

# DDR INTEGRATED DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION STANDARDS

## The UN commemorates the first anniversary of the launch of the IDDRS

Jointly developed by staff from 15 United Nations agencies, departments, funds and programmes<sup>1</sup> and the International Organisation for Migration, the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) are the most comprehensive body of knowledge on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) in existence, providing wide-ranging guidance for all those involved in this field.

While the UN has been involved in supporting disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes since the late 1980s, this is the first attempt to develop a system-wide approach to DDR. In the past five years, DDR has been included in the mandates for peacekeeping operations in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Liberia and Sudan, including Darfur. In these countries alone there is an expected caseload of over 417,000 ex-combatants. Simultaneously, the UN has increased its DDR engagement in non-peacekeeping contexts, such as Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo, Indonesia (Aceh), Kosovo, Niger, Somalia, the Solomon Islands and Uganda.

So what are the IDDRS? They are the most comprehensive one-stop source of policy guidance on DDR, which enable any practitioner to translate the guidance into an operational strategy. They are also the most complete repository of lessons learned and good practices drawn from the experience of all United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes in DDR. In sum, they are a crucial tool for informed decision-making in every step of DDR programming and are the basis for the UN to deliver as one on DDR.

The web-based DDR Resource Centre ("<http://www.unddr.org>") which includes electronic copies of all of the IDDRS documents as well as the Operational Guide which shows users how to find their way round IDDRS and the Senior Managers Notes. For further information on the IDDRS, or to obtain copies of the IDDRS documents, please contact:

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**So if you think you are familiar with the IDDRS and want to test your knowledge on the IDDRS, take the quiz below or find it on the UN DDR Resource Centre – [www.unddr.org](http://www.unddr.org).**



<sup>1</sup> IAWG members are as follows: Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA), Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Department of Political Affairs (DPA), Department of Public Information (DPI), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health Organization (WHO).



## The first IDDRS quiz:

	Questions	Click for answer	Answer in IDDRS
<b>Question 1</b>	What are the different approaches to reintegration that could be taken into account when planning a DDR programme?		<i>Section 7 of module 4.30</i>
<b>Question 2</b>	True or false: The Optional Protocol on Children and Armed Conflict prohibits armed groups from recruiting children under 18?		<i>Annex A of module 5.30</i>
<b>Question 3</b>	True or false: foreign combatants can become refugees after demobilisation?		<i>Paragraph 13.3.2 of module 5.40</i>
<b>Question 4</b>	Who are the national actors who should be involved in a DDR programme?		<i>Section 6 of module 2.30</i>
<b>Question 5</b>	How is the eligibility of candidates determined for entering a DDR programme?		<i>Section 7.3.6 of module 4.10</i>
<b>Question 6</b>	Which group of persons should never receive cash during the demobilization phase?		<i>Section 8.5 of module 5.30</i>
<b>Question 7</b>	Name three other security, peace-building and recovery programmes that DDR links into?		<i>Section 5 of module 2.20</i>
<b>Question 8</b>	What are the five general phases (stages) of planning for UN mission and post-conflict peace-building support?		<i>Section 5 of module 3.10</i>
<b>Question 9</b>	True or false: Ex-combatants and dependants should never be given cash handouts upon completion of demobilisation?		<i>Section 8.9.1 of module 4.20</i>
<b>Question 10</b>	Does including women and girls in a DDR programme make it gender-responsive?		<i>Section 6.2 of Module 5.10 (Assessment phase)</i>
<b>Question 11</b>	What are the guiding principles that ought to be adhered to while initiating/integrating HIV programming into DDR programmes?		<i>Section 6 of module 5.6</i>
<b>Question 12</b>	True or false – national ownership means Government ownership?		<i>Section 4.2 of module 3.30</i>



## Answer to question 1

The table below illustrates the different approaches to reintegration that can be used when planning a DDR programme.

