

**A Window of Opportunity  
in the Democratic Republic of the Congo:  
Incorporating a Gender Perspective in the  
Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration  
Process**

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## Introduction

As the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) balances in limbo between ongoing conflict and peace, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, repatriation and resettlement (DDR(RR)) process is underway.<sup>1</sup> The aim is to provide a viable way of life for former combatants whose main source of survival has been by way of the gun.<sup>2</sup> To date, this process has been focused on addressing the needs of armed men, while less priority has been given to those of women.<sup>3</sup>

The ideology of equally including perspectives, impacts and needs of men and women has been evolving at the United Nations through the concept of ‘gender mainstreaming’. This paper argues that gender<sup>4</sup> mainstreaming of DDR(RR) processes is a transformative concept, in which equal attention to women and men in the theory, policy and practical implementation are all crucial to the success of DDR(RR) processes. The DRC is a threshold case in this context, as the UN mission, since March 2002, has a Gender Unit actively contributing to the inclusion of gender considerations in the DRC’s DDR(RR) process.

Despite ongoing fighting in the eastern regions of the DRC, several developments in recent months have sparked new hope for post-conflict recovery, including the adoption of a national DDR plan and the move towards a nationally integrated military structure. Therefore, the moment is ripe to assess ways in which gender mainstreaming can be further incorporated into this DDR(RR) process.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This paper does not discuss the overall merits or faults with the concept of DDR(RR), assumptions or underlying rationales for DDR(RR), or if this is the right time for DDR(RR) in the DRC.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Lesson Learned Unit. “Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of ex-Combatants in a Peacekeeping Environment: Principles and Guidelines,” (United Nations, December 1999), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> This finding has been argued by several experts, including Nathalie de Watteville, Vanessa A. Farr, Susan McKay, Dyan Mazurana, and Angela Veale, and UNIFEM.

<sup>4</sup> An examination of gender, “the social roles that define women and men in a specific cultural context,” provides insights on assumptions and stereotypes of values and qualities associated with each. Noeleen Heyzer, “Gender, peace and disarmament,” Disarmament Forum 4 (Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 2003), pp. 5-16.

<sup>5</sup> The analysis in this paper focuses mainly on whether the DDR(RR) process in DRC has adequately met the needs of women. However, the focus on women in “no way negates the needs of men,” indeed both are “inextricably linked,” as they are part of the same families and communities. In addition, although this paper mainly refers to women, much of the context also applies to girls. Charlotte Lindsey-Curtet, Florence Tercier Holst-Roness, Letitia Anderson, “Addressing the Needs of Women Affected by Armed Conflict” (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, March 2004), p. 9.

Section I discusses gender perspectives in DDR(RR) more generally and the emergence of this concept at the UN. Section II examines the gendered impact of the conflict in the DRC. Section III describes DRC's DDR(RR) infrastructure, with a look at mechanisms for gender mainstreaming. Section IV examines the initial planning process of DDR(RR), looking at how gender perspectives have been incorporated. Section V provides an overview of disarmament and demobilization, exploring successes, gaps and opportunities for gender mainstreaming. Section VI does the same for reintegration and repatriation. The last section offers recommendations on how gender-sensitive DDR(RR) can be implemented, and how future DDR(RR) processes can benefit from such lessons.

### **Section I: Gender Mainstreaming and DDR(RR) Processes**

DDR(RR) processes are part of a wider integrated recovery strategy encompassing economic development, security sector reform, integration of refugees and internally displaced persons, and justice and reconciliation.<sup>6</sup> While DDR has mainly been undertaken by UN peacekeeping missions,<sup>7</sup> many development agencies have also become involved in this sector.<sup>8</sup>

Each component of DDR(RR) is essential in order to achieve success, although it does not always occur in a formulated sequence<sup>9</sup> and is tailored to meet the particular context.<sup>10</sup> Disarmament is the separation of the soldiers from weapons, voluntarily, coercively, or in exchange for goods. Demobilization is the process of transforming the soldiers from combatants to ex-combatants, which involves bringing them together to

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<sup>6</sup> International Peace Academy, "A Framework for Lasting Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Crisis Situations" IPA Workshop Report (New York: German House, 12- 13 December 2002), p.3.

<sup>7</sup> Operations that have contributed to this experience include the UN missions in Namibia, Central America, Cambodia, two in Angola, Somalia, Mozambique, Guatemala, Eastern Slovenia, Baranja and Western Sirmium, Liberia, Sierra Leone and East Timor.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Muggah, Philippe Maughan and Chris tian Bugnion, "The Long Shadow of War: Prospects for Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration in the Republic of Congo," A Joint Independent Evaluation (European Commission, UNDP and the MDRP Secretariat, 13 February to 6 March 2003), p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> Vanessa Farr, "The importance of a gender perspective to successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes," Disarmament Forum 4 (Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 2003), p. 25.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

encampment<sup>11</sup> sites where they are disarmed, given tools and training, and discharged. Reintegration is the stage where the former combatant re-enters life into the civilian community. This paper addresses DDR, activities associated with national ex-combatants, as well as DDRRR, the process of relocating foreign ex-combatants to their country of origin.<sup>12</sup>

To date, individuals who have qualified as ‘target groups’ for DDR(RR) benefits have mainly been armed men, with little consideration for a “wide range of actors who do not share common characteristics, needs or vulnerabilities”.<sup>13</sup> As a result, the roles of women and girls in armed conflict have often been invisible and their needs overlooked.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, an inclusive redefinition, with specific criteria of ‘target groups’ must be undertaken, so that men and women’s needs are equally addressed in the post-conflict phase.<sup>15</sup>

### *Evolution of an International Regime: Norms and Commitments*

At the international policy level, norms and commitments have been developed to ensure that gender perspectives are included in post-conflict recovery. The first UN articulation linking gender equality, development and peace was the 1975 UN Conference on Women in Mexico City. In 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) defined discrimination against women and set up an agenda for national action. In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action highlighted several gender-specific impacts of armed conflict.<sup>16</sup> In 1997, an ECOSOC resolution defined gender mainstreaming within the UN as “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including

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<sup>11</sup> The terms “cantonment”, “encampment” and “assembly areas” are used interchangeably in this paper.

<sup>12</sup> Muggah, Maughan and Bugnion, “The Long Shadow of War”, p.19.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>14</sup> Study submitted by the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). “Women, Peace and Security,” S/2002/1154 (United Nations, 16 October 2002), p. 129.

