

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP
60th MEETING**

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**UN Inter-agency Co-operation on
Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of Ex-combatants**

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Context. The UN has been engaged in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants in post-conflict situations for over fifteen years. It continues to implement DDR programmes in dozens of countries across the globe. DDR aims to enhance security in order to enable reconstruction, recovery and development to begin.

Challenges. To date, the UN record on planning and implementing DDR programmes has been disappointing. In recent years a consensus has emerged within the UN system and among Member States that much more needs to be done to increase the effectiveness and delivery of the Organization in this key area.

The way forward. Since April 2004 an informal group of UN¹ has been working together to enhance co-operation and effectiveness on DDR issues. In January 2005 the working group was expanded and now includes thirteen UN departments, agencies and funds.² Membership remains open to other relevant agencies that are engaged directly or indirectly on DDR issues. In the future other key international partners, like the World Bank, may also be invited to participate in this working group.

There is now a need to institutionalize this strong, but informal, interaction of the United Nations system on DDR. To this end, the DDR working group will ask the UN Executive Committee on Peace and Security on 15 March to formally endorse the establishment of the DDR working group. The working group members proposed that the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) WG should also be briefed.

Aim and Objectives. The **goal** of the working group is to improve the UN's performance in the area of DDR. The **aim** of this inclusive interagency effort is to bring together all relevant UN agencies to support efforts to strengthen and to

¹ The International Organisation for Migration has also been invited to join the working group because of its experience and expertise on DDR issues.

² The participating agencies of the working group are the UN Department of Disarmament Affairs, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the UN Department of Political Affairs, the UN Department of Public Information, International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Development Fund for Women, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization.

comprehensively improve DDR programmes. The group is also tasked with developing clear and usable policies and operational tools to assist DDR managers in the field to plan and implement effective and efficient programmes.

2005 Programme of work. Much has already been achieved since the informal working group was established last year. Working group membership has been expanded and in October 2004, the first draft of policy guidelines and procedures, the *Integrated Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS)* was presented at a United Nations workshop in Geneva. In the coming year the UN DDR Working group will:

- ❖ **Finalise the IDDRS:** The working group has produced a comprehensive set of policies and procedures providing direction or guidance in more than 30 areas of DDR, for those engaged in the planning, and implementation of DDR programmes. The IDDRS include policies and guidance on issues such as women, children, youth, HIV/AIDS, health and food security. The second draft will be tested at a simulation exercise in April, consultations will then be conducted and the guidelines will be launched in October.
- ❖ **Launch the UN DDR Resource Centre.** In order to pull together information and policy guidance on DDR, the working group has developed a web-based DDR Resource Centre. The Resource Centre will serve as a “one-stop-shop” on DDR.
- ❖ **Develop the capacity of UN staff to implement DDR operations.** Currently the UN lacks experienced staff working in DDR. A key priority for the working group over the coming year will be to train and build capacity among staff of all relevant agencies.

Health and DDR. For DDR to be comprehensive, it is essential that the health sector is represented in relevant bodies by the comprehensive peace agreement which oversees the DDR process. This will establish a political/legislative interface useful to create the space for health action and appropriate support to the health needs of specific groups (e.g. disabled/chronically ill).

Health sector participation in the peace process/DDR overseeing bodies reduces the risk of creating ad hoc health services for combatants while facilitating the adoption at the national level of specific health guidelines. Close collaboration of international and national health staff creates ownership of the DDR process, building local capacity.

Health programmes/actions in DDR should have the means to address with effective basic care the entire range of threats to health that affect the geographical area and the population. They need to be supplemented by appropriate reference systems for surveillance and give due emphasis to specific risk factors of the target population; e.g. war trauma (physical/psychological) and HIV/AIDS.

To this end, health programmes/actions in DDR **should** build on local capacity and be planned and implemented in cooperation with the national authorities including, when relevant, representative of the various fighting factions. Health programmes/actions

in DDR **should be** designed to support the rehabilitation of the whole health system. Health programmes/actions **should respects** the ethical and internationally accepted human rights standards.

DDR relevance to IASC processes. DDR is a critical component of the wider recovery strategy, contributing to overall security, reinforcing national peace-building and reconciliation, contributing towards sustainable development.

Proposed Actions by the IASC WG members:

- Take note of this interagency initiative on DDR
- Help to populate the DDR website

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