

Policy Options for United States Support to Demobilization, Demilitarization and Reintegration in Sub-Saharan Africa

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**Office of the Secretary of Defense
International Security Affairs
Office of African Affairs
OSD/ISA/AFR**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Threats to the United States' national security interests in sub-Saharan Africa require that the U.S. take steps to focus its strategy toward enhancing regional stability. Addressing these threats depends on creating stability where conflict and turmoil prevail, and thereby heading off conditions supportive to international terrorism, and other unwanted influences. Effective demobilization, demilitarization and reintegration (DDR) of combatants post-conflict are critical steps toward containing violence and vulnerability. It is in the United States' national security interest to play a more active role in these processes. It is also essential that the parties to the conflicts exhibit the political will to facilitate DDR's success.

Interviews with those responsible for policy and programs in post-conflict DDR in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) point to options in two areas for strengthening U.S. participation.

- First, take steps to streamline processes in support of DDR within the United States government. These areas include:
 - Coordination among involved USG agencies;
 - Distribution of clear information on funding sources across the government which can be used for DDR;
 - Shaping long-term post-conflict objectives in Africa, with a goal of preventing future conflict;
 - Reexamining statutory restrictions which may limit the scope and options for U.S. participation in DDR; and
 - Enhancing cooperation among U.S. agencies addressing HIV/AIDS in demobilizing African militaries.

- Second, experts suggest options for further action relating to international DDR efforts. Here key options center around:
 - Working to improve coordination among international participants in DDR;
 - Creating more efficient funding mechanisms for DDR and increasing overall funding;
 - Using information and media effectively to assist DDR; and
 - Improving the HIV/AIDS situation through international efforts.
 - Most critically, options emerged for addressing the economic motives which fuel conflicts, sap political will to cooperate, and foil DDR attempts—often repeatedly—in countries where authority is decentralized or fragmented.

The experts recommended specific options in the areas outlined above. This paper describes these options in detail and provides possible difficulties and benefits in implementing them.

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KEY OPTIONS:

Streamline USG DDR Processes

1.0 COORDINATION.

- 1.1 Establish a standing USG office with central responsibility for coordinating DDR.
- 1.2 Focus USG agency coordination through the U.S. ambassador at the country level.
- 1.3 Include agencies with functional expertise important to DDR in the coordination process.
- 1.4 Look to other countries and organizations as models for coordination.

2.0 FUNDING

- 2.1 Clarify and centralize information on available funding.
- 2.2 Establish a common funding pool for DDR.
- 2.3 Leverage the Demobilization Inter-agency Working Group process to find and bundle resources.
- 2.4 Increase the most effective types of funds.

3.0 STATUTORY RESTRICTIONS.

- 3.1 Establish waiver authority.
- 3.2 Change the law as appropriate.

4.0 HIV/AIDS.

- 4.1 Develop official coordination agreements among U.S. agencies.
- 4.2 Determine if legal changes are needed.

5.0 VISION.

- 5.1 Use DDR planning as a starting point to shape U.S. objectives in SSA.
- 5.2 Establish U.S. willingness to participate in DDR.

Address International DDR Issues

6.0 COORDINATION.

- 6.1 Leave the main responsibility for DDR with the parties to the conflict.
- 6.2 Coordinate across phases of post-conflict rehabilitation/reconstruction.
- 6.3 Share training among participating organizations.

7.0. FUNDING

- 7.1 Obtain funding faster.
- 7.2 Make known when funds are available to collaborate among international DDR participants.

8.0 MESSAGE.

- 8.1 Provide consistent information to combatants in an appropriate medium.

U.S. policymakers need to take steps, both domestically and in international forums, to highlight the US commitment to DDR and to implement change.

9.0 DDR AND HIV/AIDS.

- 9.1 Apply available prototypes now, research and test later.
- 9.2 U.S. DoD to Facilitate Cooperation between Military and Non-Military on Critical Information.
- 9.3 Link demobilization with small enterprise development.
- 9.4. Extend military health care.

10.0 ECONOMIC MOTIVATIONS AND ALTERNATIVES.

- 10.1 Bring factions to negotiations through the right mix of incentives and penalties.
- 10.2 Use health care as an incentive to cease fighting?
- 10.3 Try non-traditional approaches.
- 10.4 Strengthen whole communities where combatants are reintegrating.

