help to avoid duplication and ensure that activities reflect common objectives.

5. Plan and carry out SSR and DDR processes according to well-documented guidelines – which must be appropriately tailored to the given context. Avoid pressures to focus on only the major tasks or to effect change as quickly as possible. Shortcuts – in vetting, training, etc. – can undermine the security sector in the long run.

Sources:

1. **Primary reference:** “[Security Sector Reconstruction in Post-Conflict: The Lessons from Timor-Leste](#),” by Deniz Kocak, in “Impunity: Countering Illicit Power in War and Transition,” National Defense University (NDU), 12 April 2016.

2. Other references:

- “[Security Sector Reform in Timor-Leste: Missed Opportunities and Hard Lessons in Empowering the Host-Nation](#),” by Nicholas J. Armstrong, Jacqueline Chura-Beaver, and Isaac Kfir, PKSOI, April 2012
- “[Institutionalizing Community Policing in Timor-Leste: Exploring the Politics of Police Reform](#),” by Néilson De Sousa C. Belo and Mark R. Koenig, The Asia Foundation, December 2011



Dili, East Timor – 1 March 2000. The Portuguese contingent of UNTAET sets out for a security patrol of the Becora district. (Photo credit: UN / Eskinder Debebe)

Key Lessons from Supporting Police Reforms in Kenya **(Lesson #2700)**

Observation:

Seven major lessons were documented by Saferworld in supporting police reforms in Kenya over the 2012-2015 timeframe: (1) Build constructive and collaborative partnerships; (2) Prioritize constructive engagement with the police service; (3) Promote citizen participation; (4) Ensure strong police ownership over operational policies, including at the local level; (5) Support access to resources and data; (6) Promote an internal culture of accountability; and, (7) Link police reform to the task of addressing community insecurity.

Discussion:

Kenya's 2010 constitution contained provisions for sweeping reforms of the police service. These reforms included: merging Kenya's two police forces (the Kenya Police and the Administration Police) under one Inspector General of Police, improving the independence of the police service (i.e., reducing political interference), and strengthening accountability through new oversight mechanisms. The overall intent of the reforms was to fix issues of abuse, corruption, and ineffectiveness and transform the police into a modern, accountable, and responsible service.

In support of Kenya's police reform agenda, Saferworld (an independent international organization) and Usalama Forum (a Kenya-based Security Sector Reform lobby group) implemented a program titled "Institutionalising Comprehensive Police Reforms In Kenya: Towards Equitable Responsive and Accountable Policing" over a 3-year period: February 2012 to January 2015. Their work consisted of two efforts: technical assistance to government institutions to help implement the various reforms, and building capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) and the public-at-large to press the government for improved service delivery by the police. Seven key lessons stand out from this "partnering and capacity-building" program. A brief discussion of each lesson follows.

1) Build constructive and collaborative partnerships. Saferworld/Usalama's program emphasized three types of collaboration: (1) collaboration between Saferworld/Usalama and local implementing partners, (2) collaboration between Saferworld/Usalama and the National Police Service (NPS); and, (3) collaboration at the local level between communities and local authorities/police. Taking the time to build collaboration at the outset of the program ensured a shared vision/expectation/understanding among the various stakeholders for overall police reform. This early work included a collaborative methodology for the design of reform activities, which emphasized flexibility and inclusiveness – not only at the top/national level, but also heavily at the local/grassroots level.

2) Prioritize constructive engagement with the police service. To ensure commitment and structured engagement, Saferworld/Usalama worked with the Inspector General of Police to develop and sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that specified tasks and responsibilities for the signatories with regard to police reform work. One key task in this

MoU was supporting revisions of laws and policies, inclusive of inputs from CSOs and local communities – which heretofore had been marginalized. Besides this structured engagement at the higher level (codified in the MoU), Saferworld/Usalama also initiated local public mechanisms to recognize and reward outstanding police officers. This community level activity helped alter public opinion of police in a positive way. Also, it helped build a culture of public service within the police force itself.

3) Promote citizen participation. Saferworld/Usalama established Community Safety Forums (CSFs) in 13 project sites across the country. Each CSF consisted of some 30 members from the local community – women’s and youth group representatives, community chiefs/elders/leaders, religious leaders, hospital/health representatives, and police personnel. The CSFs established three internal teams – accountability teams, crime observatory (data) teams, and access-to-justice teams – which worked to identify and develop solutions for various police, crime, and justice issues. Additionally, Usalama and the NPS – with inputs from citizens – developed a police station “workflow chart” to help convey (both to police and citizens) how police processes fit into the overall justice system.

4) Ensure strong police ownership over operational policies, including at the local level. Saferworld/Usalama made a deliberate effort to ensure that the police “owned” the vision and guidelines for their operations. They facilitated a comprehensive review by the police – senior, mid-level, and junior police officers from sites across the country – to update the Service Standing Orders (SSOs), which regulated virtually all aspects of police performance. As a result of this review – which also included periodic consultations with government offices, CSOs, and community representatives – the SSOs now contain detailed guidelines (“owned” by police, and shaped by police and citizens) on key areas of police professionalism and accountability. The guidelines include the following subjects: arms and ammunition accountability, arrest and detention procedures, firearms control, and community policing activities.

5) Support access to resources and data. Local police stations in Kenya had been relying on manual, outdated systems to record, process, and manage crime data. Their records and reports were not digitized. To address this shortcoming, Saferworld/Usalama helped by establishing/resourcing crime observatory systems with a database called the “crime clock.” Also, crime observatory (data) teams initiated coordination processes with other institutions (such as hospitals) to gain/upload additional information about crimes. At 4 of the 13 police stations, this collection of information led to recognition of more severe problems and trends. Across the board, the new database helped to inform leadership decisions on police strength, deployment, and expertise needed to support operations. As a result, crime prevention improved.

6) Promote an internal culture of accountability. Saferworld/Usalama worked hard to strengthen accountability within/across the Kenyan police force. These two partners trained over 90 investigative officers on external and internal policing oversight mechanisms, the role of commanders in handling complaints, and the rights of police personnel facing disciplinary action. Saferworld/Usalama also arranged for a visit by six Kenyan police officers to the United Kingdom – where various organizations provided the visitors with information on

police professional standards, police training programs (on accountability and ethics), and methodologies for developing regulations on complaint management. This visit greatly contributed to the formation of an Internal Accountability Unit in the Kenya's National Police Service – promoting professionalism, integrity, and accountability in the service.

7) Link police reform to the task of addressing community insecurity. Saferworld/ Usalama made a concerted effort to involve communities in local security reform efforts. The 13 CSFs implemented a range of interventions to reduce the likelihood of at-risk groups becoming engaged in criminal behavior. Interventions included: car wash associations to generate income and savings for at-risk youth, training/education of *bodaboda* (motorcycle taxi) drivers with the aim of preventing crimes against passengers, provision of designated safe market spaces for women to sell produce and other items, and savings plans involving groups of parents – to allow more children to attend school and gain jobs, vice engaging in criminal activity. These interventions promoted citizens' involvement in their own/community security, helped to reduce crime, and contributed to better community-police cooperation.

