

DIIS REPORT

FROM SOLDIER TO CIVILIAN:
DISARMAMENT DEMOBILISATION
REINTEGRATION IN AFGHANISTAN

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Summary

This report sets out to explore the processes of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) within the context of post-conflict peace-building. I have tried to investigate the transformation of soldiers to civilians in the aftermath of war. The purpose of the research is to facilitate practical recommendations of DDR to be used in future cases of post-conflict peace-building.

The empirical focus of this study is the post-conflict DDR programme in Afghanistan. A field study was carried out in December 2004, including interviewing people close to the programme and thereby getting answers to the research questions developed on basis of 10 success criteria for DDR. The analysis of the field study has resulted in several recommendations as a supplement to future DDR processes.

Generally speaking, the DDR process in Afghanistan can be described as a success in relation to other contemporary DDR processes conducted throughout the world during the last decade. The incorporation of DDR provisions into the Bonn Agreement and the subsidiary decrees contributes to giving an understanding and endorsement of the importance of the DDR process to be prioritised by both international and national actors. The dedication and work of the international community, especially the United Nations (UN) and Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP), show that lessons have been learned through time, but it also shows that DDR is a process under constant development and that we – international and national implementing actors – still have a lot to learn from the current cases in the field and of the future.

On the political/strategic level, three general findings can be derived from the case study of the DDR programme in Afghanistan. First, the case study suggests that the DDR programme is firmly linked to broader political frameworks, such as ceasefires and peace agreements, but is insufficiently linked to frameworks for peace-building, recovery and development. Second, the case study suggests that national ownership of DDR programmes can be critical for an effective, cost-efficient and sustainable execution of DDR, but at the same time potentially damaging to DDR when national and local actors lack the necessary institutional and human resource capacity for, or bona fide commitment to, the DDR programme. Finally, the case study suggests that evidence in terms

of fact-finding is critical, not only for the technical and logistical planning of DDR but also for the negotiation of programme terms. This concerns e.g. the numbers of combatants to be processed and the numbers and types of weapons to be surrendered. Consequently, peace agreements, UN Security Council resolutions and mandates should allow time for the collection of comprehensive and reliable data.

On the operational level, one general finding can be derived from the case study of the DDR programme in Afghanistan. The case study suggests that targets and timeframes for the planning and implementation of the DDR programme are likely to occur as a result of political controversy, and targets and timeframes are therefore likely to become unrealistic.

Finally, on the tactical level two general findings can be derived from the case study of the DDR programme in Afghanistan. First, the case study emphasises the importance of public information of both ex-combatants and civilians, and that the inclusion of media assessments – i.e. assessments of communication infrastructures, public accessibility to mass media, and general levels of education and literacy – into the overall evidence-based planning of the DDR programme is critical for an effective and timely implementation of public information measures. Second, the case study suggests that community participation is often the key to successful planning and implementation of a DDR programme, but at the same time that community participation does not constitute a success criterion per se, when other social collectives prove equally functional for DDR, or when community structures simply do not exist.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AMF	Afghan Military Forces
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANBP	Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme
AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
DACAAR	Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration
DDRR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration
DIAG	Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups
EU	European Union
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ONUSCA	United Nations Observer Group in Central America
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDDA	United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPKO	United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary-General
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Map of Afghanistan



University of Texas Libraries, Perry-Castañeda Library map collection
http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/afghanistan_pol_2003.pdf

Introduction

In the late 1980s it came apparent that post-conflict peace-building had entered a stage of complexity that needed new comprehensive tools if success were to be achieved. One of the new tools emerging on the scene were programmes to demobilise former warring factions – guerrilla groups, rebel movements or government forces – so that sustainable peace could be achieved. The objectives of these new initiatives were not total disarmament or large scale social rehabilitation, but simply the demobilisation of combatants.

The programmes emerging in the late 1980s to the early 1990s did not try to remove all arms from society, but rather tried to prevent the presence of armed groups to obstruct the peace process. The first of such missions were the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) which from 1989 to 1992 conducted voluntary demobilisation of the Nicaraguan Resistance (UNSC Resolution 650). These limited programmes soon proved to be too limited in focus and in 1992 the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was launched with the tasks of ‘... *regroupment, cantonment, disarming and demobilization* ...’ (UNSG report on Cambodia). This was the first time a UN mission facilitated a large-scale disarmament and demobilisation. As can be seen with the various UN missions that followed, the concept and idea of DDR was here to stay. It was however relatively soon realised that simply to demobilise the soldiers created many until then unforeseen problems with former combatants drifting around the cities with nothing to do. United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo implemented in 1999 was therefore equipped with a mandate stating ‘*the comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration of all members of all armed groups*’ (UNSC Resolution 1291). A new era of peacekeeping missions was introduced together with the many new challenges that followed (see the appendix for a comprehensive table of major UN led DDR programmes).

This report seeks to examine the new complex challenges that DDR poses to post-conflict peace-building, and to study if new lessons can be drawn from current DDR processes. The study is guided by the structured, focused comparison method developed by Bennett and George (1997) on basis of which an analytical framework has been constructed. Within this methodology and with the purpose of conducting a systematic analysis of the DDR process in Afghanistan,

10 criteria for success have been developed. The 10 success criteria have been derived from a comprehensive analysis of past and current DDR programmes conducted by the UN¹ (see appendix). Also, the study of several UN documents and guidelines together with reports and articles on DDR has contributed to the success criteria.² The notion is that the 10 success criteria should guide any DDR process if success is to be achieved. The 10 criteria presented below have for the purpose of clarity been divided into three dimensions – political/strategic level, operational level and tactical level.

Table 1: Measurement criteria for success

Dimension	Success criteria
Political/ Strategic level	Comprehensive political and development frameworks
	National ownership of the programme
	Evidence-based approach to programme planning
Operational level	Sufficient and flexible funding arrangements
	Effective coordination
	Realistic targets and timeframes for programme implementation
Tactical level	Holistic and indivisible approach to programme implementation
	Effective public information
	Detailed and transparent eligibility criteria for programme entry
	Community participation

¹ The table (appendix) primarily identifies United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) lead DDR programmes. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have however also conducted a number of DDR programmes (from 2002 and on e.g. in Afghanistan), but the success criteria have been derived primarily from UNDPKO programmes because of the departments extensive involvement within this field.

² See e.g. Berman (1996); Colletta (1996); Dworken (1997); Godnick (2001); Gomes (2003); International Crisis Group (2001); International Crisis Group (2003); Meek (2004); Muggah (2003); United Nations (1999); United Nations (2000); United Nations Development Programme (2001); United Nations Development Programme (2002); United Nations Development Programme (2003a); United Nations Secretary-General (2000a); and United Nations Secretary-General (2000b).

The report will proceed by describing the context in which the DDR process in Afghanistan has been implemented. This will include a presentation of the political environment, the role of the UN and the setup of Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme. Followingly, the three dimensions – political/strategic, operational and tactical level – will form the analysis of the DDR programme. At the end of the report the conclusion of the analysis will be presented.

Background to DDR in Afghanistan

On 3 October 2001 UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan reappointed Lakhdar Brahimi, who had resigned two years earlier, as his Special Representative for Afghanistan (SRSG). The reappointment came as a result of the unfolding situation in the country which culminated four days later when a USA-led coalition launched the first air strikes against the Taliban regime. The air strikes were launched because of the direct link between the Taliban who controlled most of the country and the Afghan based Al Qaeda group who had claimed responsibility of the 11 September attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The subsequent fall of the Taliban marked the end of 23 years of war in Afghanistan and the beginning of a complex peace-building process with the international community as a major player.

The Taliban began its military operations in the early 1994 in the town of Kandahar in the southern part of Afghanistan. The movement consisted mostly of sons and orphans of the mujaheddin and was created with the core believe that the Afghan government was corrupting the mujaheddin ideology and therefore should be overthrown. From 1994 to 1995 the Taliban grew markedly in strength and soon the control of the southern and western parts of the country was removed from the government. This resulted in the enforcement of Sharia law in the regions under Taliban control. In September 1996, after intensive fighting, the Taliban forced President Burhannudin Rabbani³ and the government out of Kabul, leaving the capital in the hands of the movement. With the fall of Kabul, the Taliban established a government, only recognised by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, which began to impose an extremely repressive Islamic regime throughout the country, repressing women and committing extensive human rights violations, particularly with respect to the Hazara population.

With the fall of Kabul, the Afghan president joined an opposition alliance, the United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan also known as the Northern Alliance, based in the Panshir valley, north east of Kabul. The Northern Alliance was formed in 1986 under the command of Ahmed Shah Massud

³ President Burhannudin Rabbani can be seen as the political leader of the Northern Alliance. After the fall of Kabul he established headquarter in Faizabad, northern Afghanistan.

during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and from 1996 it was the only organised military faction opposing the Taliban regime (Jalali 2002: 78-79). The Northern Alliance formations consisted of a number of warlords, mostly Panjshiris, joined in the fight against the Taliban. From 1996 to 2001 the fighting between the Northern Alliance and the Taliban continued unabatedly, primarily in the northern parts of the country, thus continuingly deteriorating the humanitarian situation.

Following the 11 September terrorist attacks, the USA-led coalition formed an alliance with the Northern Alliance with the purpose of overthrowing the Taliban regime, destroying the Al Qaeda training camps, and inserting a pro-Western government. The coalition embedded special forces and advisors from the US military and the Central Intelligence Agency in the ranks of the Northern Alliance. In the following weeks of coalition air strikes and swift advancement on the ground by the Northern Alliance, the Taliban regime fell.⁴ The remaining Taliban forces retreated to the border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan where they today are undertaking insurgent operations against the Afghan forces and the US-led coalition.

Table 1.1: Overview of the Afghan conflict (inspired by the Conflict Database, Uppsala University)

Phase	Regime	Insurgent
First (1979-1989)	Government of Afghanistan (President Babrak Karmal from 1980 and President Mohammad Najibullah from 1986) and the Soviet Union	Mujaheddin groups
Second (1989-1996)	Government of Afghanistan (President Mohammed Najibullah and President Burhannudin Rabbani from 1992)	Mujaheddin groups, Warlords and Taliban (from 1994)
Third (1996-2001)	Government of Afghanistan (Taliban)	Northern Alliance
Fourth (2001-)	Government of Afghanistan (President Hamid Karzai) and the US Coalition	Taliban

⁴ The Northern Alliance entered Kabul on the morning of 13 November 2001 almost without meeting any resistance from the Taliban.

Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme

After the appointment of Lakhdar Brahimi as SRSG and the authorisation by the UN Security Council on 20 December 2001 of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) (S/RES/1386 (2001)),⁵ the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was established.⁶ At the time of these overall arrangements coming into place, two meetings were held in Geneva in spring 2002 to structure the ground-work of establishing peace and stability in the country through a security sector reform. The main targets addressed in the security sector reform were divided into five pillars, to which a lead donor was attached: a military reform led by the US; a police reform led by Germany; a DDR-process led by Japan; a judicial reform led by Italy; and a counter-narcotics programme led by the UK.

The two pillars of the military reform and the DDR process were interconnected, meaning that it was recognised that the current armed groups in the country needed to be disarmed before a government controlled army could be sovereign, and that the new army needed to be built proportionate with disarmament to fill out the potential security vacuum created by disarmament of the armed factions.⁷ Under the auspices of the UN, a conference of foreign ministers on *'Rebuilding Afghanistan: Peace and stability'* was held on 2 December 2002 in Petersberg, Germany,⁸ with the purpose of reaching an agreement on the conditions for establishing peace and stability in Afghanistan and to ensure the continuing commitment of the international community. At the end of the conference, a decree on the Afghan army was announced, including the overall structures under which the DDR process was to proceed.

After signing the Petersberg Decree, President Karzai announced four government commissions to handle the issues of the DDR process. The four commissions comprised of one disarmament commission with the responsibility for collecting weapons, one demobilisation and reintegration commission with the respon-

⁵ NATO overtook the command and coordination of ISAF in August 2003.

⁶ In March 2002, the UN Security Council in its resolution 1401 established the United Nation Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) with the purpose of enhancing the role of the UN in helping the Afghan interim authority to implement the Bonn Agreement (S/RES/1401 (2002)) and S/2002/278).

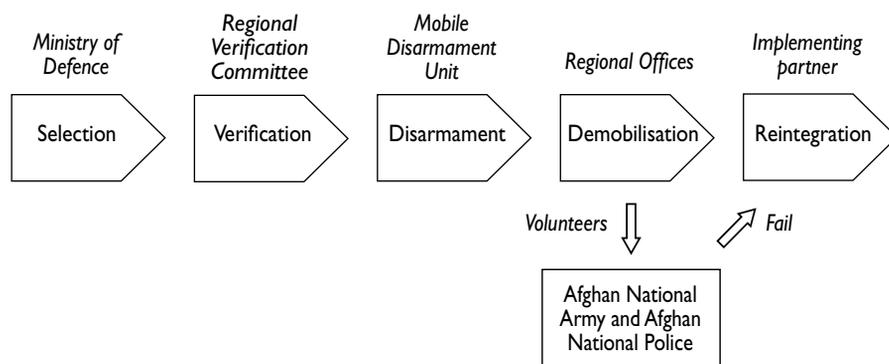
⁷ The five pillars of the security sector reform were only interconnected in theory. In reality there was no connection between them. This problem was however addressed later in the peace process, and the connection between the two pillars of DDR and the Afghan National Army has been described to be the most successful of the five pillars.

⁸ The high ranking officials of the conference were: Joschka Fischer, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany; Hamid Karzai, President of Afghanistan; Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan; and Javier Solana, High Representative of the European Union for Common Foreign and Security Policy.

sibility for demobilising and reintegrating the disarmed combatants, and two commissions with the responsibility for setting standards and methods for the recruitment and training of officers and soldiers for the new Afghan National Army (ANA) (ANBP 2005: 2). With these governmental bodies in place, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was given the task of planning, equipping and training personnel, and organising and implementing the DDR process in close cooperation with the four commissions. Furthermore, it was decided that the target group of the DDR programme was the Afghan Military Forces (AMF), comprising the Northern Alliance and supporting warlords and militias, all organised under the Ministry of Defence in the transition period from the end of the war to the establishment of the ANA.⁹ The name of the process was to be Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) in order to mark the end of 23 years of war with a new beginning.

The ANBP organisational structure under UNDP consisted of a central office placed in Kabul where the overall coordination and management was handled, and eight regional offices where the different aspects of the DDR programme were implemented. ANBP had approximately 650 national and international staff members and a mandate of three years. The programme structure developed by ANBP can be seen on the DDR flowchart below:

Figure 1: DDR Flowchart¹⁰



⁹ When establishing the AMF, it seems that only the warlords and commanders who supported the Minister of Defence were enrolled into the AMF. The rest have not been addressed until today in the current 'Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups' (DIAG) programme which has followed the ANBP. The roll of the Minister of Defence and the AMF will be addressed below in the analysis. See www.ddrafg.com for further explanation of the individual steps of the DIAG programme.

¹⁰ See www.undpanbp.org for further explanation of the individual steps of the ANBP programme.

Disarmament

The disarmament phase of the programme started off with the selection of combatants. The Ministry of Defence identified units qualified for disarmament and asked them to prepare lists of those eligible for verification. The selection list was based on the units structured under the AMF, which as mentioned was the constellation of the armed factions organised under the Ministry of Defence. Subsequently, the list of candidates was presented to a Regional Verification Committee, consisting of representatives from ANBP, the regional offices and local elders. The Regional Verification Committee then verified the list to ensure that only former combatants and not free riders entered the programme. When this was done, a mobile disarmament unit, sent out from the central office in Kabul, established a temporary weapons collection site where the combatants, still organised in units, met for disarmament. The mobile disarmament unit collected and registered the weapons and issued a temporary ANBP identification card for the soldiers to show when they later went through demobilisation. Subsequently, the mobile disarmament unit safeguarded the weapons back to a central storage in Kabul for refurbishment and later issue to the ANA through the Ministry of Defence. The disarmament ended when the combatants received medals and a Certificate of Honour for their participation in the war (ANBP 2005: 6-7).

Demobilisation

Upon disarmament the demobilisation phase began. This phase consisted of a one-day programme, organised by the eight regional offices, where the combatants were informed about the overall content of the DDR programme and their future options. This was followed by an individual data collection where ANBP took photos, fingerprints, issued a permanent identification card and registered the preferences and aspirations of the individual soldier. At the next step the combatants were interviewed by a personal local caseworker, explaining the reintegration phase and identifying skills, qualifications, educational needs and wishes of each individual. After this the caseworker presented a portfolio of options attempted to match the aspirations of each individual combatant, including vocational training, agricultural packages, de-mining courses, joining the ANA etc. At the end of disarmament, the combatants – now legally ex-combatants – received food packages to support themselves and their families until the commencement of the reintegration programmes (ANBP 2005: 7-9).

Reintegration

Approximately three weeks after demobilisation, the reintegration phase began. The ex-combatants met with their personal caseworkers from the regional offices with the purpose of being introduced to a roadmap for reintegration. When the caseworker and the ex-combatant jointly had decided on a 'life choice', the process was turned over to an ANBP-implementing partner organisation with proven expertise within the given area. If the ex-combatant decided not to join the ANA,¹¹ the implementing partner organisation would complete the educational training, and after 2-4 months the ex-combatants were reintegrated into civil society (ANBP 2005: 10-11).

Based on this framework, the first pilot project of the DDR programme was launched in October 2003, approximately six months late. Upon the completion of the pilot projects, an evaluation of the experiences was carried out and the lessons identified were incorporated into the main programme, consisting of four periods. The last period was completed in July 2005, but ANBP will continue to support the reintegration of ex-combatants until June 2006 and to support the Afghan government in its new programme on Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG). Looking at today's status, the disarmament and demobilisation has ended; approximately 63,400 combatants have been disarmed resulting in the collection of 36,500 small and light weapons and 12,000 heavy weapons; 62,000 combatants have been demobilised and 60,600 ex-combatants have been reintegrated.¹²

In the following, the DDR programme in Afghanistan will be analysed according to the ten success criteria, including in-depth analysis of some of the elements that have been outlined above. The analysis will be divided into three levels – political/strategic, operational, and tactical – structured according to the success criteria.

¹¹ Only about 3 percent of the demobilised actually joined the ANA and of these most were younger men who had not participated in the whole 23 years of war – a symptom which might be related to war weariness.

¹² The numbers are of March 2006 (www.undpanbp.org).

Political/strategic level

Comprehensive political and development frameworks

One of the corner stones when conducting DDR operations in a post-conflict environment is the incorporation of DDR provisions in overall peace accords and political agreements. In the case of Afghanistan, both the international community and the Afghan Interim Authority acknowledged the importance of a comprehensive DDR process from the very beginning of the peace process and the rebuilding of the country.

With the signing of the Bonn Agreement on 5 December 2001 the structural conditions were created for assembling the armed factions under the united command and control of the Afghan Interim Authority. The Bonn Agreement should not be seen as a traditional peace agreement, but rather as a framework for further negotiations and it did therefore not explicitly mention the conditions under which the DDR programme was to be implemented. Instead it stated that all the former mujaheddin, Afghan armed forces, and armed groups should be integrated under a new structure to be known as the AMF (The Bonn Agreement 2001: 4-5). The idea with the formation of the AMF was to attain control, under a single command structure, with all the armed groups that had participated in the fighting from the Soviet invasion in 1979 to the fall of the Taliban in 2001. In return, the single command – the Ministry of Defence of the Afghan Transitional Administration – would pay the salaries of the combatants embedded in the AMF until these could return to a civil life. The purpose of the constellation of the AMF was to preclude the combatants from unemployment with no other possibility of earning money than the use of a gun and the thereby risk of insurgency movements throughout the country.¹³

A year after the signing of the Bonn Agreement, a second conference was held in Petersberg, Germany, with participants from Afghanistan, Germany, the EU and the UN. Under the headline '*Rebuilding Afghanistan: Peace and Stability*', one of the primary objectives of the conference was the signing of a decree to establish the ANA and at the same time to set out the conditions of the DDR programme in Afghanistan (Petersberg Decree 2002). Annex 1 of the Petersberg

¹³ Interview conducted 12 December 2004 in Kabul with Rick Grant, Spokesperson for ANBP.

Decree stated that *'Concurrent with the recruitment and training of soldiers, a program of collection of arms and reintegration shall be carried out'* (Petersberg Decree 2002: 2). The programme was to be led by the Afghan government and with the assistance of the UN, the government of Japan as lead donor, as well as the four government commissions, already mentioned above, chaired by the Defence Commission of the Afghan Transitional Administration.