APPROACH	PURPOSE	OBJECTIVE	CHARACTERISTICS	ACTIVITIES
Short-term stabilization (reinsertion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To draw ex-combatants away from fighting or criminality until a peace mission is deployed, or security sector or political reform is completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To provide rapid transitional support for resettlement and short-term income-generation opportunities to all potentially disruptive ex-combatants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Low cost per ex-combatant</li> <li>■ Short-term measure</li> <li>■ Only works when ex-combatants are not a long-term security threat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Information, counselling and referral services</li> <li>■ Transitional support schemes (food, clothing, transportation, other)</li> <li>■ Short-term labour-intensive projects</li> </ul>
Reintegration focused on ex-combatants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To provide ex-combatants with specifically designed, individually focused sustainable programmes for long-term reintegration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To involve ex-combatants in sustainable micro-projects to reduce the long-term security risks they present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Higher cost per ex-combatant</li> <li>■ Can create feelings of unfairness within the community</li> <li>■ To be used when ex-combatants represent a long-term threat to security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Information, counselling and referral services</li> <li>■ Microproject development through grants</li> <li>■ Training, technical advisory and related support services</li> </ul>
Community-based reintegration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To provide communities with tools and capacities to support reintegration of ex-combatants, together with IDPs, refugees and other vulnerable groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To support ex-combatant reintegration as a component of wider, community-focused reconciliation and recovery programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Highest cost per ex-combatant</li> <li>■ May not deal with ex-combatants' concerns directly</li> <li>■ Deals with the needs of the community as a whole</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Community projects with greater inclusion of all social actors</li> <li>■ Peace-building and reconciliation activities</li> <li>■ Local activities to improve security</li> </ul>

*For further information see section 7 of IDDRS module 4.30 on Social and Economic Reintegration*

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## Answer to question 2

The answer is :

True - On 25 May 2000, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the Optional Protocol (OP) to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict. The OP raises the age for direct participation in hostilities from 15 to 18 years. The OP prohibits conscription or forced recruitment and use by governments below the age of 18 and calls on States Parties to raise the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to 15 and above. It prohibits all recruitment - voluntary or compulsory - of children under 18 by armed forces and groups. Under article 6, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons within their jurisdiction recruited or used in hostilities contrary to the present Protocol are demobilized or otherwise released from service. States Parties shall, when necessary, provide such persons with all appropriate assistance for their physical and psychological recovery and their social reintegration. The OP entered into force on 12 February 2002.

*For further information on Children associated with armed forces and groups and DDR, please see module 5.30 on Children and DDR*

## Answer to question 3

True, however, refugee status determination for former combatants involves establishing three facts:

- that they have genuinely and permanently given up arms and become civilians;
- that they meet the definition of a refugee under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention or regional instruments;
- that they are not excluded from being protected as refugees, according to the exclusion clauses of refugee conventions.

*For further information see section 13.3.2 of IDDRS module 5.40 on Cross-Border Population Movements*

## Answer to question 4

The national actors who should be involved in a DDR programme are:

### Political parties

DDR is one component of the wider peace-building and recovery framework. This framework is often outlined in a peace agreement that lays out the way in which national institutions will manage post-conflict governance, including the respective roles that parties who signed the peace agreement will play in establishing and running national institutions and formulating policy. Because details of policy and institutional mechanisms are often left for further negotiation among the parties or within the transitional government or authority, it is necessary to ensure that DDR is linked to larger peace-building and recovery plans.

To build trust among the parties and the broader public, all key stakeholders in the political process, including those who have not directly participated in armed conflict, should be involved in the development of DDR policy and institutions. The coordinating body for DDR can do this by organizing national and local DDR committees that bring together local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs), and military and administrative authorities to discuss and agree to preparations for DDR.

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Although national DDR institutions should be politically neutral, it is important to include major political parties, e.g., through the establishment of an advisory or consultative mechanism, or through informal meetings, seminars and communications strategies when discussing the creation of national DDR structures.

Potential spoilers should be identified early in the assessment phase and strategies developed to win their support. There are a range of individuals and groups who may try to delay or undermine the DDR process, including: those with a political interest in undermining and derailing post-conflict transition; those with a personal interest in retaining power through the control of armed groups; and those with commercial or criminal interests protected through armed violence and the breakdown in the rule of law.