<sup>15</sup> Several experts, including de Watteville, Farr, McKay, Mazurana, Veale, and UNIFEM have argued that women, by definition, are often excluded from “target groups” for DDR processes.

<sup>16</sup> Paragraph 135 of the Platform reads, “while entire communities suffer the consequences of armed conflict and terrorism, women and girls are particularly affected because of their status in society and their sex.”

legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels...so that women and men benefit equally.”<sup>17</sup>

In 2000, more specific norms were developed applying to peacekeeping operations. On 31 May 2000 the Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming stated that “the principles of gender equality must permeate the entire [peace] mission, at all levels, thus ensuring the participation of women and men as equal partners and beneficiaries in all aspects of the peace process.”<sup>18</sup> The adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on ‘Women, Peace and Security’ in October 2000 called for the incorporation of gender perspectives in all areas of peacekeeping operations, including DDR initiatives.<sup>19</sup> This was a conceptual shift, as women were finally recognized in international law as active agents in peacebuilding and development, rather than merely as victims of war.

#### *The UN DPKO and Gender Mainstreaming*

Following the adoption of Resolution 1325, there has been new momentum on the inclusion of gender perspectives in international peace and security work. In 2002 various documents contributed to the analysis of how to implement Resolution 1325. UNIFEM’s Independent Expert’s Assessment recommended ways to address the needs of women affected by war.<sup>20</sup> The Secretary-General’s report ‘Women, Peace and Security’ included an entire section on DDR.<sup>21</sup> Pertinent Department for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)

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<sup>17</sup> Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Agreed Conclusions (United Nations, July 1997), p. 28.

<sup>18</sup> Windhoek Declaration: [On the 10th Anniversary of the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG)] The Namibia Plan of Action on ‘Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations’ (May 2000).

<sup>19</sup> Security Council Resolution 1325 on “Women, Peace and Security,” S/RES/1325 (31 October 2000). Specifically, Point 13 of Resolution 1325 calls for “all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants.”

<sup>20</sup> Elisabeth Rehn and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Women, War and Peace: The Independent Experts’ Assessment (New York: UNIFEM, 2002).

<sup>21</sup> Report of the Secretary-General, “Women, Peace and Security” S/2002/1154 (New York: United Nations, 2002), pp. 129-134. The report articulated the need to address women in all stages of planning of DDR, develop awareness of domestic violence, recognize and use women’s contributions in persuading combatants to disarm, and ensure women’s access to all resources of DDR.

policy was developed, including guidelines<sup>22</sup> and a handbook.<sup>23</sup> Steps taken by the DPKO to incorporate gender perspectives in peacekeeping<sup>24</sup> included:

- The establishment of gender advisory capacity for missions through a gender advisor<sup>25</sup> and a permanent gender advisor at UN headquarters;<sup>26</sup>
- The prohibition of sexual exploitation by peacekeepers with a ‘Code of Conduct’<sup>27</sup>, and the Secretary-General’s Bulletin on sexual exploitation<sup>28</sup>; and
- The provision of materials for training on gender awareness developed by UNITAR,<sup>29</sup> as well as a module developed by Canada and UK.<sup>30</sup>

As it is the responsibility of the troop contributing country to enforce the Code of Conduct and undertake gender trainings, there is no assurance that peacekeepers are aware of, or will comply with these measures. In addition, it is not clear how much of the DPKO budget is devoted to gender mainstreaming. In DPKO’s 2004-2005 budget, while mentioning the goal of gender mainstreaming,<sup>31</sup> there is no specific budget line for related activities. The budgetary and programmatic ambiguity at the Headquarters level

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<sup>22</sup> Department of Peacekeeping Operations Lessons Learned Unit, “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective In Multidimensional Peace Operations,” (New York: United Nations, July 2000).

<sup>23</sup> Department for Peacekeeping Operations Best Practices Unit, “Chapter IX: Gender Mainstreaming” in Handbook on U.N. Multidimensional Peacekeeping Operations, (New York: United Nations, December 2003), pp. 113-123.

<sup>24</sup> International Alert, “Gender and Peace Support Operations: Opportunities & Challenges to Improve Practice,” (London: International Alert, July 2002), p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Out of a current 15 peacekeeping operations, four have Gender Units (in Kosovo, DRC, East Timor, and Liberia), and two have Gender Advisors (Afghanistan and Sierra Leone - though not mandated to work on gender issues).

<sup>26</sup> The interim Senior Gender Advisor for the DPKO at UN Headquarters in New York was Anna Shotton. The new permanent Senior Gender Advisor scheduled to take up her position in late-July 2004 is Comfort Lamptey. Anna Shotton will remain with DPKO to work on Sexual Exploitation

<sup>27</sup> Department of Peacekeeping Operations, “The 5th Standard Generic Training Module (SGTM)” (New York, United Nations, for 2004) deals with the Attitudes and Behaviours of the United Nations Peacekeepers.

<sup>28</sup> Secretary-General’s bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13).

<sup>29</sup> Department of Peacekeeping Operations, “The Standard Generic Training Module (SGTM) 6C” (New York: United Nations, 2003) deals with Gender and Peacekeeping.

<sup>30</sup> Gender and Peacekeeping Training Course, (Canada and United Kingdom), available on-line at: <http://www.genderandpeacekeeping.org/menu-e.asp>.

<sup>31</sup> United Nations General Assembly, “Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005: Peacekeeping operations (programme 3 of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005)” A/58/6 (New York: United Nations, 12 March 2003).

translates into little direction at the field level on how to operationalize gender mainstreaming.

## **Section II: Gendered Impact of Conflict in the DRC**

DRC's conflict, labelled Africa's 'first world war' drew in forces from seven other nations<sup>32</sup> and resulted in more than 3.5 million deaths since August 1998.<sup>33</sup> The past six years have consisted of a tumultuous back-and-forth between a plethora of peace agreements and activities, to ongoing conflict between armed groups in the east.<sup>34</sup>

Men and women civilians and combatants have suffered immensely in the conflict in the DRC, experiencing "internal displacement; the breakdown of every institution, beginning with the family; the inability to care for crops or cultivate farms; rape and sexual violence on a massive scale, and complete impunity for the perpetrators of heinous crimes."<sup>35</sup> Even so, men and women have not experienced conflict in DRC the same way.