Recommendations:

To optimize success of police reform programs:

- 1) Build constructive and collaborative partnerships – from the very outset – to ensure a shared vision and common methodology among stakeholders.
- 2) Prioritize constructive engagements (through MoUs, formal arrangements, confidence-building mechanisms, etc.) between the police service, reform program managers, and local communities.
- 3) Promote citizen participation – inclusive of women, youth, local leaders, etc.
- 4) Ensure strong police ownership over operational policies, including at the local level.
- 5) Support police access to resources/technology/information systems and build capacity to manage crime data.
- 6) Promote an internal culture of accountability within the police force.
- 7) Link police reform to the task of addressing community insecurity – through program interventions aimed at communities' taking some responsibility for their own state of security ... which resultantly supports police efforts/reforms.

Sources:

1. Primary reference: "[Institutionalising police reforms in Kenya: lessons from 2012-2015](#)," by Esther Njuguna, James Ndung'u and Kathryn Achilles, Saferworld, 9 June 2015.

2. Other references:

- "[Deepening police reforms in Kenya post-National Accord: Policy implications](#)," by Mikewa Ogada, Saferworld, July 2016
- "[Participation and inclusion in police reforms in Kenya: Opportunities and challenges since 2008](#)," by Florence Simbiri-Jaoko, Saferworld, July 2016
- "[A decade of police reforms and the future of policing in Kenya](#)," by Charles Otieno et al, Saferworld, June 2015
- "[Community Based Strategies for Peace and Security \(CBSPS\)](#)," by Lawrence Mitchell, Peace Operations Training Institute (POTI), April 2008

Local Insights for Police Reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Lesson #2701)

Observation:

A 5-year police reform program in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) highlights the importance of understanding local context, designing reform programs with affordability and sustainability in mind, and including the inputs of local police and community members.

Discussion.

...Changing the police's everyday behavior ultimately requires improving living and working conditions of ordinary police personnel. Listening to their lived experiences and perspectives, thereby deepening the understanding of the political economy of street-level policing, can yield important insights in how to improve reform impact and sustainability, and should be at the heart of future police reform programs. (Thill et al, p. 9)

From 2010 until its end in early 2015, the Security Sector Accountability and Police Reform (SSAPR) program achieved a handful of positive results. Specific successes were: (1) a series of laws and decrees governing the police were passed; (2) over 1,500 police officers were trained in police-community partnerships and accountability principles; and, (3) police-community meeting platforms were established to bring police, administrators, and civil society members together on a periodic basis. However, various other initiatives did not endure once this donor-driven program ended.

Several reasons account for why this police reform program fell short overall – without sustainability:

- 1) Patronage structures were prevalent in this context – whereby most police officers were loyal to certain superiors/powerholders; these police officers routinely took or accepted money from local citizens in order to provide regular/weekly payments to superiors/powerholders; and, these police officers thereby also had job security.
- 2) Police training courses (within the police reform program) were seen by many participants primarily as a means to get meals/money/uniforms for a 6-month period – without having to commit to serving in the police force for their communities. After the training period, some participants simply returned to their homes, some pawned their equipment, and only small numbers of recruits actually went on to serve their communities.
- 3) Many police commanders did not see any personal benefits from the reform program. They perceived the small number of newly trained and reform-minded recruits as threats to their interests. Consequently, they assigned just marginal work to those personnel and overlooked them for promotions.
- 4) The rather short timeframe (five years) of the program was insufficient to change the long-standing attitudes and operational practices of the police institution. Upon program termination and absence of donor involvement/resourcing, many of the

program's successes quickly eroded, and old practices of revenue collection by police for superiors returned to prominence.

In the wake of this short-lived reform program, low-ranking Congolese police officers had the opportunity to express what they themselves would want to see in future police reform efforts. By and large, they wanted generation of a positive image/professional pride (conveyed among the public), recognition from the state/government as being an important service, and support for working & living conditions. The police officers mentioned "pride and honor" as the primary motivating factor and stated that new/serviceable uniforms would considerably help in this regard. Their list of desires included: sufficient pay, suitable uniforms/equipment, regular training, merit-based promotions, housing support, child care, health care, pension, and help with transportation.

Based upon contextual analysis and inclusive of these police officers' inputs, the authors of the article upon which this lesson is based have presented several low-cost measures for "locally-driven police reform" – as an impactful, financially viable, and sustainable way forward.

- Address simple material shortcomings – e.g., provide uniforms, radios, office equipment/supplies, etc. on a regular basis – to improve the basic working conditions/essentials of local police officers.
- For the currently existing police camps (where many police reside), get local administrators involved to improve infrastructure (water, electricity, etc.), and encourage donors to invest in camp facilities.
- Improve operation of the existing health care fund for police – to fulfill basic healthcare needs – and have the Inspector General of Police monitor this fund's activities to help guard against any misuse.
- Understanding that many police contribute to informal *Likilimba* funds to help with education, child care, food bills, etc., consider taking steps to formalize and improve efficiencies of this mechanism.
- Revive the police coaching program, whereby trained police coaches provided mentoring for lower-level commanders and station chiefs on policing procedures and helped instill a spirit of reform.
- Strengthen the police-community meeting platforms by encouraging inclusion of various donor programs (governance, education, and health) – to expand security support, interfaces, resources, etc.
- Examine the patronage payment system to identify which practices can harm civilians, constitute human rights abuses, or undermine the police institution – and work to address/change such activities.

The prevalence of the patronage payment system in this particular context is important to understand, and it is equally important to deal with this system "by, with, and through" the local stakeholders. Reassurances would need to be developed and provided to officials/powerholders that their status can still be maintained – while low-cost, locally-driven police reform measures are implemented in the interests of improving pride, honor, professionalism, and performance of local police and the safety & security of communities.

Recommendations:

When designing programs for police reform (security sector reform), consider focusing on “locally-driven police reform” – based on the experiences, needs, and motivations of the men and women serving in the local police. Understand context, and gain/incorporate local insights for:

- Improving working conditions (uniforms, equipment, supplies, etc.)
- Addressing living conditions (i.e., adequate support for basic living essentials)
- Investing in training, coaching, and mentoring
- Strengthening police-community relations
- Assessing and attending to societal practices, pressures, etc. that impact police work – working “by, with, and through” local stakeholders

Sources:

1. Primary reference: “[Putting Everyday Life at the Centre of Reform in Bukavu](#),” by Michel Thill, Robert Njangala and Josaphat Musamba, Rift Valley Institute, March 2018. Note: This lesson does not intend to take credit from, copy, remix, or change the authors’ article in any way whatsoever. Rather, it serves to highlight just a few of the many excellent points raised by those authors – potentially for reform planners to take into consideration.