## Governments

National or transitional governments generally lead the establishment of institutions for DDR such as a national commission on DDR (NCDDR). This commission, or its equivalent, must be closely linked with government ministries, which will be responsible for longer-term national recovery and reintegration strategies (also see [IDDRS 3.30 on National Institutions for DDR](#)). DDR must also be connected to other transitional authorities such as ceasefire commissions, reintegration commissions, national economic recovery strategies, truth and reconciliation commissions, etc.

There are three major considerations when dealing with national authorities, and in particular NCDDRs, in post-conflict contexts:

- they can be perceived — rightly or wrongly — to favour one party over another;
- they may reflect a fragile balance of power between previously warring parties, making them weak;
- they may lack the technical expertise and capacity necessary to plan and manage complex DDR processes.

In order to assist in building local capacity, the UN system should assist the NCDDR by seconding to it or otherwise arranging for it to be supported by experts and consultants. The UN system should also play a guiding role to ensure that work plans are implemented and deadlines met. Also, to support the establishment of open, transparent and integrated governance structures for DDR, the UN can support and encourage the broad participation of all parties to the conflict and all parts of society in the national DDR structures.

While it is important to maintain central oversight of national programmes, supporting or establishing provincial and local authorities for the planning and delivery of DDR programmes allows for flexibility and greater responsiveness to regional and local conditions and dynamics, thus improving the chance for effective and sustainable reintegration. However, the decentralization of decision-making authority for DDR can be a source of difficulties in post-conflict States where central government is often trying to consolidate its administrative control over territories in which rebel groups have been operating.

## The military

The success of DDR programmes depends on adequate coordination among civilian, police and military institutions, so it is important to include civilian, police and military personnel in the DDR team to facilitate cooperation between the peacekeeping mission and external partners, including UN funds, agencies and programmes, as well as national military authorities. Possible ways of doing this include coordination meetings, the establishment of military liaison officers, and the integration of staff from organizations actively involved in DDR into a single DDR coordinating team. Civil–military cooperation should also take place between the UN blue helmets and the local population (also see [IDDRS 4.40 on UN Military Roles and Responsibilities](#) and [IDDRS 4.50 on UN Police Roles and Responsibilities](#)).

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## Non-signatory armed groups

Ideally, the DDR of all armed forces and groups is discussed as part of the peace accord and political agreement, and the different motivations and interests of leaders, field commanders, and members of armed forces and groups are understood before DDR planning begins.

If other forces and groups have not been represented in political processes or formal institutional mechanisms for DDR and/or have not signed the peace accord, a framework must be set up to secure their buy-in and participation. This is particularly important in areas where informal militias and/or criminal gangs have been active in conflict, but are not represented in political processes and negotiations. To avoid disagreements, the framework for inclusion must pay particular attention to the status of individuals in other armed forces and groups. One solution may be to establish a consultative framework for them that works together with the formal forum; another could be to bring in a neutral and respected non-UN body to negotiate with them. When dealing with such groups, UN partners must ensure that they have a mandate to do so. As the mandates of many peacekeeping missions are given in support of a peace agreement, the mission's mandate may be limited to assisting with the DDR of the groups listed in the peace agreement.

## Civil society

Civil society organizations based in local communities are stakeholders in the policy development and planning phases of DDR, and should be consulted through formal and informal mechanisms. During the implementation phase, they are local partners and service providers. However, international assistance will usually be necessary to build their capacity in networking, strategic planning, programme development, financial management and communications strategies. Such support is one means through which DDR increases capacities within communities for post-conflict peace-building and also for recovery in the broader sense. CSOs are very different and may include NGOs, religious groups, traditional authorities, workers' associations, women's organizations, human rights groups, the private sector and so on. After war, these organizations may be polarized along political, religious or ethnic lines, and may represent specific interests, so their legitimacy and representation should be checked.

Although their capacities may have been weakened by conflict, CSOs can become partners in DDR by providing individual opportunities for reintegration through employment and training as one of many industry and economic recovery strategies. At the local level, partnerships with small businesses support the creation of sustainable reintegration opportunities for ex-combatants and their dependants.