Next Steps: U.S. policymakers involved in DDR decision-making and resource allocation should consider these and other options for improvement. U.S. policymakers need to take steps, both domestically and in international forums, to highlight the U.S. commitment to DDR and to implement change. Insights from this office’s comparative study of DDR in three regions of Africa—a study unique in presenting implications for future DDR efforts from a U.S. perspective—can inform discussions on regional solutions. Additionally, some of the insights clearly apply to DDR in general, and should be shared with DDR implementers for other regions.

INTRODUCTION:

As the 21st century begins, the United States wields enormous global influence for democracy, free trade, and regional peace and stability. U.S. foreign policy goals in Africa include promoting democracy, good governance and economic development; ending conflicts; and addressing humanitarian needs. The current U.S. contribution to regional peace and economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa is significant, but today more than ever, this contribution must be focused and made more effective.

The United States' objectives stem from our shared history with Africa, economic interests, and democratic values. U.S. national security interests in sub-Saharan Africa include access to oil reserves and other resources; stemming terrorism, the drug trade, weapons proliferation, and organized crime; as well as containing the spread of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. In recent months, it has become apparent that threats to our national security interests require a more comprehensive strategy than has been in place.

Addressing these threats depends on creating stability where conflict and turmoil prevail, and thereby heading off conditions supportive to international terrorism, and other unwanted influences. Effective demobilization, demilitarization and reintegration (DDR) of combatants post-conflict are critical steps toward containing violence and vulnerability. It is in the United States' national security interest to play a more active role in these processes. At the same time, no changes to U.S. or international policy will make a difference absent the political will from parties to these conflicts to support and facilitate DDR efforts themselves. Recommendations of experts and practitioners presented here provide options for streamlining U.S. government processes and U.S. participation in the international approach to DDR.

Context

This paper builds on the results of a six-month, historical case study and cross-case analysis of the DDR experiences in four sub-Saharan African countries, prepared on behalf of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, Office of African Affairs (OSD/ISA/AFR). The idea for a study on DDR stemmed from the activities of an ongoing U.S. government inter-agency working group, chaired by the National Security Council (NSC), on demobilization and reintegration. Findings in the resulting report, *Critical Factors in Demobilization, Demilitarization and Reintegration: An Analysis of Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe*,¹ were presented to experts and practitioners in DDR

¹ *Critical Factors in Demobilization, Demilitarization and Reintegration: An Analysis of Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe*, prepared for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, Office of African Affairs (OSD/ISA/AFR) by ANSER (Analytic Services Inc.). February 2002. For more information on this study, contact: Michael Westphal, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, African Affairs, or Jill L.

Addressing these threats depends on creating stability where conflict and turmoil prevail, and thereby heading off conditions supportive to international terrorism, and other unwanted influences.

issues and programs across relevant U.S. government agencies, regional commands and from international and non-governmental organizations.

Those experts provided comments on the four country case studies. In addition, experts provided input on critical factors developed through cross-case analysis--factors without which, the report found, DDR is unlikely to succeed. The experts described a range of issues which influence the effectiveness of DDR. This paper presents recommendations for more active United States participation in DDR. Included are options for improvement from the perspective of the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the theater Commanders in Chief (CINCs), through the U.S. government inter-agency process, and in inter-governmental and international capacities.

This paper surfaces many concrete options for improvement, informed by frank and open input from experts who participate daily in USG DDR activities. It does not present detailed research on current DDR-related programs, policies or legislation, nor does it specifically chronicle positive and negative aspects of USG activities. The recommendations presented regarding USG DDR processes and international issues in DDR should, however, lead to improvements and better awareness of these areas.

IMPROVE U.S. GOVERNMENT DDR PROCESSES

The U.S. will further its goals of stability in SSA through DDR programs if U.S. government processes more actively support them. The experts interviewed suggested streamlining and strengthening these processes. Better means for coordination, fewer statutory restrictions on the use of available funds, closer links between U.S. agencies addressing HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases in African militaries, and a clearer overall view of DDR in the context of shaping the U.S. role on the continent are recommended.

1.0 COORDINATION. Two main factors are at issue with regard to coordination within the USG. First is the need for more flexibility among USG organizations toward coordination and cooperation in DDR areas. Secondly, there is a need for improved mechanisms for coordination.