2. Other references:

- “[Evaluation: Security Sector Accountability and Police Reform Programme](#),” Department for International Development, UK, 27 October 2016
- “[Community Based Strategies for Peace and Security \(CBSPS\)](#),” by Lawrence Mitchell, Peace Operations Training Institute (POTI), April 2008



Mambassa, DRC – 24 Aug 2013. Local women attend the inauguration ceremony for a newly built police station. (Photo credit: UN / Sylvain Liechti)

3. DDR LESSONS

Community Action Plans vs. Arms Proliferation in South Sudan (Lesson #2693)

Observation:

A community-based project launched by Saferworld in 2017 in South Sudan achieved notable, positive impacts in reducing the dangers posed by widespread proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Although not tied to a broader national level program, this Saferworld intervention made a significant dent in “disarmament” across several communities and offers lessons with regard to building and expanding community capacity to effect change in conjunction with local officials.

Discussion:

In April 2017, Saferworld, with support from the United Nations Mines Action Service (UNMAS), implemented a 1-year project that built capacity in three major communities of South Sudan – Kuajok, Rumbek Central, and Rumbek East – to address the problems posed by the widespread availability and access to SALW. Saferworld organized and facilitated several educational, experience-sharing events in these communities – attended by 90 community members that included people from civil society organizations (CSOs), women’s groups, youth groups, and local authorities. UNMAS essentially brought community members together to share ideas and inclusively develop “community action plans” to help solve their local SALW problems. The objectives of the “community action plans” were: to build community capacity, raise community awareness of the dangers posed by SALW proliferation, tackle the demand for SALW by addressing the root causes of localized conflicts, and engage local authorities through advocacy meetings to encourage the adoption of measures to improve citizen security.

Best practices and key ideas that surfaced in the “community action plans” were:

- 1) Improving knowledge and influencing attitudes and behaviors;
- 2) Building local knowledge and capacity of communities and local authorities;
- 3) Addressing demand for SALW; and
- 4) Mitigating dangers posed by SALW in communities.

1) Improving knowledge and influencing attitudes and behaviors (Information/awareness campaign):

- The most successful campaigns used media such as radio, television, print media, and social media platforms, as well as employed physical distribution of information/educational materials through posters, flyers, banners, t-shirts, etc.
- Campaigns that collected data on deaths, injuries, robberies, and sexual and gender-based violence involving the use of SALW and that then “armed” community members to report the facts to local authorities (with requests for action) proved to be powerful.

Within Rumbek Central County, this resulted in prompt action by the local authority in Nyotikangui, who came to realize – through the data & analysis presented to him – the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in his community.

- After participating in the community action group meetings, women of Rumbek Central and Rumbek East began to reject the storage of arms in their houses and spread this message: “It is unsafe to keep firearms where our children are playing.”
- Youth-centered awareness-raising campaigns, during which students marched with posters depicting their disapproval of the proliferation and misuse of SALW in their communities, persuaded other youths to stop loitering with guns in public places and encouraged the county commissioner and police to increase their presence in those places.

2) Building local knowledge and capacity of communities and local authorities (Inclusive capacity-building & follow-up activities):

- Saferworld and partners provided initial training that focused on “participatory action planning” – so that community members and local authorities could share knowledge on SALW issues (including the proliferation of weapons and unexploded ordnance), build local capacity for developing “community action plans,” and then implement them.
- After implementation, groups came back together to discuss actions/approaches that worked well in particular locations and those that worked less well. They measured the impacts achieved – to better understand and highlight what worked best.
- A certain member of the community action group in Kuajok talked about how his group had saved school children in the area from dangers of unexploded ordnance. Children had retrieved a rocket-propelled grenade shell from a hole near their school and had begun to play with it. However, owing to the training he had received from Saferworld and UNMAS, he recognized the shell as a weapon/hazard and took it from the children. He then called UN personnel over to the area to have them search for other unexploded ordnance, which they then safely detonated away from the area. This community member emphasized that the training received should help his whole community deal with various SALW threats.

3) Addressing demand for SALW through Dialogue:

- Saferworld emphasized holding peace dialogues to address local intra- and inter-communal disputes, because such communal disputes had been a major source of armed violence – and an underlying factor that had compelled many individuals to acquire weapons. The peace dialogues brought together community leaders such as chiefs, women leaders, and youth leaders, as well as CSO members and local government authorities.
- Saferworld organized advocacy meetings with local authorities to influence decisions, policies, and legislation to address SALW problems. From one such advocacy meeting in Rumbek East, the commissioner acted on a request by the chiefs and community action groups to create gun free zones for public places (e.g., markets, schools, health clinics, and public gathering places). This new policy helped to

reduce crimes involving firearms, such as armed robbery and random shootings. Likewise, in Kuajok, after a series of meetings that brought together community action groups, partners and local authorities, government representatives initiated state-level legislation to regulate the possession and use of SALW by civilians.

4) Mitigating dangers posed by SALW in communities through **Tailored Training**:

- Saferworld conducted tailored training sessions (tailored to the specific community/context) that focused on the risks of civilians possessing automatic firearms.
- As an outcome of this training, leaders in one community/cattle camp initiated a practice of collecting all firearms to keep them in one place – an arms storage site guarded by selected individuals on a regular basis. This practice had a positive impact in reducing the number of shootouts – which previously had been quite common in the cattle camp and which often had resulted in injuries and killings.

Outside of these local actions/best practices, community action groups recommended that **larger efforts** be undertaken to lobby the national government to demand increased security at South Sudan's porous borders in the interest of preventing the smuggling of SALW from neighboring countries. Also, noting that members of government security forces had been selling guns and ammunition to civilians, another recommendation was for the proper storage of arms and ammunition, controlled dispatch and inventory management, and proper registration/tagging/marketing of weapons assigned to security forces. Finally, community action groups recommended that a comprehensive, well-coordinated, and nationwide voluntary disarmament program be embarked upon.

Recommendations:

1. In contexts where the proliferation and misuse of SALW has been a pervasive problem, consider resourcing projects aimed at building local/community capacity (inclusive of local authorities, women, men, youth, and CSOs) to help effect change. Consider incorporation of the best practices discussed above: information/awareness campaigns; inclusive capacity-building & follow-up activities; intra- and inter-communal peace dialogues for purposes of resolution and influence; and, training tailored to specific communities/context.
2. If national-level disarmament programs are initiated, ensure that lower/community-level stakeholders are fully informed and included, and that steps are taken to synchronize local/community disarmament actions with the overarching national-level program.