The Petersberg Decree set up the framework under which the DDR process has been implemented. It also established a command and control structure which gave the government the overall responsibility and authority to decide who should be disarmed and reintegrated where and when. In this regard it fulfilled the requirements of genuine commitment and national participation to the process. The decree, on the other hand, did not set up the conditions for an integrated approach where the overall recovery strategy concerning the rebuilding of the country was taken into consideration, meaning that the broader objectives in recovering Afghanistan from 23 years of war were not incorporated into the structure and planning of the DDR programme. The consequences of the lack of coordination between the DDR programme and the overall recovery strategy could turn out to hamper the reintegration of the ex-combatants in relation to job possibilities and community development. Especially, by producing an overload in supply of certain jobs not in relation to the actual demand and need of the country; e.g. the wish of many combatants to be educated as tailors. Even if this overload is not created, a focused incorporation of the overall recovery strategy could facilitate a strengthening of job generating programmes for the former combatants – something that often is a problem in DDR processes and post-conflict peace-building. Cooperation between the different peace-building strategies should always be emphasised with the possibility of mutual enforcement. Even though this was not incorporated into the Petersberg Decree, by now, and quite late in the process, the reintegration of former combatants into civilian life seems to have reached a degree of coordination where the responsible parties involved in the DDR process and the different parties involved in the rebuilding of Afghanistan are informing each other on the progress of the different programmes, thereby supporting the rebuilding efforts. Unfortunately, it came too late to fully create the employment opportunities to satisfy the needs of the reintegrated soldiers.

In sum, the first criteria on the comprehensive political and developmental framework were partial met with the DDR provisions integrated into the Petersberg

Decree on peace and stability in Afghanistan. However, the overall peace-building and recovery strategy for Afghanistan was not explicitly incorporated into the DDR provisions, stating clearly how the DDR programme could reinforce the overall peace-building process. A focused incorporation of the recovery strategy for Afghanistan could have braced other recovery programmes, thereby accelerating the process in achieving peace and stability. Also, the creation of the AMF to fill out the quite long time span between the signing of the Bonn Agreement and the implementation of the DDR programme could be questioned, because it also enabled the local and regional strongmen to establish themselves in the illicit economy.

National ownership of the programme

With the political/strategic framework in mind, the notion of national ownership and involvement in the design and implementation of the actual DDR programme will be analysed. To establish national ownership of the DDR programme in Afghanistan – the incorporation of national and local actors on the overall level – the Petersberg Decree provided that responsibility for the DDR programme to the Afghan Transitional Administration with the Ministry of Defence as the lead player. The Ministry of Defence, together with the UN and Japan as lead donor, was authorised to negotiate the design and implementation of the programme. This also included identifying how many combatants there were in the country to be dealt with in the programme. As described by the representative of the Ministry of Defence to the DDR programme, Brigadier Mir Saheb Gol,¹⁴ the assignment of disarming the country was given to the Ministry by President Karzai. The Ministry then initiated the negotiations with the different parties described as a 50/50 cooperation with a satisfying result in terms of national participation.

These negotiations were conducted in the first quarter of 2003 and were described as extremely complicated in terms of engaging with the Ministry of Defence on the overall design of the programme. It seemed that the Ministry had visions of doing disarmament their own way without much interference¹⁵. However, the aspirations of the Ministry did not conform to

¹⁴ Interview conducted 14 December 2004 in Kabul with Brigadier Mir Saheb Gol, DDR responsible from the Ministry of Defence.

¹⁵ Interview conducted 12 December 2004 in Kabul with Paul Cruikshank, Deputy Programme Director of ANBP.

the intentions of the international community in terms of the duration and extent of the programme, including the importance of integrating the three DDR phases¹⁶. These problems complicated the negotiations a great deal. The consequence of the disagreements was that the whole process dragged on and that ANBP, the organisation responsible for the implementation of the programme, could not make fixed plans and start implementing the programme.

Another obstacle in getting the programme on the way was the insistence of the international community led by UNAMA to conduct significant reforms of the Ministry of Defence before the DDR programme was launched¹⁷. One reason for these reforms was the projection by the civil society of the Ministry of Defence as a Northern Alliance ministry led by Marshall Mohammed Qasim Fahim, a Tajik commander with his own militia in the Panshir valley of the northern part of the country.¹⁸ The reforms required were in terms of ethnic balance and parliament control of the ministry, so that it would not be viewed as just another warlord in the eyes of the public and the international community.¹⁹ The reforms were, however, difficult to implement because of the lack of human resource capacity on a technocratic level – expertise in how to run a ministry – in the country and within the government²⁰. There was not much to deal with apart from warlords and local commanders at the time. Furthermore, the winning party of the war against the Taliban regime, the Northern Alliance, was reluctant in the beginning of the reforms to enforce the demand of representative ethnic representation in the Ministry of Defence. So in the end, all of the above

¹⁶ The government started their own weapon collection programme in summer 2002 where they conducted weapon collection in different areas of Afghanistan. The programme was led by a National Disarmament Commission which collected approximately 50.000 pieces of military equipment in 2002. The programme did not, however, include a reintegration package and the conditions surrounding the programme have lacked a great deal of transparency (BICC 2002: 37-39).

¹⁷ There are some diverse opinions on whether it was Japan that insisted on the reform before the release of the donor funding, or whether it was a general demand by a variety of actors. This does not affect the conclusions on the subject, however.

¹⁸ Defence Minister Fahim inherited the military command of the Northern Alliance after Ahmed Shah Massoud who was killed by the Taliban the 9 September 2001. At the time of the Taliban defeat Fahim personally had approximately 18.000 soldiers under arms (Giustozzi 2003: 12).

¹⁹ Interview conducted 14 December 2004 in Kabul with a Political Advisor for UNAMA and interview conducted 11 December 2004 in Kabul with Andrew Wilder, Director of Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit.

²⁰ Interview conducted 11 December 2004 in Kabul with an Economic Advisor to the Finance Minister.

mentioned effort to include the national stakeholders in the process almost by fault became the reason why the process was halted. The programme that was supposed to start in June 2003 did therefore not get on its way with the first pilot project until October 2003.

Looking at the initial negotiations and preparations it might have been an advantage if the international community had been the lead implementing actor, and the Afghan Transitional Administration a secondary partner with a co-responsibility of implementing the DDR programme, and thus enabling a strong organisation with an extended area of expertise to control the planning, design and implementing of the programme and with a national partner on the side to watch and learn. Also, this could have given the reform process of the Ministry of Defence more time and tranquillity to establish an ethnic balance and to locate the relevant expertise required to run an effective ministry in a democratic government. If the aim of a DDR process is to get hold of the former warring factions, to abolish the existing military structures and to disarm and reintegrate combatants as is the case in Afghanistan, it might have proven more effective and realistic to have set a third party – the UN – in overall charge of the process. As will be described in the following section, there were also problems with the cooperation of the local commanders to engage in the programme, and their collaboration was not made more propitious by the involvement of the Ministry of Defence. Contrarily, it might have halted the process that the Minister of Defence himself had a militia and therefore was not viewed to have genuine interests in the process. With a weak government going through a complicated and far-reaching conversion it seems preferable to do a ‘decentralised’ DDR process with a third party as the lead actor and a national counterpart learning on the side.

In sum, as with the previous criteria concerning the comprehensive political framework the Petersberg Decree established the conditions that complied with the requirements for DDR operations. The Petersberg Decree stated the national ownership of the process by appointing the Afghan Transitional Administration with the Ministry of Defence as lead responsible for the DDR process and secondarily appointed Japan and the UN as responsible for the design and the implementation of the programme. However, the aspirations of the national ministerial body and the international community did not foster a frictionless process, on the contrary the different internal political

conditions and external reform demands complicated the process a great deal. So, as it has also been seen in DDR programmes elsewhere, e.g. in Liberia,²¹ the incorporation of national actors by all means as primarily responsible for the DDR process could be questioned in a complicated post-conflict peace-building context. When conducting a relatively short programme compared to the other aspects of the peace process, it could turn out to be advantageous if the international community was appointed to lead the DDR process, thereby relieving the pressure on the transitional administration.

Evidence-based approach to programme planning

The last criterion on the political/strategic level is the application of an evidence-based approach to programme planning and implementation. To ensure the implementation of a DDR programme that addresses the real needs and challenges faced in the country and to define realistic targets, the planning and implementation of the programme should be undertaken on the basis of careful and comprehensive qualitative and quantitative assessments of the situation on the ground. This is important to begin the DDR process as quickly and pragmatic as possible. Therefore, following the signing of the Petersberg Decree and the above-mentioned negotiations it was decided that the UN and the Ministry of Defence should engage in a detailed and comprehensive evidence-based assessment of the actual military situation in the country. The hereafter rather extensive survey conducted to make the programme evidence-based was formed as a field research where UNAMA field officers were sent into the different regions of the country to identify and assess the approximate quantity of combatants to be disarmed. After roughly two months, the UN assessment on combatants was in the area of 94,000. At the same time of the UN assessment, the Ministry of Defence sent out 1,500 officers²² to do a similar survey. The result of the Ministry of Defence survey was an estimated 250,000 combatants to be disarmed. As indicated by Brigadier Mir Saheb Gol of the Ministry of Defence the difference in the identified number of combatants by the two institutions and the problems concerning the identification process in the field turned out to be one of the biggest problems of the DDR process.

²¹ For more information on United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the DDDR programme see e.g.: Aboagye (2004); Adebajo (2002); Fraser (2001); International Crisis Group (2004); United Nations Development Programme (2003b); United Nations Development Programme (2005).

²² The number of officers trained and sent out varies from 700–1,500 depending on the different sources. My number is obtained during an interview conducted 14 December 2004 in Kabul with Brigadier Mir Saheb Gol, DDR responsible from the Ministry of Defence.

One reason for the high number identified by the Ministry of Defence could be the constellation mentioned above with the creation of the AMF and the salaries paid to them by the Ministry of Defence. The salaries were channelled to the combatants by the Ministry, through the individual commanders who, in turn, were responsible for paying the combatants. By establishing this setup it was possible for the commanders to earn extra money by reporting artificially high numbers of soldiers in their unit and thereby keeping the extra salaries from the Ministry for themselves. Also, by reporting artificially high numbers the commanders could deter possible attacks from their neighbours. The non-cooperation by the local commanders seems to be one of the main reasons for the process being delayed.