Practitioners state that agencies are at times too concerned with their relative status, and following protocols on who is to chair meetings, regardless of relevant experience or mandate. Agencies also prefer to hire in-house expertise in areas related to DDR—such as health, agriculture or transportation—rather than to take advantage of expertise available in other government agencies.

Those interviewed find a need for change in the established means of coordination among agencies. The inter-agency working group (IWG) on DDR,

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it was stated, produced good ideas—such as a planned National Security Program Directive on USG coordination during DDR—but required better continuity. The IWG was found to rely on institutional memory rather than documentation. Experts perceived member agencies as holding somewhat conflicting goals, such as the NSC’s focus on relevant near-term participation in DDR activities, while the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) emphasizes a long-term approach. Agency staff participating in the IWG held varying levels of accountability for their roles and different degrees of authority to speak for their organizations.

Those interviewed cited the fact that successfully implemented DDR programs are often a result of individuals taking the initiative to make informal connections with other agencies, vet ideas as needed with government lawyers, and collaborate. One example along this model is the Oshodi resettlement center in Nigeria, established as a DoD program, using Department of Labor and USAID funds.

The experts agreed that [statutory] limits placed on funding seriously curtail the U.S. ability to participate effectively in international [DDR] efforts.

Options:

1.1 Establish a standing USG office with central responsibility for coordinating DDR. This would formalize the relationship among agencies by establishing an entity at the center of DDR coordination. A shortcoming of this approach might be a loss of flexibility in putting together participants with programs. Additionally, the U.S. may not participate in enough DDR efforts to justify a dedicated office.

1.2 Focus coordination through the U.S. ambassador at the country level. This approach could involve empowering the United States ambassador within a country to assemble a pool of experts from USAID, DoD, the State Department, *et al*, with a regular seat at the table, reporting to the ambassador on the status of DDR activities. The ambassador would oversee coordination, and from that informed position, recommend what level of involvement the U.S. should have. This might reduce differences at the headquarters level over whose information is more current or comprehensive. A potential drawback of this oversight would be the ambassador’s understandable interest in obtaining resources for the State Department and its agencies.

1.3 Include agencies with functional expertise important to DDR in the coordination process. Establish a team from U.S. domestic agencies with expertise that can assist DDR—in areas such as health, transportation, agriculture, environmental restoration, veterans’ affairs and police training (such as the Department of Justice’s Overseas Police Training Program)—and include these capabilities in planning done by lead international agencies. The shortcoming of this approach would be that it might require all new statutory authorization for participation of agencies not previously operating internationally.

1.4 Look to other countries and organizations as models for coordination.

Those interviewed recommended reviewing coordination mechanisms in the United Kingdom and the European Union as possible models for the U.S. to adapt.

2.0 FUNDING. Funding available for foreign assistance by the United States is limited. Assistance which can be used in a context involving combatants, demobilized or not, is especially scarce. The experts agreed that the limits placed on funding—much of which cannot be provided to DDR until combatants have disarmed, demobilized and been transported to a location for reintegration—seriously curtail the U.S. ability to participate fully in international efforts. Limits on funding may have an effect on the credibility of the United States, making it seem unwilling to contribute when in fact it is statutorily unable. An example is the World Bank trust fund for Sierra Leone; because funds are in one pool, undifferentiated as to which stage of DDR they will support, the U.S. cannot participate in the fund.

The requirement to expend funds within certain timeframes or funding cycles can cause programs to spend money counter-productively. Usually this means too quickly, and unevenly. USAID funds expended rapidly in order to meet deadlines sometimes cause economic distortions between communities where they are spent and neighboring areas which receive no assistance.

A strong recurrent theme in the interviews regarding funding was the need for transparency among agencies involved in DDR as to what money they hold, how it can be used and how it is restricted. No central document or analysis exists describing—across the U.S. government—the various types of funds, conditions under which money can be used and limitations on its use. Because so little is appropriated for DDR, those interviewed see it as critical that information be shared, to facilitate collaboration among agencies. Some organizations with complex areas of responsibility need clarification on how and whether their own funds can be used for DDR.

Some expressed the opinion that resources for DDR should be at the centralized disposal of one U.S. authority, such as the Secretary of State.

Options:

2.1 Clarify and centralize information on available funding. Research, compile and disseminate a document detailing all USG agencies' funds which can be used for DDR-related activities, and the limitations upon them. A report such as this requires consensus and sponsorship to succeed in its purpose. It would also need to be regularly updated according to legislative changes and budget cycles.