Source:

This lesson is based on the following report: "[Communities Tackling Small Arms and Light Weapons in South Sudan: Lessons Learnt and Best Practices](#)," Saferworld, July 2018.

Major Shortcomings of DDR Programs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

(Lesson #2699)

Observation:

Five major shortcomings contributed to the failure of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) over the 2002-2009 timeframe, perpetuating security problems well beyond: (1) unrealistically short timelines to accomplish stated goals, (2) inadequate funding, (3) an over-emphasis on disarmament, (4) the failure of the DRC to enact meaningful Security Sector Reform (SSR) and create competent security forces, and (5) the DRC's troubled relationships with neighboring countries, particularly Rwanda.

Discussion:

After several years of armed conflict in the DRC, combatant groups ultimately agreed to peace terms on 17 December 2002. These terms called for the establishment of DDR programs. DRC leaders, supported by various international actors, proceeded to create four distinct DDR programs: a DDR-Reintegration and Resettlement program aimed at repatriating foreign fighters, two national programs aimed at demobilizing various Congolese rebel and militia groups, and one program that focused specifically on the province of Ituri – an area plagued by violent rebel groups. After seven years' time, however, these four DDR programs failed to accomplish their objectives – with many ex-combatants resuming their former livelihoods as fighters. The DRC's DDR programs largely failed because of five specific shortcomings:

1) Unrealistically short timelines to accomplish stated goals.

The DDR-Reintegration and Resettlement program – which targeted militant groups including the *Interahamwe* (a Hutu paramilitary organization), groups of fighters formerly of the *Forces Armées Rwandaises* (FAR / Rwandan Army Forces), and various other ethnic militia groups – allowed only 90 days for the withdrawal of Rwandan fighters and for the dismantlement of the *Interahamwe* and FAR groups within the DRC. 90 days was not enough time for the DRC to train, mobilize and deploy its own security forces to oversee the resettlement/repatriation process. Also, this short timeframe did not give the UN (MONUC) enough time to prepare and deploy sizable formations to help implement this complex process over an under-governed eastern region.

2) Inadequate funding.

The various DDR programs all suffered from inadequate funding. The DDR-Reintegration and Resettlement program ran out of money halfway through its lifespan. For all four DDR programs, the services planned/promised for demobilized combatants and their families (financial support, food, clothing, shelter, health care, and psychological counseling) could not be delivered on a consistent basis due to funding shortfalls. Also, only \$14 million

was allocated for reintegration efforts in the DRC's military (FARDC) – causing limitations/difficulties for that organization to incorporate former combatants.

3) An over-emphasis on disarmament.

The DDR programs focused heavily on the disarmament piece, to the detriment of reintegration. Estimated numbers of personnel who disarmed were: 402 in the DDR-RR program, 198,820 in the two national programs, and several thousand in the Ituri program. In the latter program, some 6,200 weapons were collected; however, 70% were old and unusable – indicating that many ex-combatants were not actually giving up their good/functioning weapons. For most fighters who turned in their weapons, however, alternative lifestyles/employment opportunities were not provided. DDR program managers failed to emphasize the reintegration phase or properly resource it. Miniscule funding allocated for vocational training, education, employment assistance, etc. quickly ran out.

4) The failure of the DRC to enact meaningful SSR.

The DRC's government failed to take action to reform its security forces (military, police), professionalize them, or deploy them in sufficient numbers to critical/volatile areas such as Ituri. The absence of professional/proficient security forces across the eastern region translated to a huge security vacuum – soon filled by militia groups and criminal gangs, with many new members joining their ranks for want of security, food, work, etc. Also, numerous community leaders/chiefs in that region proceeded to organize their own local militia groups for protection/security.

5) The DRC's troubled relationships with neighboring countries, particularly Rwanda.

Rwandan militants/deserters proved to be problematic – with some helping the Congolese Tutsis organize the notorious M23 rebel group – fighting for the Tutsi population in North Kivu against Hutu militias. The M23, Hutu militias/nationalists, Rwandan fighters living in the DRC, and external support from Rwanda perpetuated the violence/conflict throughout the Kivu region for several years, with the UN ultimately deploying a Force Intervention Brigade and authorizing offensive operations to counter/neutralize the M23. However, international and regional bodies did not endeavor to fix the problematic relations between the DRC and its neighbors, nor create effective mechanisms for removing foreign fighters from the DRC.

Bottom Lines:

...The DDR programs in the DRC demonstrate that ... demobilizing armed combatants requires a **transnational or even regional approach** in order to stabilize a country and end the fighting. (Hakimu & Gregg, p. 35)

...Overall, the **DDR programs in the DRC did not place enough emphasis on long-term efforts during the “reintegration” phase.** ... Successful reintegration requires the parties to address a multitude of problems that go beyond illegally armed individuals, including security sector reform, good job opportunities for ex-combatants, and mechanisms for reconciliation and rebuilding trust within the communities that receive ex-combatants. (Hakimu & Gregg, pp. 29-30)

Recommendations:

1. Set realistic timelines to accomplish DDR work and to attain program goals/objectives. Gain long-term commitments from stakeholders.
2. Diligently work to gain and sustain funding for DDR – to support activities over the entire timeline of the DDR program(s).
3. Place emphasis on, and apply requisite resources to, the reintegration component of DDR.
4. Encourage the host nation and its partners to closely align DDR with SSR and to apply rigor to both.
5. Initiate and sustain international & regional efforts aimed at achieving cooperation and positive action among neighboring countries towards attainment of DDR goals/objectives.

Sources:

1. Primary reference: “Demobilizing and Reintegrating Armed Groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,” by MAJ Badura Hakimu and Dr. Heather S. Gregg, US Naval Post-graduate School, [CTX \(Combating Terrorism Exchange\), v.8:1](#), Spring 2018 (June 2018).

2. Other references:

- [“United Nations led Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration \(DDR\) in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo,”](#) by Tristan M. Allen, December 2011
- [“UN Force Intervention Brigade against the M23,”](#) by David Mosinski, PKSOI, 15 November 2013



Nyabiondo, DRC – 4 April 2008. After agreeing to disarm and repatriate, Rwandan fighters of the FARDC board a UN helicopter headed for a camp in Goma. (Photo credit: UN / Sylvain Liechti)

Gender-Sensitive DDR Processes: Integrating Female Ex-Combatants in Sierra Leone (Lesson #2486)

Observation:

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) processes have narrowly defined women's roles in armed conflict by focusing on women primarily as victims, showing reluctance to identify them as soldiers. Because of this lack of gender sensitization in programming, female ex-combatants, such as those from Sierra Leone's 11-year civil war (1991-2002), have largely avoided participating in DDR processes.