There are a number of indications that the commanders were keeping the money and reporting unnatural high numbers to the Ministry. This seems quite evident when looking at the actual turn up of combatants to disarmament when the programme was launched, for instance. The actual turn up at disarmament was only about 50 percent of the total strength initially stated by the commanders. The disarmament conducted in Kandahar could be seen as an example of the difficulties in estimating the exact number of soldiers. 2nd Corps in Kandahar had a stated strength reported by the commander of 7,000 soldiers. When disarmament started the figure was downsized to 3,700, but when approximately 1,300 soldiers had been disarmed ANBP had to stop the collection because no more soldiers turned up.²³

With the two very different numbers identified by the UN and the Ministry of Defence, negotiations had to be conducted for ANBP to be able to start the planning of the programme and the pilot projects. The representatives of the different parties involved in the process met to decide on a target number that the programme could be designed to cope with. After extensive talks between the involved parties and the use of its power over the budget by the Minister of Finance²⁴, it was decided that the number of soldiers to enter the DDR process was 'identified' to be 100,000 people.²⁵ Today, with the disarming and demobilising phases concluded the end figure is in the area of 63,400 soldiers.

²³ Interview conducted 12 December 2004 in Kabul with Paul Cruikshank, Deputy Programme Director of ANBP.

²⁴ It is the Ministry of Finance that allocates money to the Ministry of Defence for salaries to be paid to the AMF.

²⁵ Interview conducted 11 December 2004 in Kabul with an Economic Advisor to the Finance Minister and interview conducted 12 December 2004 in Kabul with Paul Cruikshank, Deputy Programme Director of ANBP.

By turning the process of identifying the number of soldiers in the country into political negotiations, the idea of the evidence-based approach lost its meaning and undermined the validity of the efforts to conduct a legitimate DDR programme; meaning that the 'new beginning' is not that new when power politics in terms of military capacity and economic benefits is leading the process – conditions which could undermine the process in the eyes of the public. On the other hand, with the structure of the programme and the Afghan Transitional Administration as lead responsible and not a third party, it could probably not have been conducted in another way because of the various personal enticements in the Ministry of Defence and for the commanders in the field. Furthermore, the unification of the different forces under the AMF umbrella has probably contributed to the overall stability in the country by enabling the soldiers to obtain a minimum of living in a short term transitional period. This is of course only possible in a context where the attention of the international community is so intense that a substantial amount of money has been donated to the rebuilding of the country – as in the case of Afghanistan. However, the creation of the AMF has also enabled the commanders to manifest their position locally by keeping them positioned as commanders, a position that among others has been used in the illicit economy surrounding the opium trade.

Having decided that the DDR programme was to process 100,000 combatants, a series of five pilot projects were conducted, starting October 2003.²⁶ The pilot projects were carried out to enhance the evidence-based approach and to measure whether or not the programme design was feasible or if adjustments were needed to respond effectively to the situation in the field. In the first couple of pilot projects it was decided to issue 200 USD compensation in return for the weapons handed in and to enable the soldiers to take care of themselves and their families until they could enter the reintegration phase of the programme. Despite bad experiences with this approach from earlier DDR programmes, e.g. Liberia, the 200 USD compensation was issued to give the soldiers an incentive to hand over their weapon and to enter the DDR programme. The experiences from this procedure were not good and it soon became apparent that when the combatants had received their 200 USD, their commanders often extorted the combatants to hand over the money. In some cases, combatants were hospitalised after being robbed by their former commanders. The experiences of the pilot projects led to a change in the programme from compensating the combatants

²⁶ The 5 pilot projects were conducted in Kunduz, Gardez, Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif and Kandahar.

in cash to compensating the combatants by issuing 100 kg of food and giving them 10 USD for the transport home. Other experiences such as the actual turn up at each demobilisation site and the use of the mobile disarmament units were also incorporated into the project design before proceeding to the main phases of the DDR programme.

With the main phase of the DDR programme on the way, a new problem emerged which had not been identified previously – heavy weapons – which obviously should have been identified in the evidence-based pre-planning surveys and assessments. In the Petersberg Decree, Annex 1, Paragraph 7, concerning DDR, it is stated that the Afghan Transitional Government with assistance of UN and Japan should prepare a programme also including ‘*Concentration on collection and integration into the ANA of heavy weapons (to include tanks, armoured personnel carriers, artillery, field guns, multiple-rocket launchers and towed air-defence weapons, etc.)*’ (Petersberg Decree 2002: 2). However, this was not included into the DDR programme and by spring 2004 it became a problem that had to be dealt with. There were two reasons why this problem emerged: 1) not all soldiers had small arms issued but were instead part of a heavy weapons crew; and 2) the presidential election coming up (9 October 2004), the second reason being the primary. The government was worried about the threat to the central power of having more than 10,000 heavy weapons scattered around the country. The possibility of the different warlords to project power in terms of heavy weapons could be seen as a serious threat when trying to conduct a democratic election. One could argue that the threat of NATO and US airpower could undermine the use of heavy weapons. This is, however, definitely not the case in the eyes of the public who identify threat as the visual effect of the many heavy weapons under the control of different commanders in the country; a threat that could be used to ‘oppress’ the voters’ democratic rights before going to the polling-stations.²⁷ These reasons indicate that if a focused inclusion of the overall aim of a post-conflict peace-building process and the contextual realities had been incorporated into the DDR design, issues such as heavy weapons and ammunition would probably have been identified earlier on. This means that the conditions for sustainable peace and democratic elections would normally include the collection of more than 10,000 unregistered heavy weapons. The experience with heavy

²⁷ In several cases single commanders had additional tanks, artillery pieces and Scud missiles under their command.

weapons in Afghanistan is a lesson learned that should be incorporated into future DDR programmes.

In sum, the evidence-based approach applied in Afghanistan seems to have been rather comprehensive compared with other DDR programmes elsewhere, and therefore it seems to be a good example of how an evidence-based approach to programme planning may be applied. There were efforts, but the processes with national rather than third-party lead overshadowed parts of the DDR programme. At the end, the process was complicated by the lack of genuine national commitment and political disputes within the Afghan Transitional Administration and towards the international community, consequential leading to target numbers based on political negotiations rather than evidence. Furthermore, an inclusion of the overall framework of peace-building – the political conditions and priorities – could have prevented the later problem with collecting heavy weapons in the programme.

Operational level

Sufficient and flexible funding arrangements

The first criterion of the operational component of the DDR programme is funding. To enhance the possibility for a DDR programme to be successfully implemented, and to ensure a smooth transition between disarming, demobilisation and reintegration, sufficient and flexible funds must be made available early in the process. In the case of Afghanistan, the Japanese government initiated a donor conference, '*Change of Order – from Guns to Plows*', held on 22 February 2003 with the purpose of raising money for carrying out the DDR programme. With more than 50,000,000 USD pledged to the programme, the initiative enabled ANBP to start the planning early in the process and in more realistic terms.

Initially, the total budget for the implementation of the DDR programme was 167,000,000 USD but in early 2005 it was downsized to 150,500,000 USD. The budget covers a three-year period – from summer 2003 to summer 2006 – and is managed through a dedicated trust fund for DDR, established by the UNDP in Afghanistan. Until today, the governments of Canada, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, the UK and the USA have donated money to the trust fund. The trust fund is guided by the UNDP principles for the management of funds, which in this case means that UNDP and ANBP are responsible for the management of the fund and how to break the donated funds into different activities. So far, the donated funds have primarily not been 'ring fenced' by the donors to specific activities, which has given ANBP a great deal of influence on the spending, thus ensuring that the money is channelled to the activities that are most needed, and not to areas solely selected by different governments. This constellation also implies that the funding has not been phase funding, where money is donated only to a specific component of the DDR programme with the risk of undermining the outcome of other components and the link between the components.

However, the aim of having all the money for the programme donated prior to programme implementation has not been reached. By spring 2005, the received budget support was approximately 92,500,000 USD with a shortfall of 58,000,000 USD. This shortfall is a problem that could eventually create delays in the very fragile reintegration phase of the DDR programme, which

concludes in summer 2006. If the budget requirements are not met, the rest of the demobilised soldiers will not be reintegrated properly. The flexible funding arrangements have had a positive influence on the execution of the DDR programme but the lack of funding could eventually become a problem. Funding gaps is a common problem in post-conflict societies, where the interest of the international community is dominant in the beginning but often lacking in the later phases. Even though, Afghanistan has been of great importance to the international community for a long time, ANBP was not able to raise sufficient funds before the beginning of the programme.

In sum, the ANBP programme in Afghanistan largely met the criterion of establishing sufficient and flexible funding arrangements by constructing a trust fund holding the total budget available for all the phases of the DDR programme. The total of funds necessary for programme implementation was not raised beforehand, which in the end could hamper the final part of the reintegration programme. It is, however, noticeable that the international attention on Afghanistan and the relatively large planning budget in relation to other DDR processes points to a DDR process where funds were easier to raise and that the constellation with Japan as lead donor nation has created a safety net, which to some extent have eased the process.

Effective coordination

To strengthen the overall peace-building initiatives and the viability of DDR, effective coordination must be achieved through meetings, discussion of strategies and the exchange of information and results. Four dimensions that require effective coordination will be analysed below. In the case of Afghanistan, it is the impression that the coordination between other parties in the peace process has been sufficient but with no initiatives to go beyond the limited scope of the DDR programme.

In relation to the UN-UN coordination, the first dimension, ANBP has been in a daily contact with UNDP. The coordination with UNDP is of an administrative character, meaning that ANBP is taking administrative directions from UNDP because of its status as a UNDP programme. Regarding the more programme- and field oriented coordination, ANBP is described to work closely with UNAMA, the World Food Programme and in the beginning with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). UNAMA – the UN political mission in Afghanistan – has the formal contact to the government and other actors in

the country. The coordination between UNAMA and ANBP is at headquarter level and consists of progress reports from ANBP to UNAMA and information exchange on the political and security-related situation in the country. The coordination with the World Food Programme was related to the coordination of efforts in the field when doing the actual demobilisation. Here the World Food Programme was helping ANBP in providing the ex-combatants with the food package they received for the period before joining the reintegration phase of the programme. As for UNICEF, in the beginning of the DDR process they were part of the programme with a programme officer permanently stationed at the ANBP headquarter. Before the pilot projects were conducted there was an impression that a large number of child soldiers would be identified in the field and therefore a plan for their entry into the programme needed to be designed in coordination with UNICEF. Upon the completion of the pilot projects, it became apparent that the amount of child soldiers was too low for ANBP to establish a separate programme to deal with the children. Today UNICEF works independently of ANBP when reintegrating child soldiers into society.²⁸

In terms of headquarters and field coordination, the second dimension, the constellation with the eight regional offices controlled by a centrally placed headquarter in Kabul facilitate a command and control structure that enabled a great deal of communication in terms of central experience gathering and the communication of lessons back into the field. Also, the mobile disarmament units all based at the central headquarter enhanced this effect. This was especially seen during the pilot projects where the very important lessons learned regarding the issuing of payment to the soldiers were communicated back to headquarter, analysed and channelled into future practice. The same process is seen with the reintegration programmes. Here a programming section placed at headquarter in Kabul administrates the reintegration efforts. The only difference was that the demobilisation and reintegration phases were done with implementing partners and therefore not as command and communication sensitive as the disarmament phase. Based on the interviews, it appears that ANBP was coordinating efforts with relevant UN agencies on a 'need to know' basis, but it has in addition to this developed thorough internal communication systems which have proven effective especially in the beginning of the programme implementation, where lessons learned and the fast communication of these were essential for pro-

²⁸ For more on child soldiers in Afghanistan see BICC 2005: Demobilizing and Reintegrating Afghanistan's Child Soldiers.

gramme success.²⁹ The consequences of the minor UN-UN communication is not fatal in a framework like the Afghan, where the UN involvement is not as decisive as in a framework where the UN has the lead say and is more present as e.g. in Kosovo.