2.2 Establish a common funding pool for DDR. This is a more extensive step toward centralizing control over DDR; examining the British model would be informative. Such a move might enhance effectiveness of USG participation

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by making it easier to use larger portions of funds when needed, and possibly eliminating some of the layers of statutory restrictions. However, this step is likely to encounter opposition from those agencies which are already reluctant to coordinate. Also, some funds available for DDR are also available for other purposes.

2.3 Leverage the Inter-Agency Working Group process to find and bundle resources. Create a clear role for the IWG to serve as a means for putting resources together. This can include linking up USG resources with African or other international program funds, toward common DDR objectives.

2.4 Increase the most effective types of funds. Determine which types of funding, in which agencies, provide the most effective options for DDR, and work to obtain more funding in those areas. This could entail redistribution among types of funds, or working with Congress to get more funding authorized. An example could be further funding to USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, or to the CINCs, entities which have greater relative flexibility to participate in international assistance.

3.0 STATUTORY RESTRICTIONS. Limitations on the use of funding sources for DDR, as described above, are due to statutory requirements, mandated by Congress, which U.S. assistance must meet. Types of restrictions include the stages of DDR in which the U.S. can participate—often only post-disarmament and demobilization. Laws restrict who may receive assistance; police, security services and combatants are excluded from most U.S. programs. Statutory restrictions are not necessarily consistent across agencies, but depend on the individual laws which created the restrictions.

Statutory restrictions limit the U.S. ability to assist in areas of DDR where it has important technical expertise unavailable to most international organizations. For instance, the U.S. Department of Defense has knowledge and skills for dismantling the command structure of demobilizing military factions, civil-military restructuring, threat assessment and right-sizing of new post-conflict armies, but is statutorily prohibited from providing direct program assistance in these areas.

Options:

3.1 Establish waiver authority. Some of the experts believe that a statutory waiver authority for the Secretary of State or the President is required. This would provide that under certain conditions, statutory restrictions could be waived and available funds used for purposes otherwise restricted. While this would address the problem to some degree, disagreements over when the waiver was authorized would likely make the mechanism cumbersome to use; the slow process which could result would limit the usefulness of the waiver.

Statutory restrictions limit the US ability to assist in areas of DDR where it has important technical expertise unavailable to most international organizations.

3.2 Change the law as appropriate. Given the political capital which would need to be expended to obtain a waiver, that effort might be better spent on changing restrictive statutes. Now is an ideal point in time to make the argument that USG agencies can help foster stability—and U.S. national security interests—with a freer ability to participate in DDR.

4.0 HIV/AIDS. The executive agent for the U.S. DoD HIV/AIDS Prevention Program since 2000 has been the Naval Health Research Center. The Defense Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (Public Law No: 107-117) provides that:

\$14,000,000 shall be available for HIV prevention educational activities undertaken in connection with U.S. military training, exercises, and humanitarian assistance activities conducted in African nations.

The program presently operates in 22 countries. Priority activities have been determined by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, African Affairs; and the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) and U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Commanders in Chief (CINCs).

DoD's focus on HIV/AIDS in militaries in Africa is fairly unique among the thousands of organizations looking at the issue of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. Most organizations' mandates do not allow them to work with service members or demobilizing combatants.

DoD's program opens doors with African militaries for other U.S. agencies which have HIV/AIDS programs in Africa, including the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and USAID. As fellow uniformed service members, DoD personnel inspire trust and can facilitate cooperation.

Coordination among U.S. agencies has expanded; the first joint CDC/DoD office for HIV/AIDS programs has been established recently in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Additional steps have been recommended.

Options:

4.1 Develop official coordination agreements among U.S. agencies. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is in place between USAID and the CDC for coordination on HIV/AIDS programs related to DDR. Experts interviewed state that it would be worth pursuing MOUs between DoD and those two agencies, but that pursuit of formal understanding should not interfere with informal means of collaboration and mutual reinforcement.

4.2 Change laws if needed. There may be statutory prohibitions which limit the agencies' ability to conduct the HIV/AIDS program effectively. The program area is so new that many aspects undergo cumbersome legal review. Means to streamline these requirements should be researched and restrictions eliminated where it makes sense.