Discussion:

The DDR process for ex-combatants in Sierra Leone has been harkened internationally as a model for success. It was implemented by the UN peacekeeping mission United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and its partners following the signing of the Lome Peace Accord in 1999. "Under the programme, UNAMSIL disarmed combatants from the main warring factions, the RUF and the Civil Defence Forces, a government militia, as well as elements of the former Sierra Leone Army and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council," (UNAMSIL, p. 1). By the completion of the DDR process in February 2004, over 75,000 adult soldiers and more than 6,800 child soldiers had participated in the process. "Demobilized combatants got small cash stipends while undergoing six-month training after which they were then sent back into civilian life with start-up tool kits to help them find work," (UNAMSIL, p. 1). Almost 55,000 ex-combatants received reintegration benefits such as skills training programs, formal education, and/or tool kits, and over 42,000 weapons were collected and destroyed.

While Sierra Leone's DDR process was recognized internationally as a success, the vast majority of both adult and child beneficiaries were male. The percentages of women/girls who participated in the DDR process were very low compared with the number who actually participated in the war – only 5,000 out of the 75,000 adults in DDR were women, and only 8% of the participating child soldiers were girls. While the exact number of females involved in the fighting in Sierra Leone remains unknown, estimates range from 10-50% of the armed factions. Some female ex-combatants in Sierra Leone joined armed factions voluntarily and many achieved high military ranks, leading lethal attacks, fighting, and killing, in addition to often acting as sex slaves. Some also had children from the rebels. According to interviews with over 50 former female soldiers in the post-war context, over 75% of those interviewed described their roles as 'active combat duty.' "From these interviews it becomes clear that women and girls participated in all facets of war including active combat, commanding, and military training," in addition to various supporting roles, (MacKenzie, p. 249).

Despite this lived reality, few if any programs were directed towards female ex-combatants as soldiers. The DDR program in Sierra Leone used several labels to refer to 'girls and women associated with the fighting forces,' including 'camp followers,' 'sex slaves,' 'bush wives,' and 'abductees.' In this way, even if these women had actually taken an active

part in the violence or fighting, girls/women in this context on the whole were classified as victims. Many of these women were in fact victims on one level. Sexual violence was rampant, used systematically as a currency during the war and experienced by an estimated 70-90% of the women. However, focusing on only one aspect of their experience isolated many female ex-combatants from their lived reality of also participating in the violence. Furthermore, women in supporting roles were not considered to be 'real soldiers,' even though male ex-combatants in similar supporting capacity were treated as soldiers by the DDR programs. In this way, the DDR program was based on gendered stereotypes of how men and women experience war, which "led to a disarmament process that did not address the 'actual lived experiences' of girls and women," (MacKenzie, p. 246).

There were several barriers that limited female participation in DDR due to how the process was structured. One such barrier to the participation of female ex-combatants in the Sierra Leone DDR process was the weapons policy. Initially, each combatant was required to turn in a gun during the "Disarmament" phase in order to be eligible for the DDR program. However, "both males and females who performed support roles during the conflict (including domestic tasks, acting as spies or messengers, and looters) may or may not have ever possessed a gun," (MacKenzie, p. 251). Many female ex-combatants did not have a gun or no longer had a gun, or had used an alternative type of weapon, such as a machete. A NOREF report maintains that "[...] women often shared guns when engaged in fighting. The fact that sometimes four or five women shared one gun became a challenge during the DDR process, when the handover of an individual gun was required for an individual to be considered eligible to participate in DDR programmes," (UNAMSIL, p. 2). Over 11 years of war, items were lost, stolen, and/or transferred; furthermore, some commanders deliberately took weapons from women/girls to preclude their eligibility in DDR.

Another obstacle preventing female ex-combatants from participating in the DDR process was the way in which the children's and adults' DDR processes were separated. The distinction and eligibility for each respective program was based on international definitions of the age limits for children and youth. However, these international standards did not make sense in the local context. Local traditions differentiated children from adults based on the completion of certain traditional ceremonies, not on age. As such, even if a young girl had been with the rebel forces and had already born a child of her own, she would not be considered an adult in the local community if she had not completed the milestone rituals. If she was young enough, she could still qualify for the children's DDR process – however, she might not consider herself to be a child because of having had her own child. In this situation, attending a DDR process might be shameful for her or her family. This distinction between adult's and children's DDR caused many such female ex-combatants to avoid the process altogether.

The "Reintegration" stage of the DDR process also posed challenges for female ex-combatants. "Women were given few choices in their reintegration process: silence or stigma, limited training or nothing, isolation or marriage, motherhood, and returning to their families," (MacKenzie, p. 258). Traditionally, reintegration for women has been treated as a sensitization process to their marriageability if they had been raped or had children out of wedlock. This is an important consideration, especially given the high degree of sexual violence many

women experienced and their subsequent unique needs. However, these are not the only factors to consider. It was assumed that reintegration for women would be a 'social' process that would happen 'naturally.' Yet, in situations of conflict, norms are often disrupted and the social order is rearranged. Some women were empowered by the conflict and by the new roles they could fulfill because of it. So, returning back to norms of the past meant that they would lose power and status, especially since such women are often sidelined out of post-conflict policies. Furthermore, the training options available for women in Sierra Leone's DDR reintegration phase were trades such as tailoring, soap-making, and weaving. These were very gendered options, not particularly lucrative, and seemed condescending to women who had participated and led military units in rebel movements for 11 years.

As such, few female ex-combatants participated or desired to participate in Sierra Leone's DDR process. The vast majority of those interviewed did not think that it would be useful to them and lacked access to accurate information about the program. (44 of the 50 women interviewed, for example, had escaped from armed groups but were not aware that they would still qualify for the DDR process as escapees.) Others had negative perceptions of the process, seeing it as corrupt and fearing that it was a trap to identify anti-government combatants since photo ID cards were a prerequisite for DDR start-up packages. Many were concerned that identifying themselves would lead to potential retaliation. Female ex-combatants faced different kinds of stigma than did returning males; men might even be seen as heroes for having participated in the fighting. Women, however, were largely not seen in a positive way for having participated in the war. Many female ex-combatants and escapees subsequently avoided DDR because they were trying to disassociate themselves from the armed factions.

For both male and female ex-combatants to fully participate in and benefit from DDR processes, the programs cannot be designed as a gender-neutral process. "The case of Sierra Leone demonstrates that the failure to address gender as a factor in post-conflict programming is not only sacrificing gender equality, but also the overall effectiveness of the DDR process and the chances for a true and lasting transition from conflict to peace," (MacKenzie, p. 243).