The consequences for women in the DRC's conflict have been especially disastrous: since 1996, more than 35,000 rapes have been reported.<sup>36</sup> Compounding the hardships of the Congolese women is evidence of sexual exploitation by UN peacekeepers.<sup>37</sup> Cases of 'survival prostitution'<sup>38</sup> have been increasing, with women trading sex for food and shelter. The consequences of such high rates of sexual violence have included community

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<sup>32</sup> Carter Dougherty, "Making gems work for peace—not war" San Francisco Chronicle (20 November 2003), p. D1.

<sup>33</sup> Les Roberts, "Mortality in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo Results from Eleven Mortality Surveys," (International Rescue Committee Health Unit, 2001), p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> For a comprehensive and detailed background on the peace process in the Democratic Republic of Congo, see Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila: A People's History, (London; New York: Zed Books, May 2002); Mark Malan and Joao Gomes Porto, eds., Challenges of Peace Implementation: The UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2004); and Gomes Porto, J. and H Boshoff, eds., CD ROM: "The Peace Process in the DRC - A Reader" (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2004), available on-line at <http://www.iss.org.za>.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. and Human Rights Watch Report, "The War Within the War: Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo," (New York, Washington, London, Brussels: Human Rights Watch, July 2002).

<sup>36</sup> Although there are no precise figures, the Joint Initiative on the Fight Against Sexual violence Towards Women and Children has tried to assemble some statistics. Since August 1998: 25,000 cases on record in South Kivu, 11,350 cases in Maniema, 1,625 cases in Goma, and some 3,250 cases in Kalemie. The more recent rise in cases may be a result of more openness to report rape and sexual violence. "DRC: Focus on rampant rape, despite end of war," (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 18 June 2004).

<sup>37</sup> Paul Higate. "Gender and Peacekeeping. Case Studies: The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone", ISS Monograph Series 91, (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, March 2004), p. 7.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

rejection and stigmas, unwanted babies from rapes, high HIV/AIDS infection rates, and extensive physical and psychological injuries.<sup>39</sup> In addition, women and their families have experienced food insecurity, with increased fear of women to work fields, gather firewood, and fetch water.<sup>40</sup>

Women have not always been victims, they have also played active supporting roles in the conflict as combatants<sup>41</sup> or otherwise assisting armed groups.<sup>42</sup> They may have joined voluntarily or by force.<sup>43</sup> For example, women and girls have been abducted by the armed forces, particularly for sexual purposes,<sup>44</sup> and continue to be exploited in the transitional period.<sup>45</sup> There are several thousand such women accompanying male combatants, often referred to by UN and aid workers as ‘dependents.’<sup>46</sup> This category of ‘dependent’ is not useful as a qualification, as it perpetuates the notion that women are not valuable citizens with a contribution to the recovery phase, and does not assist in understanding the multiple dimensions of women’s involvement in fighting forces. Rather, designated category appears to be a convenient way for authorities to evade responsibility.<sup>47</sup>

Despite the myriad of overlapping roles of women in conflict, they have not been considered to have leadership skills necessary to participate for peacebuilding and reconstruction.<sup>48</sup> For example, no women were party to the Lusaka Cease Fire talks of

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p.12. The exact number of those who have been sexual violated is not an end in itself- the estimated degree of the problem serves to illustrate that conflict affects women in different and additional ways, which must be adequately addressed in order to build a healthy and peaceful society.

<sup>40</sup> UNIFEM, “Democratic Republic of the Congo: Country Profiles, Reports and Fact Sheets on the DRC”, available on-line at <http://www.womenwarpeace.org/drc/drc.htm>.

<sup>41</sup> Women and girls have been reported to be fighting in government forces, paramilitary/milita or armed opposition groups in the DRC from 1990 to 2003. Susan McKay and Dyan Mazurana, “Where are the girls? Girls in fighting forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Mozambique: Their lives during and after war” (Supported by the Canadian International Development Agency’s Child Protection Research Fund, March 2004), pp. 16 - 21. Amy Smythe, “Women, Peace and Security: a cry from the battlefield,” Op-Ed (2003), <http://www.monuc.org/Gender/downloads/OpEdDRCWomenWar.pdf>.

<sup>42</sup> Vanessa A. Farr, “A Gendered Analysis of International Agreements on Light Weapons”, Farr and Kiflemariam Gebre-Wold, eds., In Brief 24: Gender Perspectives on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Regional and International Concerns, (Bonn: Bonn International Center for Conversion, July 2002), p. 21.

<sup>43</sup> McKay and Mazurana, “Where are the girls?”, p. 23.

<sup>44</sup> Fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo S/2004/251 (New York: United Nations, 25 March 2004), p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> “Reintegrating child soldiers in DR Congo: fears for the girls” (Kinshasa: Agence France Presse, 13 April 2004).

<sup>46</sup> “DRC: 9,775 fighters and dependents repatriated to date, says MONUC,” (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 24 March 2004).

<sup>47</sup> McKay and Mazurana, “Where are the girls?”, p.121.

<sup>48</sup> Kent and McIntyre, “From Protection to Empowerment”, p. 5.



1999.<sup>49</sup> In the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD) in 2002, the women constituted only 10% of delegates.<sup>50</sup> However, as a result of lobbying from women on the sidelines of the ICD, there is now a provision in the Transitional Constitution for women to play a role in decision-making, in Article 51.<sup>51</sup> Yet, in the transition period women only make up 2% of senators, 11% of members of government, 16% of Parliamentarians and there are no women in the presidential office.<sup>52</sup> Evidently, the complexities of gender roles, priorities and responsibilities have not been adequately recognized.<sup>53</sup>

### **Section III: DDR(RR) Infrastructure in the DRC**

It is the responsibility of the DRC's Transitional Government to plan and coordinate the implementation of the national DDR programme. In October 2002, President Kabila requested the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support the government in coordinating the DDR(RR) exercise during the Interim Phase. Although mistrust in the all-inclusive government<sup>54</sup> delayed progress, mechanisms for DDR(RR) were established,<sup>55</sup> including the national committee for planning and coordination (CTPC)<sup>56</sup> and the national commission for demobilization and reintegration (CONADER) responsible for all combatants, including child soldiers.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> UNIFEM, "Democratic Republic of the Congo: Country Profiles, Reports and Fact Sheets on the DRC."

<sup>50</sup> Farr, "The importance of a gender perspective to successful DDR processes", p. 32.

<sup>51</sup> Amy Smythe, "Statement to United Nations Security Council Debate on Women, Peace and Security" (United Nations: New York, 29 October 2003).

<sup>52</sup> PNUD INFOs. "Net va plus loin avec le Projet Femmes to PNUD," <http://www.cd.undp.org/docs/projet%20femmes.pdf>.