The military and civilian part of the coordination, the third dimension, between ANBP and ISAF, the Ministry of Defence and the ANA is a very important and complex area which got a lot of attention from all sides involved in the DDR programme. The primary attention was concentrated on the disarmament phase of the programme where the mobile disarmament units were sent out in the regions to collect weapons from the AMF. When doing this the possibility of creating a security vacuum is immense and therefore effective coordination with the military structures in the country was vital. When the Ministry of Defence decided which AMF unit to disarm, a security assessment was conducted in relation to the risk of creating a security vacuum. If the risk was high it was examined whether or not an ISAF or ANA unit could be deployed to the area before the disarmament took place. Furthermore, if the security assessment did foresee a direct threat to the mobile disarmament unit, an ANA unit or an ISAF Provisional Reconstruction Team could be attached to the disarmament site for security at the period of disarmament. The coordination between ANBP, the Ministry of Defence and ISAF is described to have been essential for the programme success. The biggest problem experienced in connection to this was the small number of ISAF in the country and their limited mandate to patrol areas other than the Kabul region³⁰ and the slow upstart progress in rebuilding the ANA. In some instances, this problem slowed the progress of disarming considerably, especially when the threat of criminals taking over after disarmament was too immense. These security-related circumstances are beyond the control of ANBP but this is not uncommon in a post-conflict peace-building environment with a limited international military presence. Security considerations need to be incorporated into the implementation strategy before launching the programme, which was not considered to a great extent in Afghanistan. This issue will be elaborated further in the next paragraph concerning realistic targets and timeframes.

²⁹ It should of cause be emphasised that headquarter and field coordination can always be improved and, also, that there is room for improvement in the case of Afghanistan.

³⁰ This was especially a problem in the beginning of the ISAF mission. Later stage I and II of the ISAF operation were launched and ISAF units began to operate in the northern and western parts of Afghanistan. Here they became involved in supporting ANBP.

The fourth dimension on regional and cross-border coordination is an area that has not been explicitly built into the work of the central office in Kabul in terms of practical coordination with foreign counterparts. Contrary, to the numerous DDR programmes conducted in Africa, the programme in Afghanistan is of an isolated nature, meaning that no other neighbouring country in the region is undergoing a similar programme. Also, the border region to Pakistan is the scene of unabated clashes between the Taliban, the USA, ANA and the Pakistani military, which excluded the possibility of effective coordination and enforcement against weapons smuggling. Because of these conditions ANBP had incorporated provisions into the eligibility criteria that enabled a great deal of control with the weapons handed over to the programme. As will be illustrated in section 4.3, the primary way of entering the programme was to hand over a Russian produced Kalashnikov and not locally manufactured weapons, which are widely used in Pakistan and a favoured choice of the weapons smugglers. The provision for programme entry, thereby, was working as a cross-border coordination device opposing illegal weapons smuggling, provisions that were working with great success.

In sum, the coordination efforts within the four dimensions were to a great extent fulfilling the criteria. In terms of the UN-UN coordination, ANBP is only doing coordination on a 'need to know' basis, but in the Afghan context with a limited UN presence it seems sufficient. Regarding headquarters and field coordination ANBP have done a great job in fostering an effective communication routine especially in the fragile starting phases of the programme – a routine that probably has prevented fatal misunderstandings. The military and civilian coordination has been improved with contact and coordination on a daily basis. Coordination that promotes the DDR process a great deal when soldiers on the ground were present. The fourth dimension on cross-border coordination has been solved by incorporating provisions into the eligibility criteria for programme entry and thereby successfully opposing cross-border smuggling.

Realistic targets and timeframes for programme implementation

To enhance the success and to uphold the momentum of a DDR process it is important to define targets and timeframes as realistically as possible in the initial stages of the programme. This was not achieved in Afghanistan because of a too optimistic approach being employed in the design of the timeframes and a target assessment that turned into political negotiations with the result of a too high target number.

The incorporation of the DDR process as a part of the security sector reform was done as a result of the Petersberg Decree where DDR, as mentioned, was described as part of the toolbox for the creation of the new Afghan army. The purpose with the DDR process was to disarm, demobilise and reintegrate the AMF so that ANA could be formed and deployed in the regions as a representative of the new Afghan state and to fill out the possible security vacuums created as disarmament proceeded. The original target and timeframe for the DDR programme was 100,000 soldiers in one year – from June 2003 to June 2004. This assessment together with the capacity building of ANBP and the schedule planned to cope with the total amount of soldiers within the timeframe was developed on a too optimistic ‘best case scenario’ where ANBP would experience maximum compliance from all parties involved, and where peace and stability had settled over the country. In reality this did not happen and looking back there was at no time evidence to suggest that it would have.

Firstly, the rebuilding of ANA by the US initiated in May 2002 had only produced a limited number of soldiers at the time when the DDR process began. These ANA soldiers were earmarked to be placed in the Kabul region to strengthen the power of the government and to be used in the presidential election. So in relation to filling the security vacuum after the disarming and demobilising of AMF there were no signs of that happening in realistic terms. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, the limited amount and mandate of ISAF did not help the situation. A stronger ANA with the possibility of providing security in the demobilised areas would also have strengthened the belief of the people in the government and encouraged the process.

Secondly, as described in relation to the national ownership of the process, the reforms needed to build an effective Ministry of Defence from where ANBP should take its orders did only proceed slowly, and it was a problem ANBP struggled with throughout the disarming and demobilisation phases.³¹

Thirdly, the constellation with the payment of salaries by the Ministry of Defence to the AMF commanders was an additional impediment that influenced the commanders in trying to be the last to be disarmed. By being the last they could get more money for themselves and with no sanctions in place to be used in the negotiations with the commanders, the process was condemned to stall.

³¹ Interview conducted 12 December 2004 in Kabul with Rick Grant, Spokesperson for ANBP.

Also, upholding the military structures could have had a positive effect on the commanders fortifying their strongholds in the regions by further establishing themselves as middlemen in the opium economy, positions they could maintain by having an army not disarming.

Finally, the political conditions outplayed in the Afghan Transitional Administration with power politics and personal enticements turning the DDR process into a political process did not foster a fast completion of the programme, e.g. the personal interests of Defence Minister Fahim and his militia in the Panshir Valley. All of the above conditions should have been evident for the planners of the programme in the beginning of the process and therefore incorporated into the formulation of more realistic timeframes.

The target of 100,000 soldiers was as earlier mentioned the result of political negotiations and as evidence shows, the final number of disarmed today are approximately 63,400 soldiers. The 100,000 figure coming in too high was not a surprise for the people involved in the programme because of the negotiation process and the payment of salaries to the AMF. Seen in isolation, the consequences of the delayed DDR process have been limited in terms of eventually achieving disarmament but in terms of the strengthening the illegal power structures in the regions and the governments aspiration of getting control of the country and abolishing the criminal and warlord structures it have had a negative effect. If the external circumstances to ANBP – the rebuilding of ANA and the reform of the Ministry of Defence – had been coordinated better in the beginning of the programme, and if more emphasis had been put into filling the security vacuum instead of primarily focusing on ANA to be used in the war on terror, the government probably would have achieved faster and stronger control over the country than it has today.

This being said, it does not seem entirely to be the fault of ANBP and their programme strategy but as much the aspirations of the external actors involved in reforming the Ministry of Defence and rebuilding ANA – primarily the US. As mentioned, it seemed that the international community with the US in front focused their resources and attention much more on the ANA so that they could be used in the war on terror, with the result that the support to other processes including DDR to some extent was neglected in favour of the international focus.³²

³² Interview conducted 11 December 2004 in Kabul with Andrew Wilder, Director of Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit.

After some time ANBP and the government realised that the problems encountered with the non-coercive top-down disarmament of AMF and the power structures in the regions called for a new approach if the programme should end within a realistic timeframe. The ANBP as a volunteer programme which relied on the willingness of the commanders did not work.

In the end of the summer 2004, the government consequently started to use the threat of sanctions against the non-cooperative commanders. This was initiated in the time following the presidential elections where President Karzai came out with a strong mandate. It was decided to use two kinds of sanctions against the commanders to get them to cooperate with the Ministry of Defence and ANBP. The first sanction was directed against the petty and middle commanders and was a combination of public announcement and the withholding of salaries, where the Ministry of Defence would cut off money from the commanders who did not meet for disarmament. Afterwards the unit would be decommissioned and the individual soldier would lose the possibility of joining the reintegration programme. Supplied by the public announcements the soldiers would know that it was the commanders who had not fulfilled his obligations to the programme and therefore they could turn against him for compensation. This was done in summer 2005 with a positive effect when the 41st Division of Chaghcharan decided not to meet for disarmament. The Ministry of Defence decommissioned the unit with the result that negotiations were initiated and a new agreement of disarmament was decided upon³³. The second type of sanctions introduced was the commitment to the obligations stated in the constitution that no leader of a political party with his own militia could run for an election.³⁴ The effect of the new line advanced by the government resulted in the joining of two of the largest warlords in the country into the DDR programme.³⁵ By disarming, the warlords enabled themselves to run for the parliamentary election. Also, it seems that they have strengthened their position and status in their region by disarming, implying that people are fed up with war and warlords.

³³ The commander of 41st Division physically resisted the DDR effort and attacked a mobile disarmament unit. The attack was brought to an end by coalition airpower.

³⁴ One of the cornerstones of the new government DIAG programme is the enforcement of the constitution regarding candidacy to the parliament election (The Constitution of Afghanistan 2004: Chapter 2, Art. 35).