Recommendations:

1. Consult with female ex-combatants in the program design for DDR to understand both the ways in which they have been victimized by the conflict and "the ways in which they have participated in the conflict as agents, as supporters, and as soldiers," (MacKenzie, p. 261). All too often, "[p]rograms for female victims of the war, abducted girls and women, and girls left behind were developed in the absence of women's own accounts of what roles they took up during the war, how they perceived the DDR, and why they did not participate in the DDR," (MacKenzie, p. 255).
2. Utilize GENDER MAINSTREAMING to form gender-sensitive DDR models so that gender is considered and included ahead of time, not as an afterthought. This includes identifying women as ex-combatants, establishing appropriate criteria for them to participate in DDR, understanding the obstacles to women's political participation 'post-conflict,' and being sensitive to their experiences of stigmatization and discrimination.

- Take local traditions into account (e.g., child – adult ceremonies) so that DDR is not just an internationally-imposed process.
- Incorporate sensitivity to rampant sexual violence but do not use it to define women’s experiences too narrowly.
- Emphasize the need for reintegration of female ex-combatants without assuming that it will be a natural social process. Offer livelihood options that would be relevant to their experience, not based solely on gender stereotypes. Do not pressure women to resume traditional gender roles, especially if these roles have been broken by over a decade of war.

3. Provide clear information about the DDR process, educating the public on eligibility and on the use of ex-combatant personal information (for photo ID cards, etc.). Target specific audiences for awareness-raising, such as female ex-combatant soldiers and escapees. Utilize language that fits with the lived experience of these women.

Implications:

If gender mainstreaming is utilized in the design of DDR processes, then DDR may be more relevant for female ex-combatants. If it is more relevant to female ex-combatants, they may participate more in the process. If they participate in a process that is tailored to meet their unique needs, then they may have access to increased opportunities to relevant livelihoods and community participation. Also, if female ex-combatants are educated about the DDR process and how their personal information would be used, it may decrease their anxiety about participating in DDR.

If the DDR process is not sensitized to sexual violence, then female ex-combatants’ needs may go unaddressed. However, if DDR programs solely focus on sexual violence for women, female ex-combatants will only be seen as victims, even though some may have also participated in the violence. If they are only seen as victims and not also as agents in the conflict, their roles in the conflict may be “depoliticized,” which may take them out of the ‘post-conflict’ policy discourse. *“By encouraging women and girl soldiers to return to their “normal places” in the community, any new roles or positions of authority they may have held during the conflict are stripped from them, and [...] then the DDR process risks entrenching gender inequality,”* (MacKenzie, p. 258, 261). However, if women are taken seriously (by DDR programs) for the various roles they held during the conflict, then they may be able to sustain the social change of gender norms and experience empowerment ‘post-conflict.’

Sources:

- [“Women in armed groups and fighting forces: lessons learned from gender-sensitive DDR programmes,”](#) by Elisa Tarnaala, NOREF, June 2016
- [“Securitization and Desecuritization: Female Soldiers and the Reconstruction of Women in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone,”](#) by Megan MacKenzie, Security Studies 18:241-261, Routledge, 2009
- [“Fact Sheet 1: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration,”](#) United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL / MINUSIL), December 2005

Lesson Author: Ms. Katrina Gehman (lesson written while working as a lessons learned analyst at PKSOI, 11 August 2016).

4. DDR LESSONS – LAKE CHAD BASIN REGION (MNJTF)

Multinational Military Forces Operating across National Boundaries in the Absence of Agreed Regional Policy (Lesson #2706)

Observation:

Multinational (MN) forces need to be backed by international organizations and enabling agreements. Where a MN force has been sponsored and deployed without adequate underpinning cross-border legislation, then the ability of the force to operate effectively is limited. Surrender policies, the handling of Prisoners of War/Captured Persons (PW/CPERS), rehabilitation of prisoners, and the treatment of 'cooperative victims' must be the same across the MN Area of Responsibility (AOR). In terms of the challenge represented by Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR), getting pan-nation agreement on procedures and associated training to respond appropriately and consistently to defections is significant.

Discussion:

This insight is based on the operations of the anti-Boko Haram Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in the first half of 2018, but the authors are confident that the issue extends across the mandate of the MNJTF and is likely to endure. The discussion is the requirement for mirrored legislation in the affected states to ensure that treatment is equal across the MNJTF AOR and the force can adhere to a pan-Lake Chad policy. Messaging must be coherent to ensure that the surrender policy is clear and that Surrendered Personnel (SEP) are not 'advantaged' or 'disadvantaged' in different states. The tension lies with the fact that not all the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) nations are equal in the fight or willing members of the coalition. Boko Haram is a Nigerian problem which has been exported to the other LCB nations. To this end, the requirement for equal burden sharing is not evident, especially as Nigeria is the regional hegemon. The absence of a single pan-DDR policy and the lack of an MNJTF police component to bridge the gap between the military task force and national security agencies limit the actions of the MNJTF to military operations and a shallow information operational footprint rather than giving the Force Commander and Head of Mission the full range of levers to underwrite the campaign.

The African Union and MNJTF hosted a DDR/Regional Stabilization Conference in N'Djamena, Chad in November 2017 and aimed at being the first of three to deliver a comprehensive DDR plan for the Lake Chad Basin. The conference was planned for about 50 participants with real DDR experience and from the target communities. However, as the span of invitees expanded, the efficiency of the conference degraded and the result was simply a list of goals. A much smaller group of DDR experts (including a representative from the U.S. Department of State) was created to draft the regional DDR plan, but by September 2018 had still not concluded. One of the biggest blocks involved the law of each participating country and each country's approach to DDR – i.e., different national approaches and inevitable inconsistency.

Recommendations:

There is always a challenge between 'doing something' and setting the force. The danger is that the two are never reconciled because for some nations, simply sending troops is enough

and there is little interest in deeper engagement. Equally, the dangers of regional rivalries play out in the MNJTF space. The recommendation is the imperative to set out a draft regional Security Sector Reform (SSR)/DDR roadmap at the very start to deliver a pan-Lake Chad policy that shapes the operations of the MNJTF. While regional support is certainly required for a workable pan-region DDR plan, a small group of experts is needed to write the plan. Once written, the different nations must then adapt their laws to match the agreed protocols to ensure consistency.

Implications:

If this recommendation is not followed, then there will be a mix in surrender policies between the nations of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), which erodes anti Boko Haram messaging and offers potential 'safe havens' to defectors where they will be simply released into the community or indeed overloads a partner with a better program of rehabilitation.

Source:

This lesson is based on the experience of the lesson authors during Operation TURUS/ BARKHANE – Lake Chad Basin (January–June 2018).

Lesson Authors: COL Jon Cresswell (UK) and LTC Adam Martin (US), Cell for Coordination and Liaison (CCL) to the MNJTF (Head CCL and US Deputy Commander).