<sup>53</sup> Amani el Jack, "Gender and Armed Conflict: Overview Report," BRIDGE: development-gender), (Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, August 2003), p. 30.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>55</sup> On 18 December 2003, the President promulgated three decrees putting in place the institutional infrastructure for DDR: (a) a Inter-ministerial Committee charged with the conception and orientation of DDR, (b) a National Commission of Demobilization and Reintegration (CONADER) charged with the coordination and implementation of PNDR in all its phases and (c) a Committee on Funding for Demobilization and Reintegration (CGFDR) that will mobilize and supervise the financial resources.

<sup>56</sup> Established by Decree 0027/2003, creating the structure and requiring it to meet once a week. The members of the CTPC-DDR include: Minister for Defence, Demobilization and Ex-Combatants, Minister for Social Affairs, Minister for Solidarity and Humanitarian Affairs, Minister of the Interior, Decentralisation and Security, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Minister for Human Rights, Major General for Armed Forces of DRC, National Bureau for Demobilization and Reinsertion (BUNADER). International organization involved in the CTPC-DDR include: UNDP, MDRP, MONUC, UNICEF, and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The CTPC drafted an Operational

Main actors in the DDR(RR) in DRC are MONUC, the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP),<sup>58</sup> UNDP, and the UN Fund for Children (UNICEF), forming a DDR Technical Group. The Group's functions are to (a) voluntarily disarm and register combatants, (b) offer immediate resettlement assistance, and (c) engage in community reintegration.<sup>59</sup> MONUC<sup>60</sup> is to register the details, and send the data to the CTPC, through which a UNDP-led logistical rapid response mechanism (MRR) offers immediate support to reintegrate individuals into the community.<sup>61</sup> In the case of child soldiers, UNICEF interviews and evaluates them before reintegration.<sup>62</sup>

On 7 May 2004, the Transitional Government adopted the National Programme for DDR for ex-combatants (PN-DDR).<sup>63</sup> As a result, UNDP handed over the reins of lead agency to CONADER, officially ending the Interim Phase.<sup>64</sup> The PN-DDR defines the status of combatants and target groups, and outlines how ex-combatants will be reintegrated.<sup>65</sup> On 13 May 2004, a Presidential Decree put in place the infrastructure to establish the National Armed Forces, into which a number of combatants will be integrated.<sup>66</sup> With the adoption of the PN-DDR, on 25 May 2004 MDRP donors and the World Bank approved grants worth \$200 million USD to back the PN-DDR.<sup>67</sup> Although CONADER will be lead agency for DDR, partners such as MDRP, UNDP, MONUC, and UNICEF will still play significant roles in the "coordinated effort."<sup>68</sup> While the PN-DDR

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Framework for Voluntary and Spontaneous Disarmament and adopted an Operational Plan for Disarmament and Community Reinsertion in Ituri.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. This shifted responsibility for child soldiers from BUNADER to CONADER.

<sup>58</sup> The MDRP, mainly funded by the World Bank, is an institutional and financial mechanism defining a strategy for DDR activities in the Great Lakes Region.

<sup>59</sup> Nelson Alusala and Thokozani Thusi, "A Step Towards Peace: Disarmament in Africa" ISS Monograph Series 98 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, February 2004), p. 65.

<sup>60</sup> Security Council Resolution 1493 S/1493/2003 (New York: United Nations, 28 July 2003). The mandate focuses on MONUC's "support for armed groups, an effective ceasefire and the DDRRR by foreign and Congolese armed groups."

<sup>61</sup> Alusala and Thokozani Thusi, "A Step Towards Peace: Disarmament in Africa", p.65.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> UNDP, "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration," UNDP Newsletter on DDR in the DRC 1 (Kinshasa: UNDP, May 2004), p. 3.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Décret no. 04/038 du 13 mai 2004 portant nomination dans les catégories des officiers des forces armées congolaises, signés par le Président Kabila, RDC.

<sup>67</sup> UNDP, "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration", p. 3.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

is not yet operational, a number of special projects funded by MDRP<sup>69</sup> and MONUC's quick impact projects<sup>70</sup> are responding to emergencies and contingencies on the ground.<sup>71</sup> In addition, MONUC has been undertaking ad hoc voluntary disarmament<sup>72</sup> and repatriation of ex-combatants, mainly from Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda.<sup>73</sup> It is now in the hands of the DRC Government, with the assistance of these partners, to render the PN-DDR operational.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, as the planning process is still underway, there remains much room to include programs to equally benefit men and women.

### *Gender and the DDR(RR) Infrastructure*

MONUC's mandate includes the provision to "pay special attention in carrying out its mandate to all aspects relating to gender perspective, in accordance with UN Resolution 1325 (2000)."<sup>75</sup> The dismal gender balance of MONUC personnel, many of who are working on DDR(RR) activities, raise suspicions of commitment to this mandate.<sup>76</sup> The number of women serving in the mission is 3.4% of civilian officers, 4.2% of military observers, and 1.5% of formed units.<sup>77</sup> This is despite evidence that women personnel can play an enhancing role in making local women more comfortable to report incidences of sexual violence, who may only divulge information to other women.<sup>78</sup> The inclusion of female staff in direct assistance has also proven to drastically reduce the incidence of

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<sup>69</sup> Special Projects consist of small-scale activities that: (1) support special target groups—demobilization and reintegration of child ex-combatants, for example; (2) are carried out in parts of a country that are outside of government control; and/or (3) address specific, urgent issues while a national program is being developed. See MDRP "Special Projects" at <http://www.mdrp.org/countries/specproj.htm>.

<sup>70</sup> The Quick Impact Projects (QUIPS) programme, launched in MONUC in June 2001, is aimed at enhancing MONUC's efforts for peace building in the DRC. It is intended to provide a flexible disbursement facility to support, at short notice and through small-scale quick-impact projects. See "Quick Impact Projects," at <http://www.monuc.org/Quips/>.

<sup>71</sup> "DRC: UN agency in reintegration programme for ex-combatants", (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 18 June 2004).

<sup>72</sup> Fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on MONUC, p. 11.

<sup>73</sup> "DRC: Disarmament programme gathers momentum," (Kinshasa: IRIN news, 27 February 2004).

<sup>74</sup> UNDP, "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration", p. 3.

<sup>75</sup> Operative Paragraph 12, UN Security Council Resolution 1445 SC/2002/1445 (4 December 2002).

<sup>76</sup> Amy Smythe, "Promoting The Role Of Women In Peace Implementation: Observations From MONUC" in Malan and Gomes Porto, eds., Challenges of Peace Implementation: The UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, (2004), p. 112.

