



DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION (DDR) IN AFRICA: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND EVOLUTION

What is DDR?

Through a process of removing weapons from the hands of members of armed groups, taking these combatants out of their groups and helping them to reintegrate as civilians into society, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration seeks to support ex-combatants and those associated with armed groups, so that they can become active participants in the peace process. As an alternative path, allowing some ex-combatants to integrate formal uniformed services of the State allows their status to be regularized and ensures a close link between DDR and security Sector Reform.

Disarmament involves...

The collection, documentation, control, and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives, and light and heavy weapons from combatants.

Demobilization is...

The formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups.

Reintegration is...

the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income, allowing them to integrate socially and economically back into society.

Preconditions required for the implementation of a viable DDR programme

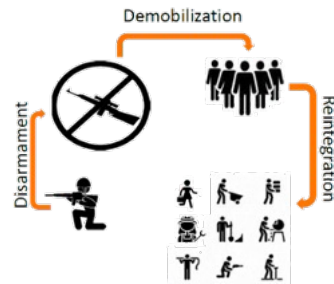
1. The signing of a negotiated ceasefire and/or peace agreement that provides the framework for DDR
2. Trust in the peace process
3. Willingness of the parties to the armed conflict to engage in DDR
4. A minimum guarantee of security

As part of the efforts to strengthen the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA), the Political Affairs and Peace and Security (PAPS) Department of the African Union Commission, through the and Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Security Sector Reform (SSR) Division, has developed a series of Operational Guidance Notes (OGNs) covering various aspects of DDR. The OGNs aim to provide Member

States and other stakeholders with practical guidance in the planning and implementation of DDR programs. While drawing from experiences in Africa and responding to the specific needs, the OGNs are also compliant with international best practice and frameworks, including the United Nations (UN) Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS).

Other DDR tools: CVR and WAM

DDR-related tools are flexible measures used before, after, or alongside standard DDR programs, especially when full DDR conditions are not met.



Weapons and Ammunition Management (WAM) is...

The oversight, accountability and management of arms and ammunition throughout their lifecycle, including the establishment of frameworks, processes and practices for safe and secure materiel acquisition, stockpiling, transfers, tracing and disposal.

Community Violence Reduction (CVR) directly responds....

To the presence of active and/or former members of armed groups in a community and is designed to promote security and stability in both mission and non-mission contexts.

Who Are the Beneficiaries of DDR?

DDR processes directly engage with members of armed groups, encouraging them to surrender their weapons and leave the group. Some DDR tools (like CVR) engage with broader members of the community- including youth at risk of being recruited to armed groups, women and girls and other disadvantaged groups.

Main reasons why individuals join armed groups

1. Unemployment
2. Family members linked to armed groups
3. Religious belief
4. Education level

The AU DDR program implementation in Africa