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Mr. George Tenet
Director of Central Intelligence

5.0 VISION. The United States’ approach to security in Africa in recent years has been to respond to crises after they occur. Few resources are available to plan ahead for how the U.S. can shape its response to the end of a conflict, including DDR, toward achieving longer-term objectives. Strategy in Africa has not emphasized means of preventing conflict, despite clear indicators that conditions adverse to U.S. security interests, fueled by conflict, prevail in many African states. As the Director of Central Intelligence, Mr. George Tenet, stated recently in testimony before Congress,

“We have already seen in Afghanistan and elsewhere that domestic unrest and conflict in weak states is one of the factors that create an environment conducive to terrorism. More importantly, demographic trends tell us that the world’s poorest and most politically unstable regions, which include parts of the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa, will have the largest youth populations in the world over the next two decades and beyond. Most of these countries will lack the economic institutions or the resources to effectively integrate these youth into their societies.”²

The challenge of reintegrating ex-combatants into these societies following demobilization is even more complex.

Experts interviewed confirmed the difficulty of obtaining funding to spend on prevention or planning, while pointing out that responding to crises after they occur comes at a much higher cost. Lack of consensus on goals among agencies limits the achievement of a vision to shape security policy.

Options:

5.1 Use DDR planning as a starting point for a broader vision of U.S. strategy in Africa. Establishing a clear vision of the U.S. goals with regard to DDR, and spelling out what the U.S. believes can be achieved longer term in SSA would be a key step in strengthening overall strategy, and perhaps addressing conditions which foster crime, instability and terrorism. Concrete actions to carry out this vision should follow.

5.2 Establish U.S. willingness to participate in DDR. Stating the importance of DDR should include demonstrating how the U.S. will participate. While the high operational tempo of the war on terrorism may preclude the use of troops on the ground, as has been shown, there are many other ways the U.S. can support DDR processes. Consistent participation will bring legitimacy and better opportunities to influence outcomes toward U.S. national security interests.

² United States Congress. February 6, 2002. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Hearing on “National Security Threats to the United States.” Witness testimony of Mr. George Tenet, Director of Central Intelligence. Washington, DC.

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES IN DDR

The experts and practitioners interviewed discussed issues shaping the effectiveness of DDR programs and policies generally, some of which have to do with how programs are carried out, and some with the nature of conflict. A number of relevant insights emerged.

CINCS can improve their participation in DDR through better coordination with international organizations.

6.0 COORDINATION. Elements found to improve international coordination on DDR included transparency, open communication, willingness to engage with other entities, identifying roles that mutually benefit involved groups, and making technical capacities available to carry out these roles.

A repeated comment regarding international coordination was that the U.S. and other organizations often do what they feel is most effective, even if it is outside the scope of the central DDR structure. This can undermine a DDR process in place in the country, especially if economic distortions result. If the central structure is especially weak, like the present National Commission in Sierra Leone, coordination is especially difficult, since many participants will see their money and effort better spent independently.

Determining an effective role—for the U.S. or any participant—should include looking at the advantage of involvement in relation to other actors. Political factors and perceptions may make an organization's participation the wrong fit. Training someone else to do a job, as the U.S. trains countries in peacekeeping through the African Crisis Response Initiative, is another way to coordinate.

CINCS can improve their participation in DDR through better coordination with international organizations. The U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) presently coordinates with the United Nations' various agencies on humanitarian operations but does not have regular contact on DDR.

Options:

6.1 Leave the main responsibility for DDR with the parties to the conflict. The United Nations Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) proposes³ a holistic approach to enhance coordination. The components are: a front-loaded investment of people and money in the DDR start-up phase; quick identification of implementation partners; and a robust analytic and planning capacity at the country level. This last element is to ensure that support activities which the international community develops mesh with the needs and abilities of national institutions which will carry them out, and realities on the ground.

³ United Nations Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA). 2000. *Harnessing Institutional Capacities in Support of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Former Combatants*. Prepared for the ECHA Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration.

6.2 Coordinate across phases of post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. Experts recommended linking phases which are usually carried out by different kinds of organizations, for purposes of continuity. Development projects could be linked backwards to earlier stages of DDR, effectively starting earlier than they might otherwise.⁴ Other organizations in addition to the United States should take the longer-term view and tie DDR to reconstruction.

The perceptions of all factions ... regarding a DDR program matter to its success.... Conveying the right message has a direct effect on managing the expectations of combatants and their commanders.