<sup>77</sup> Fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on MONUC, p. 15.

<sup>78</sup> Smythe, "Statement to the UN Security Council Debate on Women, Peace and Security."

sexual exploitation.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, the inherent discrimination limiting women's participation in peacekeeping<sup>80</sup> is detrimental both to gender mainstreaming and to the effectiveness of the mission.

The presence of women in MONUC does not automatically equal gender expertise. Rather, the goal is for all UN peacekeeping personnel to understand what gender mainstreaming entails, and specific implications for their work. To provide gender advisory capacity in this regard, a Senior Gender Advisor<sup>81</sup> took up the post in March 2002 in MONUC's Office of Gender Affairs (OGA). The OGA's mandate is to assist with gender mainstreaming in MONUC's policies and activities, as well as to work with civil society to ensure women's participation in the post-conflict reconstruction.<sup>82</sup> The OGA is staffed by five personnel<sup>83</sup> and operates without a budget for the development of its activities.<sup>84</sup> Despite limited resources, the OGA has been active in DDR(RR) efforts, including developing a policy paper on Gender and DDRRR for the DDRRR Office with recommendations, as well as participating in discussions with technical committees on DDRRR.<sup>85</sup>

A component of the OGA's efforts in gender mainstreaming has been training sessions for male and female personnel to foster understanding of the issues in the same way that gender experts do.<sup>86</sup> The OGA has also focused training on UN personnel behaviour on sexual exploitation.<sup>87</sup> Collaboration with the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) in training sessions has included seminars in February and March 2004.<sup>88</sup> In addition, several NGOs<sup>89</sup> have participated in trainings, including one on the importance

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<sup>79</sup> Patricia Weiss Fagen, Ramina Johal, Darlene Rude and Elca Stitger, "Evaluating the Implementation of UNHCR's Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women," (UNHCR, 7 March 2002).

<sup>80</sup> Smythe, "Promoting the Role of Women In Peace Implementation", p. 117.

<sup>81</sup> The Senior Gender Advisor for MONUC is Amy Smythe.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Office of Gender Affairs, "Activities report from the Office of Gender Affairs (OGA) of MONUC," (MONUC: Kinshasa, 10 January 2003), p. 4.

<sup>85</sup> Smythe, "Statement to the UN Security Council Debate on Women, Peace and Security".

<sup>86</sup> Smythe, "Promoting The Role Of Women In Peace Implementation", p.111.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>88</sup> "Training Programme for Civilian Personnel in UN Peacekeeping Operations: The Special Needs of Women and Children in Conflict" Evaluation Report Kinshasa and Kisangani: MONUC, February and March 2003 (Geneva: United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), May 2003), p. 11.

<sup>89</sup> Nana Rosine Ngangoue, "A la recherche des causes profondes des violences sexuelles," MONUC Bulletin 94, (Kinshasa: MONUC, 13 April 2004), p.16.

of mainstreaming gender in human rights and democracy held in March 2004.<sup>90</sup> While trainings do not necessarily translate into the operationalization of gender mainstreaming on the ground, the element of awareness-raising is a valuable first step in impacting the behavior of participants.<sup>91</sup> However, as trainings are optional and draw low attendance due to lack of interest,<sup>92</sup> transformation on the ground has been constrained. Trainings need to be combined with the development and use of practical implementation tools, such as UNIFEM's gender-aware DDR checklist.<sup>93</sup>

Now that a PN-DDR has been adopted, it remains to be seen exactly how CONADER and its partners will integrate gender into their activities. In this light, the next three sections look at DDR(RR) activities as they have been conceived by the World Bank (funder of MDRP<sup>94</sup>) as of 3 May 2004, assuming that the PN-DDR will follow a similar policy.<sup>95</sup> This analysis also reflects on DDR(RR) activities undertaken and examines how gender considerations may already be included on the ground. Throughout this assessment, opportunities to further integrate gender considerations in the implementation of the DDR(RR) process are explored.

#### **Section IV: Planning of DDR(RR): Gender Perspectives on Who, When and How**

Planning stages of DDR(RR) include initial planning of DDR(RR), timing, identification of lead agencies and identification of categories of target beneficiaries for DDR(RR).<sup>96</sup> Before analyzing each component in its own right, it is essential to examine the initial planning, setting the foundation for the rest of the process.

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Higate, "Gender and Peacekeeping", p. 20.

<sup>92</sup> UNITAR, "Training Programme for Civilian Personnel in UN Peacekeeping Operations", p. 11.

<sup>93</sup> UNIFEM "Gender-aware Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR): A checklist," (New York: UNIFEM, 2003).

<sup>94</sup> These are mainly outlined in the "Technical Annex for a Proposed Grant of \$100 million to the Democratic Republic of Congo for an Emergency Demobilization and Reintegration Project" (World Bank: Africa Human Development Group 3, 3 May 2004).

<sup>95</sup> MDRP plans are important to analyze because the World Bank has produced one of the most progressive and detailed documents outlining how DDR(RR) programs can incorporate gender into their planning. Nathalie de Watteville, "Addressing Gender Issues in Demobilization and Reintegration Programs," Africa Region Working Paper Series (Washington, DC, The World Bank, May 2002).

<sup>96</sup> Alusala and Thusi, "A Step Towards Peace: Disarmament in Africa", pp. 21 - 29.

*Initial planning of DDR(RR).*

UN experience has proven that civil society plays an integral role in the development of a culture of peace.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, as primary educators of families and communities, the consultation with and participation of local women, groups and networks should be included in the decision-making and planning of all stages of DDR(RR).<sup>98</sup>

Gender perspectives have been incorporated to a degree in the planning of DDR(RR) in DRC. In November 2003, UNIFEM and UNDP held an ‘awareness raising’ workshop on the importance of mainstreaming gender equality in DDR. Participants included representatives of Ministries, women’s associations, MONUC and other UN agencies, human rights organisations, and selected donors.<sup>99</sup> The recommendations of the workshop were presented to the MDRP Partners’ meeting in Kinshasa, as “a significant start to the process of including women and girls in DDR in DRC.”<sup>100</sup>

Including local women’s initiatives should be a wider strategy to involve local communities in information sessions to accurately present the purpose of the DDR(RR) process.<sup>101</sup> For example, the Office on Gender Affairs works closely with the Radio Okapi<sup>102</sup> to foster gender awareness in the DRC, through interviews of women participating in peace negotiations and the production of longer thematic programs on sexual violence against women.<sup>103</sup> Beyond simply raising awareness, it is important to develop collaborative programs based on involvement of community members, to prepare communities for the return of the ex-combatants, as well as the ex-combatants for what they might expect when they return.<sup>104</sup> Such sensitization campaigns, combined with the direct participation of local women in the design of a DDR(RR) program, can contribute to the success of DDR(RR) by promoting confidence-building, fostering

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<sup>97</sup> Agnès Marcaillou, “Gender Perspectives on D, D and R,” Presented at “Gender Perspectives on Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration,” UNIFEM Seminar (New York: United Nations, 9 March 2004).