³⁵ General Rashid Dostum (Uzbek) residing in the northwest part of the country and Mohammad Usta Atta (Tajik) residing in the western part of the country, both having approximately 5,500 soldiers under command including numerous tanks and artillery.

In sum, the rather optimistic view of the situation in Afghanistan and the belief in nationwide compliance have delayed the timeframe and created an artificial target determined by political negotiations. Also, the reform process of the Ministry of Defence, the slow build-up of ANA, the lack of sanctions and the political conditions in the country have resulted in the timeframes being broken. Even though these conditions are external to ANBP, the executive officers should have analysed the situation in the country and incorporated these analyses into the programme design. A political and security analysis might have created a new and more realistic timeframe which could have been followed by a successful implementation without constant regulations and political interference. It should be evident that total compliance is not realistic in a post-conflict situation where 'security first' is the utmost priority.

Tactical level

Holistic and indivisible approach to programme implementation

An integrated implementation of the three D-D-R components is crucial for programme success. The integrated approach enables the cross-cutting elements of each phase to be carried through in a dynamic fashion with the minimum loss of knowledge and momentum. This was to a large extent done in Afghanistan.

There is however, some critique of this approach. Some researchers³⁶ have argued that the DDR process in Afghanistan should have been conducted the other way around as an R-D-D process. The argument goes that with the lack of the described consensus among the key powerbrokers and the lack of widespread security in the country, the process will be delayed to such an extent that the ex-combatants will build a frustration towards the process. Instead of the traditional D-D-R approach a concentration on the R before the DD could help the ex-combatants on with their civilian lives and foster the creation of a peace-based economy. This argument could be a solution to the early implementation of DDR in a post-conflict environment if the primarily purpose of DDR is reintegration. However, in the case of Afghanistan the primary purpose of the DDR process was the disarmament of the AMF so that the government could gain control of the country, and thereupon reintegration. By establishing the AMF and paying their salaries the government bought time for the process to get started and thereby they kept the ex-combatants busy. Furthermore, the possibility of the soldiers turning against the commanders and not the DDR process seemed more likely with the sanctions introduced. On the contrary, by concentrating on the R, thereby upholding the power structures in the regions and not prioritising the disarmament of the AMF, the warlords and commanders could have manifested their power and criminal activities further and in turn offered a better pay to the soldiers who wanted to stay. Public opinion polls also point out that the number one priority of the Afghans is disarmament of the AMF and thereupon security and economic development (Rand Corporation 2005: 93-94), which implies that a converted approach could undermine the authority of the programme and the public support. The DDR approach

³⁶ The Bonn International Center for Conversion held an E-Conference from 4 to 11 June 2003 where 36 policy recommendations addressing the insecurity in Afghanistan were presented. One of the recommendations was the opposite R-D-D approach (BICC 2003: 7).

adapted by ANBP and the government seemed therefore to be most logical in the given context.

In sum, the DDR programme in Afghanistan was planned and implemented according to the requirements of the criteria. Elements such as staffing, infrastructure and funding were all planned to deal with the DDR programme in an interrelated D-D-R manner. Also, the security situation in the country at the time of programme implementation required an approach where the ex-combatants were kept busy under some organised control but with the central government 'at the end on the table', paying the salaries. This was necessary if a power vacuum was to be avoided and to prevent the regional commanders from becoming stronger.

Effective public information

Public information and information to the soldiers up for disarmament are vital elements of a DDR process. If there is no awareness to the programme in the public and amongst the soldiers, the possibility of halting the process becomes immense. The public information programme for the DDR process in Afghanistan did not start with the beginning of the pilot projects and for almost a year an effective information campaign was absent. ANBP did not build a sufficient capacity in terms of public information and this had a direct negative effect on programme success.³⁷

The biggest challenge for implementing a public information campaign in Afghanistan was the lack of communication facilities such as television and radio throughout the country and the fact that the illiteracy rate of the ex-combatants was about 85 percent. Many people outside Kabul had never seen a television and radio was not very common, so the challenges in this regard have been enormous. Furthermore, the human capacity within ANBP in terms of public information seems to have been rather insufficient and was during interviews described as being the wrong person, in the wrong job, at the wrong time.³⁸ The information problems manifested themselves in two areas: firstly the communication to the public in general; and secondly to the individual soldiers of the AMF.

³⁷ Interview conducted 12 December 2004 in Kabul with Paul Cruikshank, Deputy Programme Director of ANBP.

³⁸ Interview conducted 15 December 2004 in Kabul with an external communication and public information consultant.

The information to the public in terms of raising awareness of the programme was problematic because of the mentioned infrastructural conditions in the country and the lack of understanding of the Afghan civil society by the public information department at ANBP. The consequence of this was that the overall public did not know what ANBP was and what it could offer in return to the disarmed soldiers. With the ANBP programme being a volunteer programme it has among other things to rely on the support and goodwill of the people for the soldiers to join the process. The support of the people and their knowledge of the benefits to society when disarming the soldiers can in many instances smoothen the process and thereby programme implementation. This did not happen in Afghanistan in the first long period with the result of impeding the process.

The information to the individual soldier to be disarmed was as with the above-mentioned case limited or not existing. When talking to the commander of the 10 Division AMF outside Kabul about to join the DDR process, the commander complained that his soldiers did not know what to expect in the future and what alternatives ANBP could offer in exchange for their weapons.³⁹ The information strategy from the Ministry of Defence and ANBP was to inform the commanders, who in turn informed the soldiers. This did however in many instances not happen with the result that the soldiers did not show up at the disarmament site. There are several reasons why the commanders did not inform their soldiers; firstly by withholding the information the commander could get away with stalling the process and collecting extra salaries from the Ministry of Defence. Meaning that the uninformed soldiers did not complain to their commanders simply because they did not know what they were missing. Secondly in the Afghan culture it is not custom for the commander to go around and inform his soldiers on low practical issues. If ANBP had gone into the field and informed the soldiers to an extent that they knew the benefits of the programme it would probably have provoked a bottom-up requirement from the soldiers to the commanders of joining the programme so they could get on with their lives.⁴⁰

In sum, the information strategy adapted by ANBP in terms of effective public information by informing the commanders and then relying on their coopera-

³⁹ Interview conducted 15 December 2004 in Paghman outside Kabul with Dr. Abdullah, Commander 10 Division AMF.

⁴⁰ Interview conducted 15 December 2004 in Kabul with an external communication and public information consultant.

tion was a faulty strategy and seems to be one of the most important lessons drawn from this process. As mentioned above, the ideas of total compliance in a post-conflict environment is not very realistic, and it is therefore important to formulate an effective information strategy in which all parts of society are informed. It is essential that the general public and the soldiers on the ground are thoroughly informed on the benefits for them and their community if the programme is to get successfully on the way – something that did not happen in Afghanistan. In an environment like the Afghan where the infrastructure is as limited as described, the only way to accomplish a successful information campaign is to get people out into the field and give face-to-face information. This has to some extent been done in the disarmament phase, but not as effectively and thoroughly as needed. An extensive information campaign towards the soldiers would probably have advanced the process a great deal. In Afghanistan, information became power of the commanders over the soldiers and ANBP, which complicated the process a great deal.

Detailed and transparent eligibility criteria for programme entry

If a DDR process should not overlook vulnerable and non-armed groups qualified for demobilisation, a differentiated approach to target groups such as children, women and ill persons has to be adopted. As mentioned earlier in section 3.2, this was done in the case of child soldiers, where UNICEF handled the process and from February 2004 and until today UNICEF has handled approximately 4,000 child soldiers out of an estimated 8,000. The typical child soldier in Afghanistan has been male,⁴¹ between 14 and 17 years old and forcibly conscripted into the fighting forces in the last years of the conflict. 87 percent of the child soldiers have not received any formal education and can therefore not contribute to the livelihood of their families. The most popular reintegration choice of the child soldiers have been agricultural learning, animal husbandry, tailoring, carpentry and electronics.⁴² In the Afghan context it is worth noting that it is not uncommon for children to enter the labour market at the age of 13. Also, as seen in other conflicts the child soldiers were not doped up before going into combat, but primarily used as cheap labour, working as logistical support for the army.

As for other groups there were no special programmes developed before the implementation of the DDR process, but a set of all inclusion eligibility criteria

⁴¹ No girls have been identified in the armed forces in the country.

⁴² www.unicef.org/infobycountry/afghanistan.html.

were developed. For a soldier to be disarmed he had to hand over a functioning weapon (primarily Kalashnikovs) and/or be part of a military unit under AMF. With these basic rules, both armed and non-armed support personnel have been taken into consideration of the programme.⁴³ Not as separate programmes but in an integrated fashion. If an infantry brigade was due for disarming, it was expected that all the soldiers had a weapon to turn in. If it was a tank squadron, it was not expected that all the soldiers had been issued a weapon. The criteria for the weapons the soldiers handed over to ANBP were listed on the basis of the weapons used during the fighting. This was primarily Russian-made Kalashnikovs, but also older weapons. The eligibility criteria were set to prevent the smuggling of weapons from neighbouring countries, especially the western region of Pakistan where a lot of weapons are made by local gunsmiths. The ANBP did not want to foster weapons smuggling or market conditions for cheap copies. So all soldiers – combatant and not – who were attached to a Ministry of Defence recognised AMF unit could join the DDR process. No exceptions have been made in terms of handing over ammunition or other military equipment to compensate for a weapon.

When the Ministry of Defence have identified a unit for disarmament the regional ANBP office took over the verification of that unit. This was done through a verification committee consisting of ANBP staff and local senior leaders of that particular region. The verification committee identified the communities closest to the unit up for disarmament and temporarily appointed elders and respected individuals of those areas to join the committee. The soldiers went by the verification committee – who knows most people and family relations in the region – and it would verify the authenticity of the individual soldier as to his military service and family background. Once approved by the committee the soldier could enter the programme.⁴⁴

When this was done the fingerprints and photos of each soldier were taken as evidence that the soldier had entered the programme. The verification process was quite extensive and profound and it was one of the relatively greater success mechanisms used by ANBP. The system enabled the programme to exclude free riders of the process and gave the programme an internal and external legitimacy, which is often lacking in DDR processes. Meaning that it did not

⁴³ Of other groups only three women have joined the programme.

⁴⁴ Interview conducted 12 December 2004 in Kabul with Rick Grant, Spokesperson for ANBP.

become a programme everybody just could enter and receive benefits from, something which could have undermined the programme in the eyes of the public. Furthermore, by incorporating the verification process, the possibility of the programme to uphold the overall programme and economic frame has a greater possibility of succeeding.