Women's leaders and associations deserve special mention: with the right support and encouragement — both at national and grassroots levels — they can make significant and unique contributions to all phases of the DDR process, from political negotiation and planning to programme design and implementation. UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) states that all departments and agencies of the UN system have a duty to promote the representation and participation of women in all phases of DDR, to remove obstacles to their participation, and to provide alternative forums for their participation, as well as ensuring access to appropriate capacity-building programmes.

## The media

Like other institutions in post-conflict societies, the capacities, infrastructure and even neutrality of the local and national media will have been reduced. Yet the media are crucial for the delivery of messages to armed forces and groups, and members of the general public regarding post-conflict reconciliation and peace-building strategies, including the implementation of DDR programmes. A media and communications strategy, including capacity-building, must be deployed early in the DDR planning process to ensure that members of local and national media receive accurate and timely information as the process evolves.

*For further information see IDDRS module 2.30 on Participants, Beneficiaries and Partners*

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## Answer to question 5

Detailed cross-examination of DDR candidates' knowledge of key battles, commanders and armed force/group structure can be used to confirm eligibility. Yet this will only be effective if knowledgeable local staff are available to assist with this task. Female staff should be included to screen female combatants who may otherwise feel too intimidated to come forward.

Other options to assess eligibility may include:

- a language and culture test for foreign combatants;
- for combatants claiming to have taken part in active combat, a weapons procedures test, which will identify their familiarity with, and ability to handle, weapons. Although members of armed groups and militias may not have received formal training to military standards, they should be able to demonstrate an understanding of how to use the weapon. This test should be balanced against others to identify combatant status. (Children and women with weapons should be disarmed, but should not be required to demonstrate their capacity to use a weapon or prove familiarity with weaponry to be admitted to the DDR programme; see [IDDRS 5.10 on Women, Gender and DDR](#) and [IDDRS 5.30 on Children and DDR](#));
- for local militias (i.e., armed groups that did not travel outside their communities of origin), community verification, which may also be considered as a method to determine combatant status. However, steps should be taken to protect community verifiers in highly politicized and violent environments. Verification should be carried out by both female and male community members to ensure that all women (and girls) in armed groups and forces are accounted for.

*For further information see IDDRS module 4.10 on Disarmament*

## Answer to question 6

Children associated with armed groups or forces should never be given cash during the demobilisation phase. Whereas DDR programmes have, in the past, concentrated mainly on providing immediate transition benefits for adults, child-focused programmes make a longer-term commitment to reintegration. When adult compensation packages were provided to children in the same way as to adults, these longer-term reintegration objectives were not achieved. Indeed, the general population - who themselves were in need of assistance - regarded with hostility and suspicion children who received adult compensation packages, and thought that they were being rewarded for the time they had spent with an armed force or group. In some cases, the promise of demobilization payments and benefits has actually acted as an incentive for children to join armed groups and forces, or led to other forms of corruption such as commanders forcing children to share their transitional allowance, taking a child's weapon to give to family members so they can claim benefits, or selling weapons to children to get them into DDR programmes for a share of the benefits. To avoid situations like these, no monetary payments should be given to children during the demobilization phase. Children, families and communities should be clearly informed about the benefits provided by programmes during the reintegration phase, and they should understand who these benefits are for, and why. All benefits and services should support the development of the child within the community.

*For further information see section 8.5 of IDDRS module 5.30 on The UN approach to DDR*

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## Answer to question 7

By increasing security, DDR helps create a conducive (or 'enabling') environment in which other, longer-term reconstruction processes can be effectively and sustainably begun. In this section, the ways in which integrated DDR relates to and links with other peace-building, SSR, humanitarian and socio-economic recovery processes are discussed.