<sup>98</sup> UNIFEM, “Gender-aware DDR: A checklist”, p. 3.

<sup>99</sup> UNIFEM and UNDP, “Mainstreaming Gender in the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Combatants and those Associated with Armed Groups: A Joint Strategy Developed by UNDP/UNIFEM for the DRC,” (Kinshasa, November 2003).

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Alusala and Thusi, “A Step Towards Peace: Disarmament in Africa”, p. 24.

<sup>102</sup> Radio Okapi is a DRC National Radio Initiative and MONUC collaborative project.

<http://www.radiookapi.net/>.

<sup>103</sup> OGA, “Activities report from the OGA of MONUC”, p. 4.

community networks and creating an atmosphere with less stigma so that women will be more accepted when returning home from conflict.

#### *Timing.*

Due to ongoing conflict and difficulties at the political level of the Transitional Government, the DDR process has been delayed in the DRC. Yet, the prevention of sexual violence and rape is closely linked to a successful political transition and DDR(RR) process.<sup>105</sup> Such delays have increased women's insecurity, as they are more vulnerable to sexual attacks. Therefore, DDR(RR) must be promoted and accelerated to decrease the negative impact of conflict on women.

#### *Identification of lead agencies and soliciting funding sources.*

UNDP is the lead agency for the efforts of MDRP as well as the Transitional Government's CTPC. UNDP's commitment to gender mainstreaming<sup>106</sup> presents an opportunity to include the needs of both men and women in each step of the process. Although MDRP's planning and execution has tended to exclude women in the past, MDRP and the UN have expressed their commitment to an inclusive DDR process, presenting opportunities to "revisit and re-envisage the roles women could play in DDR processes."<sup>107</sup> One indication of this gender awareness is MDRP's Guidelines for National Programs, which includes a particular provision for targeting support for the social and economic reintegration of female ex-combatants as well as 'dependents.'<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> McKay and Mazurana, "Where are the girls?", p. 41.

<sup>105</sup> Pratt and Werchick, "Sexual Terrorism: Rape as a Weapon of War in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo", p. 7.

<sup>106</sup> The UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) has a key role to play in ensuring gender equality throughout all of its CPR activities. In order to assist staff in ensuring the incorporation of an effective gender perspective in planning and implementation, UNDP-BCPR published a guideline manual on "Gender approaches in conflict and post-conflict situations," (New York: United Nations Development Programme, October 2002).

<sup>107</sup> Farr, "The importance of a gender perspective to successful DDR processes", p. 32.

<sup>108</sup> Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program, "Guidelines for National Programs", available at [http://www.mdrp.org/nat-programs\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.mdrp.org/nat-programs_guidelines.pdf).

*Identification of target beneficiaries of DDR(RR).*

Identifying and defining who is an ‘ex-combatant’ to participate in DDR(RR) often includes categories such as government forces, opposition forces, civil defence forces, irregular armed groups and armed individuals.<sup>109</sup> Yet, whether or not women have been carrying guns, they are often left out of the selection criteria, and are treated as ‘secondary beneficiaries.’<sup>110</sup> In the case of DRC, the MDRP has identified ‘special target groups’ for assistance, including female soldiers, abducted civilian women, and dependents.<sup>111</sup> However, there have been reports that the DDR program does not recognize women who have performed non-combat roles and services (such as cooking or nursing), and that family members accompanying ex-combatants may be denied aid and other services.<sup>112</sup> Cynthia Enloe has critiqued the idea of ‘camp followers’, in that “focusing exclusively on the much touted craftiness of camp-followers is analytically – and politically – risky...underestimating the explicit need military commanders had for these working women.”<sup>113</sup> Evidently, a re-definition is required for who qualifies as a ‘target group’ for DDR,<sup>114</sup> and hence, therefore who is a ‘worthy’ recipient of such benefits.

The MDRP has recognized the likelihood that “significant numbers of women are part of, in particular, irregular fighting forces.”<sup>115</sup> However, it is admitted that program implementation (in Angola and Rwanda) suggests that women are being under-reported by combatants at the “front-end of the process,” and that often women themselves will not feel comfortable approaching officials for DDR assistance.<sup>116</sup> This is further

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<sup>109</sup> Alusala and Thusi, “A Step Towards Peace: Disarmament in Africa”, p. 24.

<sup>110</sup> de Watteville, “Addressing Gender Issues in Demobilization and Reintegration Programs”, p. vii.

<sup>111</sup> MDRP, “Targeting MDRP Assistance: Ex-Combatants and Other War-Affected Populations” Position Paper (Washington, DC, World Bank, January 2004).

<sup>112</sup> Smythe, “Women, Peace and Security: a cry from the battlefield”.

<sup>113</sup> Cynthia Enloe, Maneuvers. The International Politics of Militarizing Women’s Lives. (California: University of California Press, 1999), p. 39.

<sup>114</sup> MDRP defines target groups for national disarmament as: (i) Signatories to the Global Accord: FAC, MLC, RCD, RCD-ML, RCD-N, Mayi-Mayi and the Dar-es-Salaam ceasefire; (ii) Non signatory Armed groups that have taken part in the conflict, who require DDR and are willing to participate in the program and respect its conditions; (iii) Congolese ex-combatants seeking to return from foreign countries; (iv) Children associated with the fighting forces as defined by the Cape Town principles. In MDRP, “Technical Annex”, p. 10.

<sup>115</sup> MDRP Position Paper, “Linkages between Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants and Security Sector Reform, (Washington, DC, World Bank, October 2003).

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.



complicated when women rely on men to confirm their grade or status.<sup>117</sup> Therefore, clear selection criteria needs to be defined, “allowing no room for personal interpretation” which could be monitored by an advisory committee.<sup>118</sup> In addition, intra-household analyses could be conducted to evaluate how benefits might best be shared.<sup>119</sup> In conjunction with measures to encourage women to present themselves for DDR assistance, clear criteria will help to prevent the exploitation of these women wishing to reintegrate back into their communities.