N'Djamena, Chad – 2 Nov 2017. Attendees discuss policy issues during the DDR/Regional Stabilization Conference hosted by the AU and MNJTF. (Photo credit: LTC Martin)

Coordination at the Front Lines of DDR (Lesson #2707)

Observation:

Attending multiple conferences hosted by diverse organizations such as U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and the African Union, as well as working closely with regional civilian and military Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) experts from May 2017 to April 2018 while deployed as the USAFRICOM Liaison Officer to the Multi-national Joint Task Force (MNJTF), I observed that DDR is more a law enforcement

function, than a military function. However, the military is frequently expected to carry the greater share of the tasks involved.

Discussion:

Through the course of my time at the MNJTF, DDR was one of the major focuses amongst the MNJTF and the international community interested in the Boko Haram problem. Throughout this time, there were multiple conferences, many additional meetings, reams of white papers, and lots of brainpower devoted to this problem. Each country had a DDR program – some locally run, some nationally, but none of them were the same. One of the most interesting topics of discussion was who should actually process the defectors/surrenderees. Some people felt the military should be responsible for this process, others thought law enforcement officers. Each nation in the MNJTF (Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Cameroon, and Benin) had a different perspective. One of the most interesting additional elements in this equation was the vigilance committees – groups of citizens in each community that are more akin to volunteer community watch groups. These vigilance committees provided great local knowledge to the military troops in the areas and worked with local law enforcement. Through the conversations and conferences with military and community leaders, the general consensus was that the DDR must be run by the law enforcement community, with support of the military and vigilance committees. The problem with this is that the military was most likely the first government representative that defectors would encounter. If the military wasn't trained to deal with defectors, those attempting to defect could easily be killed or treated as detainees. Equally, the Soldiers would be at risk of fake defectors infiltrating their camps with hostile intentions. Training to better deal with both sides of this issue is important for the militaries of the Lake Chad Basin countries and any country dealing with DDR.

Recommendations:

The main recommendation to mitigate issues of which government organization is best suited to deal with defectors is to conduct at least minimal cross training between military, law enforcement, and other civilian organizations so that each one knows the procedures of the other and can communicate effectively and quickly to efficiently deal with DDR situations. This could even increase to liaison officers from each type of organization to be assigned, which would provide a strong level of expertise and reduce friction between the organizations.

Implications:

If these recommendations aren't followed, the lives of both civilians and Soldiers are put at risk. Additionally, the DDR process will not function as well if not carried out by the appropriate organizations.

Sources:

This lesson is based on the experience of the lesson author at the Cell for Coordination and Liaison (CCL), MNJTF, May 2017 – June 2018, N'Djamena, Chad.

Lesson Author: LTC Adam Martin (US), US Deputy Commander, MNJTF CCL.

Concise Guidance to Carry Out DDR **(Lesson #2708)**

Observation:

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) is a topic of great concern to the national governments in the Lake Chad Basin, as well as other countries with interests in the area, primarily European Union countries and the United States. However, all the detailed laws, debates over precise wording, and conferences do not translate well to concise guidance for Soldiers and Law Enforcement officers on the battlefield.

Discussion:

While the African Union, European Union, and United Nations representatives have spent years debating and trying to write DDR policy for the Lake Chad Basin countries, the Soldiers on the battlefield and the Law Enforcement and local government officials are the ones who have to implement these policies. Even when policies are written in French and English, many of the Soldiers and Law Enforcement officers speak neither of these languages. They are not able to translate prose into the actions expected by those who wrote them. There is often a disconnect between the writers and the executors of policy, which is very difficult to breach. Major General Irabor (Nigeria), the commander of the MNJTF at the time (2017-2018), even stated the same thing in private meetings and in public forums. Even though he had feet in both arenas, as a policy developer and local Soldier fresh from the battlefield, it was difficult for him to ensure those under his command complied with DDR policies of the four national governments he had to work with.

Recommendations:

While national laws must be detailed and thoroughly written to address all legal implications of the DDR process, directions and guidance to the military and law enforcement officers on the ground must be clear and concise and written in a manner that someone with minimal literacy can understand.

Implications:

If this recommendation isn't followed, the Soldiers and Law Enforcement officers will continue to do their best on the ground, but may not be as effective or efficient as they otherwise would with better guidance.

Sources:

This lesson is based on the experience of the lesson author at the Cell for Coordination and Liaison (CCL), MNJTF, May 2017 – June 2018, N'Djamena, Chad.

Lesson Author: LTC Adam Martin (US), US Deputy Commander, MNJTF CCL.

5. Key Points: SSR and DDR

SSR:

- Utilize a holistic approach to SSR. SSR strategy should cover the entire security network within the host nation – local security actors (military forces, national police, local police, border security, etc.) and all relevant institutions (ministries of interior, defense, and finance; national parliament; parliamentary committees that deal with security matters; etc.).
- Begin an SSR approach with an initial security needs assessment followed as soon as possible by the development of a strategic framework. Include broad consultations in the needs assessment and design of the strategic framework. Promote coherence and coordination across national governmental departments involved in SSR.
- Support and empower civil society organizations and women's groups, enabling them to fully participate in the SSR process.
- Understand the local historical and sociopolitical context. This will help external actors choose local partners for inclusion in various SSR activities. An in-depth knowledge of the local context is crucial to being able to identify stakeholders, attitudes, connections, etc. within the security sector and the affected communities.
- Plan and carry out SSR and DDR processes according to well-documented guidelines (see Annex B) – which must be tailored to the given context. Avoid pressures to focus on only the major tasks or to effect change as quickly as possible. Shortcuts – in vetting, training, etc. – can undermine the security sector in the long run.
- Closely align SSR and DDR. Linking SSR and DDR items/issues/concerns from the outset in program design will help to avoid duplication and ensure that activities reflect common objectives.
- There is a need to understand the “politics” of SSR and to pay attention at the outset to the impact that the political arrangements installed under a peace agreement might have on the implementation of SSR.
- Be clear about the roles and functions of each host nation security service/force.
- SSR needs to be seen as a long-term commitment. Set a long-term timeframe, to allow reforms to be achieved under challenging and changing conditions. Donors should commit their support for the duration of the SSR timespan.
- Implementation mechanisms should be as representative, participatory, and transparent as possible, and subject to monitoring, evaluation, and oversight by a neutral agency, such as the United Nations.
- Invest in educating, training, and mentoring security personnel.
- Instill and promote public service, human rights, and the rule of law among security force personnel. It is imperative that they respect the people whom they have sworn to serve and protect.
- Incorporate measures aimed at preventing illicit practices throughout the security network. Develop oversight mechanisms, objectives, and benchmarks for the purpose of eliminating corruption, abuse of office, etc. which could otherwise adversely affect reform efforts.
- Prioritize constructive engagements (through MoUs, formal arrangements, confidence-building mechanisms, etc.) between the police service, reform program managers, and local communities.
- Consider focusing on “locally-driven police reform” – based on the experiences, needs, and motivations of the men and women serving in the local police.
- Promote an internal culture of accountability within the police force.
- Emphasize the gradual development of host nation ownership, including civil society ownership. SSR sustainability requires dedicated, meaningful ownership and resources from the host nation.
- Legislative/parliamentarian governance and oversight should be strengthened in step with security sector reforms.