### Coordination of assistance

In many post-conflict transitions, the UN plays a central role in coordinating humanitarian and other assistance both before and after the establishment of a peacekeeping mission. The same local and international implementing partners may both deliver humanitarian assistance to civilians and provide support for DDR, so it is important to ensure that planning is coordinated between humanitarian and DDR programmes:

- *Assistance:* It may be necessary to deliver assistance to individuals and groups before they formally enter DDR processes. This can prevent a humanitarian emergency developing and protect local communities from being raided for food and other necessities. However, the delivery of aid before formal disarmament requires the development of specific protocols on protection and access, which must be decided between humanitarian and peacekeeping/security personnel;
- *Cantonment/Assembly areas:* When cantonment and assembly areas are used, partners may be involved in delivering basic assistance to male and female ex-combatants and their dependants, as well as to women associated with armed forces and groups. Some children may still remain with these armed forces/groups, and will need specialized assistance;
- *Reintegration assistance:* While ex-combatants may receive reintegration assistance through DDR programmes, other war-affected people will be assisted by humanitarian agencies. DDR support must be harmonized with the assistance given to other returnees to minimize competition and resentment and ensure that former combatants are not perceived as a 'special' group receiving 'special' treatment.

### Security sector reform

SSR, accompanied by judicial reform, is a central part of transition and recovery strategies, and is vital for the long-term success of DDR activities. Instead of focusing on the security of the State, SSR focuses on human security, i.e., it deals with threats to individual and community well-being. Community-based policing and the introduction of measures to deal with the root causes of violence and conflict, including socio-economic deprivation (e.g., poverty and unemployment), are central strategies of SSR.

SSR supports and assists DDR by providing ways to deal with immediate security concerns and strengthening State institutions to allow them to provide security for the citizens of the country under proper democratic control. It establishes the basis for DDR within the various legal agreements that deal with the transitional period. Such agreements specify the legal status and entitlements of former members of armed forces and groups in the post-conflict period. Justice, truth and reconciliation commissions, in particular, affect whether individuals are eligible for DDR, since they decide how to treat people who are known to have committed war crimes.

SSR may also allow for the granting of amnesty for both weapons possession and participation in armed conflict to those who voluntarily disarm and demobilize, which increases participation in DDR. (However, while national amnesties may be agreed to, the UN system upholds the principles of international law, and cannot support processes that do not properly deal with serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law.)

In turn, DDR assists SSR efforts to improve local security conditions and capacities, because it focuses on creating other ways of making a living for ex-combatants so that they will

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not resort to violence, and reduces or eliminates armed forces and groups that could pose a threat to the establishment of the rule of law. DDR also begins the process of controlling illegal weapons, which establishes the basis for longer-term legal weapons management strategies, builds the ability of governments to plan and carry out SSR measures and helps return authority on security matters (from maintaining the rule of law to management of the police and army) to the State, where it legitimately belongs.

## **Conflict prevention and reconciliation**

DDR supports and encourages peace-building and prevents future conflicts by reducing violence and improving security conditions, demobilizing members of armed forces and groups, and providing other ways of making a living to encourage the long-term reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life. DDR can help create an environment that encourages national dialogue and reconciliation, and supports local capacities to manage the interactions and relations between receiving communities and ex-combatants. Where armed forces or groups preyed on communities, creating mistrust, fear and resentment and the possibility of reprisals or retributions against returning ex-combatants, DDR processes can lay a firm basis for reconciliation to begin.

## **Economic recovery and development**

Former combatants can help start the process of broader socio-economic recovery and reconstruction if they can be absorbed by communities that benefit from their new skills. While individuals should make some decisions about the type of training they undergo, retraining must suit the ex-combatants' individual needs and circumstances and provide sustainable skills, contribute to economic revitalization and recovery, and form a basis for long-term development. Specifically designed reintegration assistance can directly contribute to the restoration of productive livelihoods, increase professional skills, improve the overall productive capacity and potential of a community, and encourage the economy to grow, while minimizing the divisions between former combatants and everyone else in the community.

Idle former combatants are a real security threat. It may, therefore, be desirable to link reintegration with immediate attempts to rehabilitate and reconstruct damaged infrastructure (roads, bridges, etc.) in order to provide short-term work in labour-intensive projects. Such work can provide on-the-job skills training to high-risk and vulnerable groups and help the community to recovery and development.