## **Section V: Disarmament and Demobilization from a Gender Perspective**

### *Disarmament*

As MDRP’s plan for demobilization and reintegration in the DRC does not include provisions for disarmament, MONUC is the main actor responsible for this activity. Disarmament is an essential first step, as the insecurity caused by the circulation of small arms in society may thwart efforts for peace. There are particular gender implications regarding the security of women, as small arms increase the risk of lethal domestic violence, raise the risk of vulnerability while managing daily workload, and women are often the ones who must care for those injured or disabled by gunfire.<sup>120</sup>

A disarmament programme in the DRC was officially launched on 23 April 2004, targeting 330,000 former combatants in the east,<sup>121</sup> although ad hoc disarmament efforts took place prior to this date, mainly in the Ituri region.<sup>122</sup> According to MONUC’s mandate, disarmament is to be purely a voluntary process.<sup>123</sup> Each combatant presenting themselves to ‘disarmament points’ will be disarmed under the supervision of CONADER. The weapons will be registered and placed in a secure place, and each ex-

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<sup>117</sup> Nathalie de Watteville, “Demobilization and Reintegration Programs: Addressing Gender Issues” Findings 227 (Washington, DC: World Bank, June 2003), p. 2.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> Farr, “The importance of a gender perspective to successful DDR processes”, p. 28.

<sup>121</sup> “DRC: Disarmament of ex-combatants begins” (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 23 April 2004).

<sup>122</sup> Fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on MONUC, p. 12.

<sup>123</sup> Operative paragraph 4 of Security Council Resolution 1445 SC/2002/1445 (4 December 2002) “stresses the importance of the voluntary nature of the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration or resettlement (DDRRR) of the armed groups referred to in annex A.”

combatant will be issued a receipt for the weapon.<sup>124</sup> After this, each ex-combatants will be invited to go with ‘suspended’ military status to a specially designated orientation center, where they will remain for five days, and will be selected by CONADER following a screening process either become part of the new national army, or to demobilize and reintegrate back into civilian life.<sup>125</sup>

According to CONADER, this process is available for *every ex-combatant* (man or woman) who took part in armed conflict between October 1996 to May 2003 as a member of an armed force.<sup>126</sup> In addition, the wives and girls under 18 will also qualify for assistance.<sup>127</sup> However, if the women or girls have been part of the armed groups but have not carried guns, they may not qualify to ‘disarm’ in which case, they would be required to begin the process at the demobilization level. The uncertainty of where and how to begin the process, combined with a lack of explicit criteria and under-reporting by armed groups of female members discussed above, poses the danger of limiting the number of women and girls to qualify for the next stages (demobilization and reintegration).

### *Demobilization*

Elements of demobilization include assembly of ex-combatants in designated places, registration and distribution of identification documents, data collection, pre-discharge information, medical screening and transport home.<sup>128</sup> Each component is discussed here in terms of gender considerations.

### *Encampment of ex-combatants for demobilization.*

Once ex-combatants arrive at the orientation centers, those who qualify for DDR will continue on with demobilization activities at the centers.<sup>129</sup> It must be considered that these centers present a security risk for women. Fear of violence has been a key factor in

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<sup>124</sup> MDRP, “Technical Annex”, p. 13.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> CONADER, “RDC: Le DDR national” (Kinshasa: CONADER, 24 May 2004).

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> de Watteville, “Addressing Gender Issues in Demobilization and Reintegration Programs”, p. 6.

girls and young women avoiding or leaving demobilization sites early, as they are often full of adult males and lack proper security, hygienic and medical care.<sup>130</sup> The separation of women from men, as foreseen by MDRP, may increase the level of safety.<sup>131</sup> The encampment phase is also when ex-combatants are interviewed for verification of their ex-combatant status. Those responsible for conducting interviews of individuals arriving at the centers must be adequately prepared. For example, there have been complaints that MONUC personnel lack language skills in French or local languages, and the number of interpreters to facilitate communication are limited.<sup>132</sup> This could make it very difficult for a recent female arrival to report sexual violence.

In addition, staff receiving women at these camps must be trained in gender-sensitivity, in recognition of the physical and psychological trauma of sexual violence experienced by many of these women. The OGA has participated in DDR-related missions in interviewing the caseload of ex-combatants and dependents at transit centers.<sup>133</sup> However, as OGA's staff is limited and often otherwise occupied, it is imperative that all staff at demobilization centers have the necessary skills, both in language and in gender sensitivity, to handle such interviews.

#### *Services at demobilization camps.*

There has generally been a failure of UN disarmament initiatives to adequately provide targeted assistance and care to women in cantonment areas.<sup>134</sup> Perhaps the DRC case will change this pattern. The MDRP has planned to offer special medical teams at demobilization centers, comprised of staff to address HIV/AIDS and the special needs of women and children.<sup>135</sup> It is necessary that specialized services for rape victims and

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<sup>129</sup> MDRP, "Technical Annex", p. 13.

<sup>130</sup> McKay and Mazurana, "Where are the girls?", p. 101

<sup>131</sup> MDRP, "Technical Annex", p. 13.

<sup>132</sup> Clifford Bernath and Anne Edgerton, "MONUC: Flawed Mandate Limits Success," Refugees International Report on MONUC, (May 2003), p. 23.

<sup>133</sup> Smythe, "Statement to the UN Security Council Debate on Women, Peace and Security".

<sup>134</sup> Alusala and Thusi, "A Step Towards Peace: Disarmament in Africa", p. 26.

<sup>135</sup> MDRP, "Technical Annex", p. 14.

reproductive health are also provided.<sup>136</sup> In addition, psychosocial assistance is critical at this stage for both men and women who have experienced violence and trauma.

### *Identification documents.*

The registration of ex-combatants and delivery of ID cards is key, as they give access to benefits.<sup>137</sup> Women should be able to register at the camps separately from the men.<sup>138</sup> Otherwise, they are forced to rely on the male head of the household, and are rendered vulnerable to being exploited in exchange for receiving benefits. It is not clear by MDRP's plans if women will receive separate ID cards, as it is stated that "each ex-combatant will receive a demobilization program ID card from CONADER."<sup>139</sup> However, the next paragraph detailing "provisions for special target groups" indicating for dependents that "although families of ex-combatants are not direct beneficiaries under the PN-DDR, the family unit of an ex-combatant will be taken into consideration during the planning and implementation of the different phases of the program."<sup>140</sup> This ambiguity of the status of the women and children accompanying the ex-combatant, forces them to remain with the ex-combatant to receive assistance, and also implies that they are *not necessarily* entitled to benefits at all. For example, the MDRP foresees the distribution of direct cash payment to ex-combatants, to be received at specified times with their ID cards.<sup>141</sup> Yet, whether or not the families of this ex-combatant see any of this money is not mentioned. It would be necessary to discuss and pay the financial portion of the package to women in private away from male family members,<sup>142</sup> to ensure

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> de Watteville, "Addressing Gender Issues in Demobilization and Reintegration Programs", p. 7.