6.3. Share training among participating organizations. Whenever possible, shared training among organizations provides a common context and understanding of how to approach issues and tasks. An example where this is occurring is a World Bank training module on basic DDR which will soon be made available to others.

7.0. FUNDING. Many DDR efforts are hampered in initial stages by the slowness of international response to funding needs. If initial funding commitments come in, this generates more participation. If funding come in too slowly, at any stage in DDR, it cannot proceed effectively and DDR can lose momentum or even disintegrate. This is especially true in the encampment phase, when combatants' expectations are high for benefits and services, and during reintegration, when lead time is needed to put programs in place.

Options

7.1 Obtain funding faster. Donor conferences can be useful to remind countries and organizations of amounts they may have pledged to DDR.

7.2 Make known when funds are available to collaborate among international DDR participants. Similarly to the compilation of funding information among U.S. government agencies, it would be valuable to research and develop a guide to DDR-related funds which can be effectively "subcontracted" to another organization. As an example, the World Bank will fund programs which individual countries do well and for which it lacks the technical expertise, such as civil-military restructuring, and right-sizing of militaries.

8.0 MESSAGE. The perceptions of all factions of the combatants, political and traditional leadership in the country, regional stakeholders and outside participants regarding a DDR program matter to its success. Elements influencing these perceptions can range from public diplomacy to the equivalent of psychological operations, depending on the circumstances. Conveying the right message has a direct effect on managing the expectations of combatants and their commanders. Combatants may not cooperate if expectations are inordinately high.

⁴ US-based non-government organization Search for Common Ground conducted a study to link development back to DDR.

Options:

8.1 Provide consistent information to combatants in an appropriate medium. Ideally, as demobilization and reintegration activities progress, demobilizing combatants and their dependents will hear and see clear, non-contradictory information, communicated regularly. This is to keep momentum going, to satisfy curiosity and to assuage fears about what is going to happen to them, when and why. Appropriate media must be used, based on estimates of literacy levels, accessibility of radio or television, and other factors.

Should those in advanced stages of infection be demobilized at all?... [This question] may be asked soon in Zimbabwe, where 8,000 troops, many HIV/AIDS-infected, are supposed to be returning from participation in the conflict in DRC.

9.0 DDR AND HIV/AIDS. Whether HIV/AIDS is a relevant factor in any DDR program will depend on the rate of infection in the active forces. Rates vary, and militaries are protective of that information for security reasons, or may not know.

Demobilizing forces are going from situations where they usually had at least some health care, to reintegration into civilian populations where they may get no health care. Treatments which they may have been receiving for HIV/AIDS may not continue. Demobilization puts additional burdens on civilian health care.

This raises a serious question: Should those in advanced stages of infection be demobilized at all? This has been discussed in Ghana, Nigeria, and Namibia with no solution determined. It may be asked soon in Zimbabwe, where 8,000 troops, many HIV/AIDS-infected, are supposed to be returning from participation in the conflict in DRC. The Zimbabwean troops in DRC want to bring back new partners to Zimbabwe. The government does not want them to come. If not brought back, the partners will infect others in DRC. Military members to be demobilized in Zimbabwe will look for new partners, infecting still more people in Zimbabwe. Leaving partners behind has ethical and health care repercussions.

At the time of demobilization, there is a unique opportunity to educate demobilizing combatants on health issues and HIV/AIDS information. They can then disperse this knowledge to communities where they reintegrate, and serve as peer educators. However, the timeline for implementing programs is very accelerated because they must be approved, planned and implemented before combatants are discharged and dispersed.

The reinsertion phase raises difficulties when the military is associated with atrocities committed during the conflict. Communities don't want to take ex-combatants back, even less so if they are HIV/AIDS infected. In some states, former combatants have not reintegrated into a community, and have become nomadic. This situation threatens stability and health.

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Options

9.1 Apply available prototypes now, research and test later. Because timeframes for implementing HIV/AIDS prevention programs are so short, programs err on the side of doing something about the issues, rather than studying them.⁵ The U.S. DoD HIV/AIDS prevention program is using examples shown to work where they exist, including a program in the military in Thailand and some civilian programs.

Other countries have studies, materials, and pilot programs, but they are not specific to demobilizing soldiers—it is the exception when the military is included as part of the equation. UN/AIDS and the World Health Organization have large programs in Africa, but military or demobilizing combatants are prohibited from inclusion.