National economic policy decisions, such as the formulation of development plans for specific areas, can be driven by DDR, especially if economic reintegration initiatives are designed together with plans to boost the private sector in order to start and encourage investment, open up markets and create an environment favourable to business. Cooperation with the private sector benefits both parties concerned: ex-combatants provide a supply of labour for the private sector if ways can be found to employ them, and the private sector benefits directly from the increased security brought about when former combatants are redeployed into productive work. In many countries emerging from conflict, national economic policies are designed to stimulate the local economy through financial incentives and to support micro-, small and medium-sized businesses. Sustainable reintegration programmes should be based on these policies.

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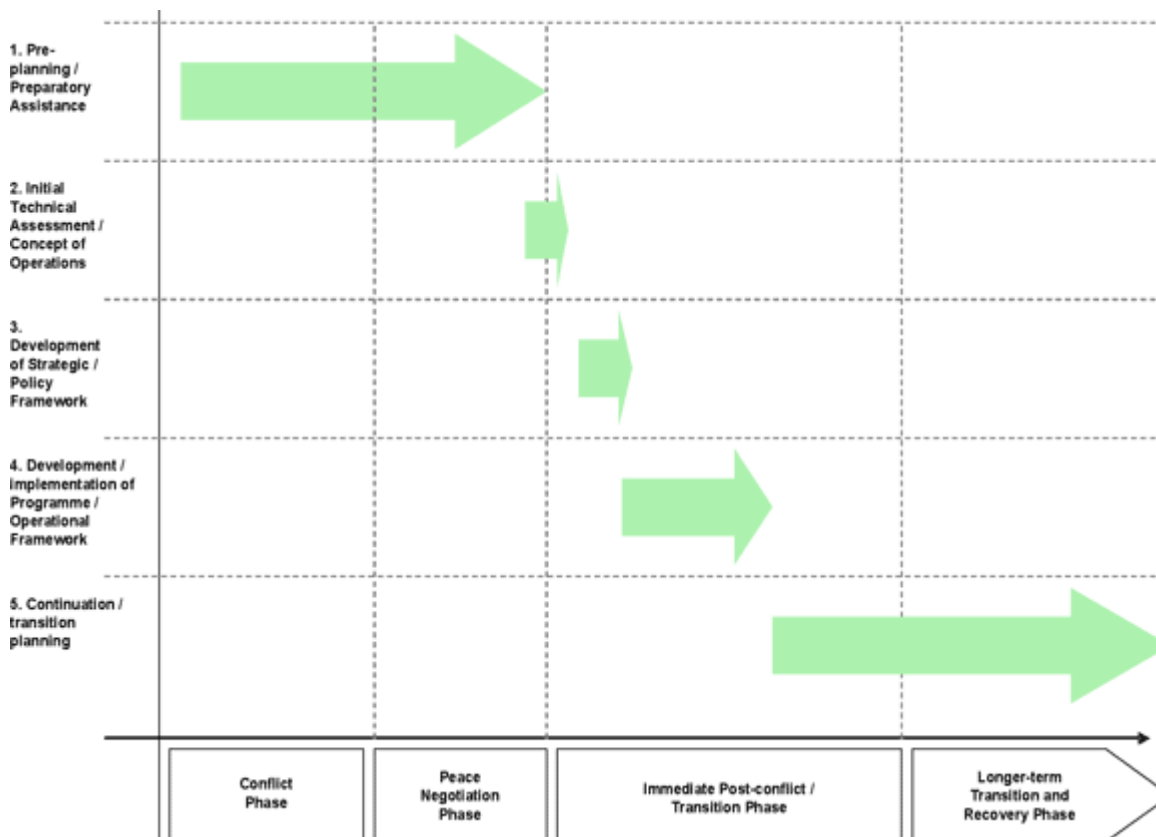


## Answer to question 8

The five general phases (stages) of planning for UN mission and post-conflict peace-building support that form the basis for defining exactly how the DDR planning process will take place are:

- *Phase I:* Pre-planning and preparatory assistance;
- *Phase II:* Initial technical assessment and concept of operations;
- *Phase III:* Development of a strategic and policy framework (strategic planning);
- *Phase IV:* Development of a programme and operational framework (operational planning);
- *Phase V:* Continuation and transition planning.

