



## OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE NOTE

### DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION (DDR)

The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of armed groups and those who may be associated with armed groups (children and women) often constitute a major component of a peace agreement.

#### **I. DDR Principles**

The following list enumerates the principles and standards of DDR and should function as a guide to the peacemaker.

##### **▪ Clarity of Purpose**

DDR should be understood as a concept aimed not only at removing weapons from armed groups and combatants but to promote political discourse and sustainable reintegration in the political, economic and social sectors. The overall aim of the exercise is to enhance human security.

##### **▪ National Ownership**

Political commitment and will of the parties to implement the DDR process are key to its sustainability.

##### **▪ Accountability and Transparency**

National ownership is broader than government ownership. To support the political process and to enhance security, all actors must be accountable to progress and results in DDR.

##### **▪ Unity of Effort**

There must be unity of effort amongst the multitude of international, regional and local actors who are involved in any aspect of the DDR programme.

##### **▪ Sustainability**

DDR programmes must be sustainable in terms of their methodology and resources.

##### **▪ Respect for Commitment**

International pledges to support the DDR programme must be honoured.

##### **▪ International Norms and Conventions**

The DDR programme is guided by extensive normative and legal frameworks, such as international human rights law, refugee law, humanitarian law and criminal law.



## **II. How DDR Facilitates Peace Processes**

DDR is also a strategic substantive issue that could be used to facilitate a peace process (i.e. it could serve as an entry point, a confidence building measure, etc.) The following are some examples of how DDR issues could be used strategically in a peace process:

### **▪ Prisoners of War**

Exchange of prisoners of war is one element related to the DDR programme that can serve as a confidence building measure.

### **▪ Demobilization of Special Groups**

The demobilization of special groups such as children and women, disabled and chronically sick is another measure that can serve to promote confidence.

### **▪ Declaration of Forces and Weaponry**

Transparency on the issue of force level and structures and accompanying weaponry can also build trust.

### **▪ Weapons Control, Disarmament and Destruction**

At the appropriate time, control over existing stockpiles (joint supervision), disarmament (giving up the weapons) and weapons destruction are all tangible signs of increased confidence among former warring parties.

### **▪ Public Information Campaigns**

Extensive public information campaigns are a key aspect of the DDR programme that can help promote reconciliation and reintegration.

### **▪ Security Sector Reform**

Discussing the next steps in terms of how more democratic and accountable security forces may be established can also create an environment of trust amongst armed groups.

## **III. Considerations to Facilitate Implementation**

There are several issues that a mediator could consider to ensure that the DDR provisions adopted facilitate implementation and promote sustainable peace in post-conflict contexts. The international standards on DDR are described in the United Nations Integrated DDR Standards (IDDRS). Generally DDR provisions in peace agreements should:

- Demonstrate flexibility and country specificity;
- Reflect timelines that are realistic;
- Address the different categories of armed elements: statutory and non-statutory



armed forces, women and children associated with the fighting forces, disabled, veterans, foreign combatants, mercenaries, etc.

- Prioritize the demobilization of children;
- Address both short-term and long-term strategies to promote security and the reintegration of ex-combatants;
- Deal with the demand (causes of conflict) and supply (perpetuators of conflict) aspect of small arms and light weapons;
- Provide clear responsibilities for relevant international, regional and national actors in the different aspects of the DDR programme (policy direction, implementation, funding, monitoring and evaluation);
- Exclude amnesty for those committing genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity;
- Linked to all other aspects of the peace agreement, such as Rule of Law reform and Security Sector Reform (SSR);
- Take into account the regional dimension of the conflict, to include implications for neighbouring DDR programmes such as the cross-border flow of weapons and combatants;
- Hold signatories accountable for their cooperation in the DDR programme.

## **Questions for the Peacemaker:**

1. Who are the parties to the DDR process?
2. What are the strategic ways (entry points, confidence building measures, etc.) in which DDR could be used to facilitate your particular peacemaking effort?
3. Are there any major armed elements in the conflict that would need to be disarmed, but are not signatories to the peace agreement?
4. How would these elements be addressed so that they do not derail a DDR process or the peace process as a whole?
5. What are the principles that would be applicable to the DDR effort in the particular conflict context?
6. How have the DDR principles been taken into account in the provisions?
7. What are the necessary elements to be included in the arrangement that if agreed



could facilitate effective planning and implementation of the DDR programme?

8. How would the provisions on DDR in the peace agreement be drafted to be consistent with the United Nations approach to DDR?
9. How could the DDR provisions be used strategically to provide space for the development of longer-term strategies that could prevent the re-recruitment of disarmed combatants?

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**Sources and Citation:**

1. Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Best Practices Unit, DDR Advisers in collaboration with the Department of Political Affairs, Peacemaking Databank Project Team.
2. Integrated DDR Standards, First Edition (2005); [www.unddr.org](http://www.unddr.org).