In sum, the implementation of the DDR programme in Afghanistan did establish a very extensive, detailed, transparent and thorough plan for programme entry. This was done by creating eligibility criteria that were not subject to different interpretations or fraud and by establishing a verification mechanism that to a large extent enabled the exclusion of free riders. This setup created by ANBP, when further improved and adapted, could with advantages be exported to future DDR processes.

Community participation

Sustainability through local participation is a key to a successful DDR process and it is an element of great concern when planning and implementing a programme. In Afghanistan, community participation in terms of planning and implementing the disarmament and demobilisation phases of the programme did succeed to a large extent, but participation in the reintegration phase did not happen because the programme was not a community based weapons-for-development-programme.

The structure of ANBP was primarily based on national employees. With about 650 persons employed at ANBP approximately 80 of these were internationals. Especially the regional offices were staffed with nationals and as mentioned, the verification committees were primarily set up with locals from different regions. Regarding community participation in the planning and implementing phases of the programme it was, as stated, locals who were the primary responsible, and almost all communication from ANBP to the soldiers was done by Afghans. As mentioned in some of the interviews, this was done because of the requirements by the UN in turning the programme over to Afghan control by summer 2005. Also, at the central office in Kabul most of the international personnel employed had a local counterpart. So regarding the first two phases of the programme, local participation was taken into consideration and succeeded.

Because of the programme structure there is, however, no community participation in the reintegration part of the process. The task set out for ANBP to

solve was the disarmament of AMF and the reintegration of the soldiers into society. By constructing the AMF and making them the only target, ANBP did not estimate the possibility of structuring the programme as a weapons-for-development or community based programme. With the fixed unit structures it was evident to do the disarmament and demobilisation with whole units at a time because no individual soldiers then could turn up and claim to be part of some non-existing unit as it has happened in many DDR processes in other countries. Also, the verification process was simplified by using the unit structure with an identified commander attached. When the unit was demobilised the process turned into an individual process, where each soldier would enter reintegration. This part of the process could have been made as a community based programme where the community from which the soldiers came could benefit from the reintegration. This was however not done.

If a community-based approach had been adapted for the programme the problems encountered with the non-cooperative commanders could probably have been minimised, if the delay caused by the commanders had affected the whole community and not only the single soldier – again initiating a bottom-up approach. This being said, the political conditions in the country have fostered a need for the military structures to be the primary aim for dissolution and therefore a community-based programme was not an obvious option.

In sum, the implementation of the DDR programme in terms of local participation did succeed in the phases of disarmament and demobilisation. Here the primary part of the staff employed to implement the two phases were locals and the capacity-building process of turning the central administration in Kabul over to national hands proceeded as planned. On the other hand, the programme structure has not created the possibility of community participation in the reintegration phase because of it not being a weapons-for-development-programme, but rather designed to deal with fixed military units. As described there were several advantages in doing reintegration within the unit structures, but as far as the connection to the overall peace-building process the reintegration phase could have attained greater success if another approach had been adopted, but the situation in the country at the time of programme implementation did not seem suitable for such a programme structure. Today, however, a community-based programme with local participation could succeed the end of the DDR process and thereby help to accomplish the overall peace-building objectives to Afghanistan, e.g. in the context of the DIAG programme.

Conclusion

Generally speaking, the DDR process in Afghanistan can be characterised as a success in relation to the processes conducted elsewhere during in the last decade (see the appendix), and in accordance with the overall criteria presented above. The incorporation of DDR provisions into the Bonn Agreement and the subsidiary decrees gives the overall impression of an understanding and endorsement of the importance of the DDR process to be prioritised by both international and national actors. The dedication and work of the international community, especially the UN and ANBP, shows that lessons have been learned over time, but it also shows that DDR is a process under constant development and that there is still a lot to learn from the current cases in the field and of the future. Of the ten criteria, five criteria were fully met, three criteria were partly met, and two criteria were not met at all (see table 5.1 below).

Table 5.1: Compliance with the criteria

Dimension	Success criteria	Compliance
Political/ Strategic level	Comprehensive political and development frameworks	Partial
	National ownership of the programme	Full
	Evidence-based approach to programme planning	Partial
Operational level	Sufficient and flexible funding arrangements	Full
	Effective coordination	Full
	Realistic targets and timeframes for programme implementation	No
Tactical level	Holistic and indivisible approach to programme implementation	Full
	Effective public information	No
	Detailed and transparent eligibility criteria for programme entry	Full
	Community participation	Partial

Political/Strategic level

On the political/strategic level, three general findings can be derived from the case study of the DDR programme in Afghanistan. First, the case study suggests

that the DDR programme is firmly linked to broader political frameworks, such as ceasefires and peace agreements, but is insufficiently linked to frameworks for peace-building, recovery and development. In Afghanistan, the incorporation of DDR provisions into the political framework for the post-conflict transition process, the Bonn Agreement and subsequently the Petersberg Decree, established a clear line of control and nurtured participation in and commitment to the DDR programme from the armed factions. Also, the establishment of the AMF furnished the Afghan Transitional Administration valuable time to set up the necessary structures and institutions to commence the DDR process. The time span from the signing of the Bonn Agreement to the commencement of the DDR process created the time needed, but at the same time it enabled the warlords to further establish themselves as local and regional strongmen with capabilities to obstruct centrally planned programmes. In the creation of the AMF, the warlords kept their military power, which helped them to establish and manifest themselves as e.g. middlemen in the opium production and the illegal opium economy and, given this position, to influence government decisions. Thereby, the political and technical concerns of the DDR programme – buying sufficient time to setup structures and institutions for DDR, and ensuring commitment to the programme on the part of the armed factions – impaired national and international efforts to counter the production of opium, and ultimately to some extent undermined government authority by stimulating the financial and military power basis of the Afghan warlords. The creation of the AMF with the major warlords imbedded was the optimal solution taking into consideration the reluctance of western powers to contribute with soldiers. But the incorporation of the overall peace-building strategy could probably have shortened the life of the AMF and thereby the power of the warlords. On both formal and informal levels – on paper as well as on the ground – the DDR programme in Afghanistan had little linkage to the overall peace-building and development process in Afghanistan and clearly this hindered an effective implementation of both the DDR programme and other activities, notably the efforts to counter the production of opium.

Second, the case study suggests that national ownership of DDR programmes can be critical for an effective, cost-efficient and sustainable execution of DDR, but at the same time potentially damaging to DDR when national and local actors lack the necessary institutional and human resource capacity for, or bona fide commitment to, the DDR programme. In Afghanistan, the planning and implementation of the DDR programme generally met the requirements of national

ownership. Throughout the process, the Afghan Transitional Administration had the lead, and national bodies were created to manage the overall planning and implementation of the DDR programme, though in close cooperation with the UN. However, it appears that placing the DDR programme firmly in the hands of the Afghan Transitional Administrations to some extent delayed and complicated the process. Evidently, there was much disagreement between on one side the Afghan Transitional Administration, notably the Afghan Ministry of Defence, and on the other side the international community in terms of design and commitment to the DDR programme. For example, the Ministry of Defence started their own weapons collection programme in the summer of 2002. The programme did not conform to the intentions of the international community in terms of duration and extent of the programme, including the importance of integrating the three DDR phases and placing special emphasis on the reintegration phase. Also, the lack of the necessary institutional and human resources within the Afghan administration, and the post-conflict time resuming fundamentals of governmental reforms, constitution building and election processes, encouraged by the international community, constitutes obstacles to the implementation of the DDR programme; obstacles that complicated the programme negotiations and implementation considerably. These elements and the lack of genuine commitment by parties in the government on the ground of power politics did politicise the DDR process. This could probably have been prevented if other than the Afghan Transitional Administration had been leading the process with the necessary local support on the ground.

Finally, the case study suggests that evidence in terms of fact-finding is critical not only for the technical and logistical planning of DDR but also for the negotiation of programme terms. This concerns e.g. the numbers of combatants to be processed and the numbers and types of weapons to be surrendered. Consequently, peace agreements, UN Security Council resolutions and mandates should allow time for the collection of comprehensive and reliable data. In Afghanistan, the DDR programme generally met the criterion of applying an evidence-based approach to programme planning. Following the signing of the Petersberg Decree, both ANBP and the Afghan Ministry of Defence carried out rather extensive assessments to determine e.g. how many combatants were to be disarmed and demobilised, how many and what types of weapons they possessed, what was their demographic compositions, qualifications, and skills. This assessment formed the basis for the elaboration and planning of the DDR programme. However, a number of findings suggest that the assessment

was somewhat incomprehensive and ultimately subjugated to political disputes, both within the Afghan Transitional Administration and between the Afghan Transitional Administration and the international community. For example did the assessments not establish clear numbers in terms of combatants to be disarmed and demobilised during the course of the programme. Whereas the UN claimed that an estimated 94,000 combatants were to be processed, the Ministry of Defence argued that an estimated 250,000 combatants were to be processed, and consequently the final programme target – 100,000 combatants – was the product of political negotiations rather than actual evidence. Similarly, the joint assessment did not provide an adequate picture as to how many and – first and foremost – what types of weapons were in the hands of the armed factions. Consequently, during the first several months of the DDR programme, it did not address approximately 10,000 heavy weapons – predominantly leftovers from the Soviet occupation – scattered across the country. These weapons provided regional and local strongmen considerable military potency, and until adequately addressed they constituted a potential threat to the government per se and the peace process in general.

Operational level

On the operational level, one general finding can be derived from the case study of the DDR programme in Afghanistan. The case study suggests that targets and timeframes for the planning and implementation of the DDR programme are likely to incur from political controversy, and targets and timeframes are therefore likely to become unrealistic. In Afghanistan, the programme planners did not meet the criterion of establishing realistic targets and timeframes for the overall planning and implementation of the DDR programme. Particularly with respect to programme targets, it soon became a point of political dispute between the Afghan Transitional Administration, notably the Ministry of Defence on one side and the international organisations and donors on the other. As has already been described, the DDR programme planners, based on their countrywide assessment, came up with target numbers between 94,000 and 250,000, agreeing on 100,000 after negotiations. Today, at programme termination approximately 63,000 combatants have entered the programme. But also in relation to timeframes where a rather optimistic view of the situation in the country caused an adopting of a timeframe based on total compliance and best case scenarios. ‘Security first’ is a label often used in relation to post-conflict peace-building, implying that it is hard to conduct a successful peace process if there is no security in the country. ANBP realised this when the disarming

phase began and security vacuums were created in the country. Had the overall considerations and understanding of the context, in which the DDR process were to be conducted, been taken into considerations, ANBP would properly have identified this and tried to coordinate the DDR process with the expansion of ISAF and the rebuilding of ANA. It is evident that a country emerging from 23 years of war will need some sort of external security force to establish peace on ground, until new governmental security organs are developed. If the security context had been incorporated into the planning, some of the problems experienced and the unrealistic timeframes decided upon could have been avoided.