Because planning time-frames will differ from mission to mission, it is not possible to say how long each phase will take. What is important is the sequence of planning stages, as well as how they correspond to the main stages of transitions from conflict to peace and sustainable development. The diagram below illustrates this:



*For further information on DDR planning see section 5 of IDDRS module 2.20 on Post-Conflict Peacebuilding and Recovery Frameworks.*





## Answer to question 9

Trick question! – there is no strict rule on this and a decision on whether to use cash handouts should be based on the local context - There has been much debate over the pros and cons of cash hand-outs to ex-combatants and dependants upon completion of the demobilization phase of DDR. On the one hand, some argue that this is the same as a weapons buy-back scheme, and may have the counter-productive effect of encouraging weapons recyclers and/or fuelling the arms market. Past experience has documented misuse of cash hand-outs, which is spent on alcohol or weapons rather than essential items. On the other hand, some believe that a cash hand-out is necessary for the ex-combatant to pay for initial expenses and to provide them with a sense of dignity. There is no strict rule on this; DDR planners are recommended to evaluate the local context and choose a course of action that best suits it.

## Answer to question 10

Planners should develop a good understanding of the legal, political, economic, social and security context of the DDR programme and how it affects women, men, girls and boys differently, both in the armed forces and groups and in the receiving communities. In addition, planners should understand the different needs of women, men, girls and boys who participate in DDR processes according to their different roles during the conflict (i.e., armed ex-combatants, supporters, or/and dependants). The following should be considered.

*Different choices:* There may be a difference in the life choices made by women and girls, as opposed to men and boys. This is because women, men, girls and boys have different roles before, during and after conflicts, and they face different problems and expectations from society and their family. They may, as a result, have different preferences for reintegration training and support. Some women and girls may wish to return to their original homes, while others may choose to follow male partners to a new location, including across international boundaries;

*Different functions:* Many women and girls participate in armed conflict in roles other than as armed combatants. These individuals, who may have participated as cooks, messengers, informal health care providers, porters, sex slaves, etc., are often overlooked in the DDR process. Women and girls carry out these roles both through choice and, in the case of abductees and slaves, because they are forced to do so.

Within receiving communities, in which women already have heavy responsibilities for caregiving, reintegration may place further burdens of work and care on them that will undermine sustainable reintegration if they are not adequately supported.

*For more information on gender responsive DDR, please see IDDRS module 5.10 Women, Gender and DDR*

## Answer to question 11

The guiding principles that ought to be followed in initiating/integrating HIV programming into DDR programmes are the following:

Lead to be provided by national beneficiaries/stakeholders. HIV/AIDS initiatives within the DDR process will constitute only a small element of the overall national AIDS strategy (assuming there is one). It is essential that local actors are included from the outset to guide the process and implementation, in order to harmonize approaches and ensure that awareness-raising and the provision of voluntary confidential counselling and testing and support, including, wherever possible, treatment,

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can be sustained. Information gained in focus group discussions with communities and participants, particularly those living with HIV/AIDS, should inform the design of HIV/AIDS initiatives. Interventions must be sensitive to local culture and customs.

**Inclusive approach.** As far as possible, it is important that participants and beneficiaries have access to the same/similar facilities — for example, voluntary confidential counselling and testing — so that programmes continue to be effective during reintegration and to reduce stigma. This emphasises the need to link and harmonize DDR initiatives with national programmes. (A lack of national programmes does not mean, however, that HIV/AIDS initiatives should be dropped from the DDR framework.) Men and women, boys and girls should be included in all HIV/AIDS initiatives. Standard definitions of ‘sexually active age’ often do not apply in conflict settings. Child soldiers, for example, may take on an adult mantle, which can extend to their sexual behaviour, and children of both sexes can also be subject to sexual abuse.

**Strengthen existing capacity.** Successful HIV/AIDS interventions are part of a long-term process going beyond the DDR programme. It is therefore necessary to strengthen the capacity of communities and local actors in order for projects to be sustainable. Planning should seek to build on existing capacity rather than create new programmes or structures. For example, local health care workers should be included in any training of HIV counsellors, and the capacity of existing testing facilities should be augmented rather than parallel facilities being set up. This also assists in building a referral system for demobilized ex-combatants who may need additional or follow-up care and treatment.