9.2 U.S. DoD to Facilitate Cooperation between Military and Non-Military on Critical Information. The U.S. DoD program, as a fellow military entity, has the potential to overcome national security-related qualms of African militaries over disclosing the scope of infection. The U.S. program can facilitate communication on the scope of the problem with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations (IOs) which are assessing the effects of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases in the whole population. The DoD program could also broker cooperation between ministries of defense and ministries of health within countries, which are often unassociated.

9.3 Link demobilization with small enterprise development. Especially when HIV/AIDS infected, a demobilized combatant needs to reintegrate with a means of support.

9.4. Extend military health care. Consider if ex-combatants' health care—particularly for those infected with HIV/AIDS—should remain a responsibility of ministries of defense and their infrastructure, in the hope of continuity of care. There will be no military healthcare to extend if the fighting factions which demobilized were decentralized militias with no support structures.

⁵ The International Center for Migration and Health, based in Vernier, Switzerland is seeking to fund a country study of the dimensions the HIV/AIDS problem and demobilization may take in the future.

The US DoD program, as a fellow military entity, has the potential to overcome national security-related qualms of African militaries over disclosing how many are [HIV/AIDS] infected.

The challenge... is to convince combatants that a new civilian livelihood is more attractive than living by the gun...

10.0 ECONOMIC MOTIVATIONS AND ALTERNATIVES. The biggest challenges in DDR occur in non-traditional situations where parties to the conflict are factions and militias with no central component to speak or negotiate for all. The first challenge is to convince factions to stop fighting and agree to a settlement when there are economic incentives to continue fighting, and/or there is a class-based ethnic or religious difference fueling the conflict.

The second big challenge, if factions do negotiate, is to convince combatants that a new civilian livelihood is more attractive than living by the gun, whether in returning to armed conflict, or signing up with organized crime or, potentially, terrorists. The DDR process must generate enthusiasm for civilian life, and convince combatants that they have an alternative, and can succeed.

Effective DDR must counteract the coercion many combatants have experienced since being conscripted as children, by separating them from commanders, and must provide alternatives amidst an often devastated society.

Unless the parties can gather the will to settle their differences by political means, and move to a post-conflict society, no amount of involvement of outside mediators will cause DDR to succeed. Our case-based analysis found that not just during peace negotiations, but all the way through demobilization, disarmament, reinsertion and reintegration phases, political will is a critical element.⁶

Options:

10.1 Bring factions to negotiations through the right mix of incentives and penalties. Persuade the sides that they cannot get what they want through fighting. Squeeze their suppliers, cut off markets for their goods, and get the international community arrayed against those who won't participate so that negotiation is the only option. Ensure that a settlement will address underlying economic causes of conflict which fuel ethnic or religious hatred.

10.2 Use Health Care as an Incentive to Cease Fighting? If not now, it may soon be true in some countries that the majority of those in a fighting faction will be infected with HIV/AIDS. If unable to care for their sick and dying, it is possible that factions and militias may respond to incentives of health care for peace.

10.3 Try Non-Traditional Approaches. When there is no central leadership to represent all factions or combatants, the traditional DDR model—the sequential processes of disarmament, then registration, encampment, demobilization and reintegration—doesn't fit. Informal processes designed to get combatants out of the command structure and back into communities may be all that will work.

⁶ *Critical Factors in Demobilization, Demilitarization and Reintegration: An Analysis of Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe*, p.13.

As an example, in Tajikistan in the late 1990s, a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project involved commanders and whole units in road building and rehabilitation projects—still semi-armed. They were paid and kept busy. Gradually, over time, UNDP expanded the program and included non-combatants, breaking up the militia units. By then, the former combatants had built up new, post-conflict identities, and it was easier to separate them from their commander.

10.4 Strengthen whole communities where combatants are reintegrating.

This requires a linking of views on DDR and development/reconstruction. Build alliances between combatants and the rest of communities. Create common interests through economically strengthening the whole community. Ensure that programs don't reward people for having arms, and that economic assistance goes to all poor areas, not just those where people are armed.

CONCLUSION

Experts interviewed for this analysis of options concurred that rather than facing the difficulty and importance of programs and policies for demobilization, demilitarization and reintegration, current operations have lowered the standards for success. In Sierra Leone, DDR is deemed “completed” if one third of an area has been disarmed.