Tactical level

Finally, on the tactical level two general findings can be derived from the case study of the DDR programme in Afghanistan. First, the case study emphasises the importance of public information of both ex-combatants and civilians, and that the inclusion of media assessments, that is assessments of communication infrastructures, public accessibility to mass media and general levels of education and literacy, into the overall evidence-based planning of the DDR programme is critical for an effective and timely implementation of public information measures. In Afghanistan, the DDR programme did not meet the criterion of establishing effective public information measures. During the first year of the DDR process, public information was absent from the programme. A public information department was created early in the process, but no experienced personnel were assigned to the department, and the ones that were did not possess the required skills or proper educational background. In terms of informing the public, no information strategy was developed, and consequently the general public did not know about the DDR programme and its contribution to peace in Afghanistan. In terms of informing the combatants, insufficient knowledge about Afghan culture and traditional lines of communication resulted in very limited – in some cases no – information passing on to the combatants, which ultimately hampered the process and the overall implementation of the DDR programme.

Second, the case study suggests that community participation is often the key to successful planning and implementation of a DDR programme, but at the same time that community participation does not constitute a success criterion per se, when other social collectives prove equally functional for DDR, or when community structures simply do not exist. In Afghanistan, the programme implementers partially met the criterion of ensuring community participation

in the planning and implementation of the programme. Given the regionalised structure of ANBP and the widespread employment of local staff, the DDR programme in Afghanistan generally fulfilled the requirements of involving locals in the disarmament and demobilisation of the ex-combatants. However, it did not fulfil the requirements of involving local communities in the social, psychological and economic reintegration of ex-combatants. Instead of applying local communities as the focal point for all DDR activities, the programme applied the military and social structures of the armed factions. As expected, this strategy proved extremely functional with respect to disarmament and demobilisation as it insured that the combatants were processed collectively rather than individually, but it is questionable to what extent it had a positive impact on the reintegration of the ex-combatants.

The case study of the DDR programme in Afghanistan illustrates abundantly clear the new complexity that peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building face in contemporary conflicts. The politicisation of the structural level hampered the efficacy of the later phases and consequently the efficacy of the entire programme. The early programmes conducted in the late 1980s to the mid 1990s were often of an extent that enabled the military components of the peace process to take lead of the implementation. Today the Afghan experience proves that the range, expertise and the fundamental need for interaction within the broader frameworks for peace-building requires a programme structure where civil and military experts work closely together to reach their objectives and to fulfil the task. This is an extremely important lesson learned that for the sake of success should be incorporated into DDR programmes of the future – both on the civil and on the military side.

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Appendix: Major UN DDR operations

DDR Programmes	Year	Mandate
Early demobilisation programmes		
United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA)	1989-1992	<i>"... to authorize [...] an enlargement of the mandate of ONUCA and the addition of armed personnel to its strength in order to enable it to play a part in the voluntary demobilization of the Nicaraguan Resistance"</i> (UNSC Resolution 650, 27 March 1990)
United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL)	1991-1995	<i>"... to monitor all agreements between the two parties, whose initial mandate in its first phase as an integrated peacekeeping operation will be to verify the compliance by the parties with the Agreement on Human Rights signed at San José on 26 July 1990"</i> (UNSC Resolution 693, 20 May 1990)
United Nations Angola Verification Missions II (UNAVEM II)	1991-1995	<i>"... to entrust a new mandate to the United Nations Angola Verification Mission [...] as proposed by the Secretary-General in line with the Peace Accords for Angola"</i> (UNSC Resolution 696, 30 May 1991)
Disarmament and demobilisation programmes		
United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)	1992-1993	<i>"... to supervise the ceasefire and related measures including regroupment, cantonment, disarming and demobilization ..."</i> (Report of the UNSG on Cambodia, 19 February 1992)
United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ)	1992-1994	<i>"... to monitor and verify the ceasefire, the separation and concentration of forces of the two parties, their demobilization and the collection, storage and destruction of weapons ..."</i> (Report of the UNSG on Mozambique, 3 December 1992)

DDR Programmes	Year	Mandate
United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II)	1993-1995	<p>“... to maintain control of the heavy weapons of the organized factions which would have been brought under international control pending their eventual destruction or transfer to a newly constituted national army [and] seize the small arms of all unauthorized armed elements and assisting in the registration and security of such arms ...” (Report of the UNSG on Somalia, 3 March 1993)</p>
United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH)	1993-1996	<p>“... that the military component of the Mission in charge of modernization of the armed forces ...” (UNSC Resolution 867, 23 September 1993)</p>
United Nations Observer Missions in Liberia (UNOMIL)	1993-1997	<p>“... to assist in the monitoring of compliance with the embargo on delivery of arms and military equipment to Liberia and the cantonment, disarmament and demobilization of combatants” (UNSC Resolution 866, 22 September 1993)</p>
United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT)	1994-2000	<p>“... monitor the assembly of UTO fighters and their reintegration, disarmament and demobilization [and] assist in the reintegration into governmental power structures or demobilization of ex-combatants” (UNSC Resolution 1138, 14 November 1997)</p>
United Nations Angola Verification Missions III (UNAVEM III). We categorise UNAVEM III as the first attempt of a third generation DDR mission.	1995-1997	<p>“... to facilitate the demobilization and social reintegration of ex-combatants and the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Angolan national economy in order to consolidate the gains in the peace process.” and “...to monitor and verify the extension of State administration throughout the country and the process of national reconciliation; to supervise, control and verify the disengagement of forces and to monitor the cease-fire; to verify information received from the Government and UNITA regarding their forces, as well as all troop movements; to assist in the establishment of quartering areas; to verify the withdrawal, quartering and demobilization of UNITA forces; to supervise the collection and storage of UNITA armaments; to verify the movement of Government forces (FAA) to barracks and the completion of the formation of FAA” (UNSC ‘Lusaka Protocol’ Resolution 952, 27 October)</p>

DDR Programmes	Year	Mandate
United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium (UNTAES)	1996-1998	<i>“... to supervise and facilitate the demilitarization as undertaken by the parties to the Basic Agreement ...”</i> (UNSC Resolution 1037, 15 January 1996)
United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA)	1997	<i>“... to authorize for a three-month period the attachment to MINUGUA a group of 155 military observers and requisite medical personnel for the purposes of verification of the agreement on the definitive ceasefire ... [including the separation of forces, and the disarmament and demobilization of combatants]”</i> (UNSC Resolution 1094, 20 January 1997)
United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA). The mission should be seen as a downsized continuation of UNAVEM III, a third generation DDR mission.	1997-1999	<i>“... complete without delay the remaining military aspects of the peace process, including the registration and demobilization of all remaining military elements, the elimination of all obstacles to the free circulation of people and goods, and the disarmament of the civilian population”</i> (UNSC Resolution 1118, 30 June 1997)
United Nations Observer Missions in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL)	1998-1999	<i>“... Monitor the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants concentrated in secure areas of the country, including monitoring of the role of ECOMOG in the provision of security and in the collection and destruction of arms in those secure areas.”</i> (UNSC Resolution 1181, 13 July 1998)
United Nations Mission in Central Africa (MINURCA)	1998-2000	<i>“... to supervise, control storage, and monitor the final disposition of all weapons retrieved in the course of the disarmament exercise”</i> (UNSC Resolution 1159, 27 March 1998)

DDR Programmes	Year	Mandate
Complex DDR programmes		
United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC)	1999-	<p><i>“... to develop an action plan for [...] the comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration of all members of all armed groups” and “...to facilitate the demobilization and voluntary repatriation of the disarmed foreign combatants and their dependents [and] to contribute to the disarmament portion of the national programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of Congolese combatants and their dependents, in monitoring the process and providing as appropriate security in some sensitive locations” (UNSC Resolution 1291, 24 February 2000), (UNSC Resolution 1565, 1 October 2004)</i></p>
United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)	1999-	<p><i>“... to assist the government of Sierra Leone in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan [and] to that end, to establish a presence at key locations throughout the territory of Sierra Leone, including disarmament/reception centres and demobilization centres” (UNSC Resolution 1270, 22 October 1999)</i></p>
United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)	2001-	<p><i>“Concurrent with the recruitment and training of soldiers, a program of collection of arms and reintegration shall be carried out.” (Petersburg Decree 2002: 2)</i></p>

DDR Programmes	Year	Mandate
United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)	2003-	<p><i>“... to assist in the development of cantonment sites and to provide security at these sites [...] to observe and monitor disengagement of and cantonment of military forces of all of the parties [...] to develop an action plan for the overall implementation of a disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and repatriation (DDRR) programme for all armed parties; with particular attention to the special needs of child combatants and women; and addressing the inclusion of non-Liberian combatants [and] to carry out voluntary disarmament and to collect and destroy weapons and ammunition as part of an organized DDRR programme” (UNSC Resolution 1509, 19 September 2003)</i></p>
United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB)	2004-	<p><i>“... to carry out the disarmament and demobilization portions of the national programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants [and] to monitor the quartering of the Armed Forces of Burundi and their heavy weapons, as well as the disarmament and demobilization of the elements that need to be disarmed and demobilized” (UNSC Resolution 1545, 21 May 2004)</i></p>
United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)	2004-	<p><i>“... to assist the Transitional Government, particularly the Haitian National Police, with comprehensive and sustainable Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programmes for all armed groups, including women and children associated with such groups, as well as weapons control and public security measures” (UNSC Resolution 1542, 30 April 2004)</i></p>

DDR Programmes	Year	Mandate
United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)	2004-	<p><i>“... to help the Government of National Reconciliation implement the national programme for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the combatants (DDR), with special attention to the specific needs of women and children [and] to guard weapons, ammunition and other military materiel handed over by the former combatants and to secure, neutralize or destroy such materiel”</i> (UNSC Resolution 1528, 27 February 2004)</p>
United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS)	2005-	<p><i>“... to assist in the establishment of the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration program as called for in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, with particular attention to the special needs of women and child combatants, and its implementation through voluntary disarmament and weapons collection and destruction ...”</i> (UNSC Resolution 1590, 24 March 2005)</p>

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