**Ethical/human rights considerations.** The UN supports the principle of VCT. Undergoing an HIV test should not be a condition for participation in the DDR process or eligibility for any programme. HIV test should be voluntary and results should be confidential or ‘medical-in-confidence’ (for the knowledge of a treating physician). A person’s actual or perceived HIV status should not be considered grounds for exclusion from any of the benefits. Planners, however, must be aware of any existing national legislation on HIV testing. For example, in some countries recruitment into the military or civil defence forces includes HIV screening and the exclusion of those found to be HIV-positive.

**Universal precautions and training for UN personnel.** Universal precautions shall be followed by UN personnel at all times. These are a standard set of procedures to be used in the care of all patients or at accident sites in order to minimize the risk of transmission of blood-borne pathogens, including, but not exclusively, HIV. All UN staff should be trained in basic HIV/AIDS awareness in preparation for field duty and as part of initiatives on HIV/AIDS in the workplace, and peacekeeping personnel should be trained and sensitized in HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

**Using specialized agencies and expertise.** Agencies with expertise in HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support, such as UNAIDS, the UN Development Programme, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Health Organization (WHO), and relevant NGOs and other experts, should be consulted and involved in operations. HIV/AIDS is often wrongly regarded as only a medical issue. While medical guidance is certainly essential when dealing with issues such as testing procedures and treatment, the broader social, human rights and political ramifications of the epidemic must also be considered and are often the most challenging in terms of their impact on reintegration efforts. As a result, the HIV/AIDS programme requires specific expertise in HIV/AIDS training, counselling and communication strategies, in addition to qualified medical personnel. Teams must include both men and women: the HIV/AIDS epidemic has specific gender dimensions and it is important that prevention and care are carried out in close coordination with gender officers (also see [IDDRS 5.10 on Women, Gender and DDR](#)).

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Limitations and obligations of DDR HIV/AIDS initiatives. It is crucial that DDR planners are transparent about the limitations of the HIV/AIDS programme to avoid creating false expectations. It must be clear from the start that it is normally beyond the mandate, capacity and financial limitations of the DDR programme to start any kind of roll-out plan for ARV treatment (beyond, perhaps, the provision of PEP kits and the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (also see [IDDRS 5.70 on Health and DDR](#)). The provision of treatment needs to be sustainable beyond the conclusion of the DDR programme in order to avoid the development of resistant strains of the virus, and should be part of national AIDS strategies and health care programmes. DDR programmes can, however, provide the following for target groups: treatment for opportunistic infections; information on ARV treatment options available in the country; and referrals to treatment centres and support groups. The roll-out of ARVs is increasing, but in many countries access to treatment is still very limited or non-existent. This means that much of the emphasis still has to be placed on prevention initiatives. HIV/AIDS community initiatives require a long-term commitment and fundamentally form part of humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and development programmes.

However, in the absence of a functioning national AIDS strategy or implementing partners in the relevant communities, there is a moral and operational challenge in DDR providing awareness, testing and prevention programmes only to demobilized personnel. Reducing HIV transmission relies on changing risk behaviours, so focusing on only one group during reintegration would ultimately be counter-productive. At the same time, extending the benefits beyond former combatants and associated groups becomes unmanageable within the DDR specific framework -- again emphasising the need to link with national programmes. If HIV/AIDS programmes do not exist at the local level or are very limited, DDR officers should aim to support basic programmes in receiving communities for a minimum of 12 months as part of reinsertion, community security initiatives or reintegration. During this time there should be proactive efforts to involve partners in broader community-based programming.

*For further information see section 6 of IDDRS module 5.60 on HIV/AIDS and DDR*

## Answer to question 12

False - National ownership is both broader and deeper than central government leadership: it requires the participation of a range of state and non-state actors at national, provincial and local levels. National DDR institutions should include all parties to the conflict, as well as representatives of civil society and the private sector.

*For further information see section 4.2 of IDDRS module 3.30 on National Institutions for DDR*

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