Rather than lowering expectations, however, these practitioners have recommended a varied and comprehensive range of options which can be taken, in U.S. agencies and through international efforts, to enhance our efforts, and address critical issues of national security.

SUMMARY LIST OF SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve USG DDR Processes

COORDINATION.

- Establish a standing USG office with central responsibility for coordinating DDR. (p.7)
- Focus USG agency coordination through the U.S. ambassador at the country level. (p.7)
- Include agencies with functional expertise important to DDR in the coordination process. (p.7)
- Look to other countries and organizations as models for coordination. (p.7)

FUNDING

- Clarify and centralize information on available funding. (p.8)
- Establish a common funding pool for DDR. (p.8)
- Leverage the Demobilization Inter-agency Working Group process to find and bundle resources. (p.8)
- Increase the most effective types of funds. (p.9)

STATUTORY RESTRICTIONS.

- Establish waiver authority. (p.9)
- Change the law as appropriate. (p.9)

HIV/AIDS.

- Develop official coordination agreements among U.S. agencies. (p.10)
- Determine if legal changes are needed. (p.10)

VISION.

- Use DDR planning as a starting point for a broader vision of U.S. SSA strategy (p.11)
- Establish U.S. willingness to participate in DDR. (p.11)

Address International DDR Issues

COORDINATION.

- Leave the main responsibility for DDR with the parties to the conflict. (p.12)
- Coordinate across phases of post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. (p.13)
- Share training among participating organizations. (p.13)

FUNDING

- Obtain funding for DDR faster. (p.13)
- Make known when funds are available to collaborate among international DDR participants. (p.13)

MESSAGE.

- Provide consistent information to combatants in an appropriate medium. (p.14)

DDR AND HIV/AIDS.

- Apply available prototypes now, research and test later. (p.15)
- U.S. DoD to Facilitate Cooperation between Military and Non-Military on Critical Information. (p.15)
- Link demobilization with small enterprise development. (p.15)
- Extend military health care. (p.15)

ECONOMIC MOTIVATIONS AND ALTERNATIVES.

- Bring factions to negotiations through the right mix of incentives and penalties. (p.16)
- Use health care as an incentive to cease fighting? (p.16)
- Try non-traditional approaches. (p.16)
- Strengthen whole communities where combatants are reintegrating. (p.17)

ACTION ITEMS BY JURISDICTION

Executive Branch

- Establish a standing USG office with central responsibility for coordinating DDR. (p.7)
- Focus USG agency coordination through the U.S. ambassador at the country level. (p.7)
- Include agencies with functional expertise important to DDR in the coordination process. (p.7)
- Clarify and centralize information on available funding. (p.8)
- Leverage the Demobilization Inter-agency Working Group process to find and bundle resources. (p.8)
- Look to other countries and organizations as models for coordination. (p.7)
- Develop official coordination agreements among U.S. agencies addressing HIV/AIDS in SSA. (p.10)
- Use DDR planning as a starting point for a broader vision of U.S. SSA strategy. (p.11)
- Make known when funds are available to collaborate among international DDR participants. (p.13)
- Apply available DDR and HIV/AIDS prototypes now, research and test later. (p.15)
- U.S. DoD provide the link from military to non-military on critical information. (p.15)

Executive Branch With Congress

- Establish a common funding pool for DDR. (p.8)
- Determine if changes are needed in HIV/AIDS-related legislation. (p.10)

- Establish U.S. willingness to participate in DDR. (p.11)
- Obtain funding for DDR faster. (p.13)

Congress

- Increase the most effective types of funds. (p.9)
- Establish waiver authority on statutory restrictions. (p.9)
- Change restrictive statutes as appropriate. (p.9)

U.S. and International Organizations

- Leave the main responsibility for DDR with the parties to the conflict. (p.12)
- Coordinate across phases of post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. (p.13)
- Share training among participating organizations. (p.13)
- Provide consistent information to combatants in an appropriate medium. (p.14)
- Link demobilization with small enterprise development. (p.15)
- Extend military health care. (p.15)
- Bring factions to negotiations through the right mix of incentives and penalties. (p.16)
- Use health care as an incentive to cease fighting? (p.16)
- Try non-traditional approaches. (p.16)
- Strengthen whole communities where combatants are reintegrating. (p.17)

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