DDR:

- Utilize a strategic framework when planning/conducting a DDR intervention in a post-conflict environment (e.g., [UN IDDRS framework](#)).
- Key ingredients for a successful DDR program are:
 - political will, including commitment and pragmatism, throughout the process
 - careful preparation, including participatory methods that incorporate ex-combatants and assess the economic and social potential of areas of return
 - transparent and effective institutions managing delivery of services and de-centralizing implementation to communities
 - timely and adequate financing
 - integration with humanitarian and development efforts
- DDR needs to be planned with an awareness of future security constructs, personnel requirements, and training requirements and opportunities. In DDR plans and programs, the international community and host nation should emphasize the reintegration of former fighters into society.
- Disarmament programs must be realistically matched to conflict settings. This can include the use of mobile collection units, which have proven to be successful in cases where a primary centralized site is not sufficient. When disarmament programs are planned/initiated, ensure that lower-level stakeholders are fully informed and included, and that steps are taken to synchronize local disarmament actions with the overarching national-level program.
- Demobilization incentives should be attractive, pertinent, and linked to reintegration strategies.
- Key actions in the Disarmament and Demobilization (DD) process include:
 - Start DD planning early.
 - Tailor the DD strategy to local conditions.
 - Include details of DD in the peace agreement.
 - Provide credible security guarantees to build confidence in disarmament.
 - Maximize host nation ownership in the DD strategy.
 - Inform the population to build popular support.
 - Aim for inclusivity of all warring parties.
 - Include affected nontraditional combatants.
 - Ensure accountability to human rights standards through identification.
 - Ensure that DD is civilian-led, with technical input and operational support from international forces.
- Reintegration requires understanding and addressing the social and economic needs of the combatants. Reintegration also requires careful treatment of psychosocial impacts for child soldiers, women, girls, etc. who were abused during conflict. Ensure inclusive participation in reintegration: Former combatants and others associated with armed groups should be part of the process of creating a common vision of community life.
- If/when the U.S. is involved in the DDR intervention, designate ministerial advisors from the Departments of State, Defense, and Justice to work with the HN/executive authority to help keep the DDR program(s) on track.
- Initiate and sustain international and regional efforts aimed at achieving cooperation among neighboring countries towards attainment of DDR goals/objectives.

6. Author Information

Lead Author: Mr. David Mosinski

While assigned to PKSOI, he was the lead author of 32 publications covering various peace and stability topics, as well as author of 8 lesson reports and 5 organizational studies. His previous assignments included: Senior Intelligence Officer at U.S. Army Space & Missile Defense Command, Senior Intelligence Officer at U.S. Army Japan, Professor at the University of Notre Dame, 319th Military Intelligence Battalion Commander, XVIII Airborne Corps Intelligence Plans & Exercises Chief, and Partnership-for-Peace Exercise Program Manager at U.S. Army Europe.

7. Annexes

Annex A. Additional Lessons Meriting Attention (excerpts)

- [Reforming Security Sector Assistance for Africa](#)

Author: Mr. John “Jack” Dougherty

“The United States has sought to combat security threats in Africa by providing security sector assistance (SSA) to partner governments on the continent. RAND research indicates these efforts have a mixed record.

- In the Cold War, SSA appears to have increased the incidence of civil wars.
- In the post-Cold War era, SSA outside a peacekeeping context appears to have had little or no net effect on political violence.
- In peacekeeping contexts, however, SSA appears to have reduced the incidence of civil wars, terrorism, and state repression.” [Read more...](#)

- [Reintegrating Child Soldiers from Prison in Yemen](#)

Author: Ms. Katrina Gehman

“Amidst Yemen’s devastating and ongoing civil war, grave violations against children have increased. Children have been recruited into various armed factions and some have been imprisoned for their association with armed groups. One local women-led peace-building organization, the Prisoner’s Relief Initiative, successfully reintegrated child soldiers from prison in a port city in Yemen.” [Read more...](#)

- [Recruitment & Retention of Policewomen/leaders in the Afghan National Police](#)

Author: Ms. Katrina Gehman

“The inclusion of women in national police forces such as the Afghan National Police (ANP) can increase security effectiveness, community access to justice, and women’s leadership in the governance/security sector. However, Afghan women have faced barriers to both recruitment and retention in the ANP due to cultural attitudes, security threats, and lack of institutional support – as indicated in a 2016 study by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security (WPS).” [Read more...](#)

- [Essential Factors for DDR Programs to Achieve Success \(Experiences from Africa\)](#)

Author: Mr. David Mosinski

“Four factors have emerged as being essential for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs to succeed, according to certain case studies in Africa. Those factors are: (1) the will for peace, (2) coordinated implementation of DDR with other conflict resolution tools, (3) addressing the pitfalls of structural and cultural violence, and (4) sustaining push and pull drivers through rewards, persuasion, and coercion.”

[Read more...](#)

Annex B. Additional References on SSR and DDR

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Annex C. PKSOI **Lesson Reports** and SOLLIMS Samplers (2014-2018)

2018

- Transitional Public Security
- Foreign Humanitarian Assistance: The Complexity of Considerations
- **Stage-setting and Right-sizing for Stability**
- Complexities and Efficiencies in Peacekeeping Operations
- Inclusive Peacebuilding: Working with Communities
- Monitoring & Evaluation for Peace and Stability

2017

- **Lessons on Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)**
- Operationalizing Women, Peace, and Security
- Leadership in Crisis and Complex Operations
- Civil Affairs in Stability Operations

2016

- Refugees & Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
- Strategic Communication/Messaging in Peace & Stability Operations
- **Job Creation Programs – Insights from Africa and Conflict-affected States**
- Stabilization and Transition
- **Lessons from the MSF Hospital (Trauma Center) Strike in Kunduz**
- Investing in Training for, and during, Peace and Stability Operations
- Building Stable Governance
- **Lessons Learned – Peacekeeping Operations in Africa**
- Shifts in United Nations Peacekeeping

2015

- Foreign Humanitarian Assistance: Concepts, Principles and Applications
- Foreign Humanitarian Assistance [Foreign Disaster Relief]
- Cross-Cutting Guidelines for Stability Operations
- Lessons on Stability Operations from USAWC Students
- Security Sector Reform

2014

- **MONUSCO Lesson Report**
- Reconstruction and Development
- **Veterinary Support, Animal Health, and Animal Agriculture in Stability Operations**
- Women, Peace and Security
- Lessons on Stability Operations from USAWC Students
- Overcoming “Challenges & Spoilers” with “Unity & Resolve”
- Improving Host Nation Security through Police Forces