<sup>138</sup> UNIFEM "Gender-aware DDR: A checklist", p. 4. In addition, this is an established principle for refugees, for example in UNHCR's "Five Commitments to Refugee Women": "Register refugee women individually and provide them with relevant documentation to ensure their individual security, freedom of movement and access to essential services. Refugee women and men are to participate equally in the registration process". UNHCR, "Sexual and Gender-Based Violence against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Guidelines for Prevention and Response," (Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, May 2003), p. 30.

<sup>139</sup> MDRP, "Technical Annex", p. 15.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> UNIFEM "Gender-aware DDR: A checklist", p. 7.

that both men and women benefit. This reaffirms the recommendation that explicit criteria are required for who qualifies for DDR assistance.

### *Data Collection.*

An essential component in the identification of target groups is the collection of socio-economic data. According to MDRP, data collected will include demographic characteristics such as “age, gender, marital status, number of children, education, assistance needs and aspirations.”<sup>143</sup> This information will then be imputed into a database.<sup>144</sup> In addition, MDRP plans to undertake a “study on the identification of gender issues and inclusion of these issues in the PN-DDR.”<sup>145</sup> The aim of this study is to identify critical needs related to gender and propose specific actions to ensure “that women and men both play a role in the socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants in their communities.”<sup>146</sup> If the study is adequately funded and resourced, and the findings and recommendations are taken seriously, there is potential for the DRC case to revolutionize the way DDR processes incorporate gender mainstreaming.

### *Leaving demobilization centers for reinsertion.*

Once demobilization is complete, target groups will be provided pre-discharge information. MDRP indicates that the topics will include “program benefits and payment procedures; program opportunities; the role of CONADER’s provincial offices; HIV/AIDS prevention and control; and civic duties and human rights.”<sup>147</sup> It does not indicate that gender-specific information will be included, such as on domestic violence.<sup>148</sup> It also is not clear to whom such information will be given, as “it will be provided to ex-combatants, and, where applicable, their partners.”<sup>149</sup> Another gender consideration at this stage is women’s transportation from the center. MDRP’s plans only refer to ex-

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<sup>143</sup> MDRP, “Technical Annex”, p. 14.

<sup>144</sup> UNDP, “Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration”, p. 4.

<sup>145</sup> MDRP, “Technical Annex”, p. 21.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> MDRP, “Technical Annex”, p. 15.

<sup>148</sup> de Watteville, “Addressing Gender Issues in Demobilization and Reintegration Programs”, p. 7.

<sup>149</sup> MDRP, “Technical Annex”, p. 15.

combatants, children, the handicapped, and the chronically ill.<sup>150</sup> Special provisions for the women's transportation must also be considered, such as safety measures and identification of appropriate destination.<sup>151</sup>

DDR planners and implementers must maintain a gender perspective when analyzing, evaluating and modifying activities of demobilization. Failing to fully take women into account at every step may lead to inadequate support, budgetary strain, and could delay reintegration.<sup>152</sup> In addition, if the value of gender equality is promoted in the post-conflict stage, there is increased likelihood that gender equality will be a fundamental principle included in following recovery stages, such as the economic reintegration and the upcoming democratic process.

## **Section V: Gender perspectives of R(RR)**

Reintegration is merely one element in the post-conflict phase alongside the reform of institutions and infrastructure in society related to security, democracy, and justice, to enable a new beginning in a culture of peace. Due to the ongoing insecurity and lack of an implementation plan for the PN-DDR, current reintegration initiatives are fairly ad hoc. UNDP is the key-coordinating agency of MDRP's reintegration program, in cooperation with agencies such as UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). At the policy and programmatic level, these organizations are committed to gender mainstreaming,<sup>153</sup> providing opportunities for reintegration

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Jakkie Cilliers, ed. *Dismissed* (Pretoria: Institute for Defence Policy, October 1995), p. 18.

<sup>153</sup> The UNHCR has developed gender-mainstreaming goals, namely the five measurable, actionable and practical commitments to address practical and strategic needs of refugee women. They relate to food management and distribution, participation in decision-making, individual registration and documentation, provision of sanitary materials and the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence. UNHCR, "Guiding Principles" (2003) [http://www.rhrc.org/pdf/gl\\_sgbv03\\_02.pdf](http://www.rhrc.org/pdf/gl_sgbv03_02.pdf). FAO has adopted a

programs to directly incorporate gender perspectives. Reintegrating members of society back into communities is an immensely complex endeavour, and must take into account the differences and inequalities between men and women in relation to their position in the economy, their vocational skills and education profiles, the distribution of domestic responsibilities and mobility patterns.<sup>154</sup>

MDRP's policy of reintegration assistance is to be provided to ex-combatants for reintegration into communities by:

- Increasing economic opportunities such as through income-generating projects;
- Providing educational, vocational and employment assistance;
- Involving communities of settlement and fostering reconciliation;
- And to the extent possible, benefiting the wider community.<sup>155</sup>

Policy with specific measures for women include:

- Taking into account special needs of female ex-combatants at orientation centers;
- Ensuring that all benefits are equally accessible to men and women;
- Encouraging female ex-combatants to participate in existing women's associations;
- Including partners of ex-combatants and women in communities of return in community-level counselling activities;
- Strengthening the gender awareness and capacity of CONADER staff in the reintegration process; and
- Monitoring the impact of the Program on partners of ex-combatants and women in communities of return and bringing emerging problems to the attention of the relevant authorities.<sup>156</sup>

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gender action plan, "FAO Gender and Development Plan of Action (2002-2007)" (January 2002)

[http://www.fao.org/sd/2002/PE0103\\_en.htm](http://www.fao.org/sd/2002/PE0103_en.htm). OCHA's development of such a plan is underway. OCHA, "Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: Women and War" (2002).

[http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha\\_ol/civilians/women\\_war/](http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/civilians/women_war/).

<sup>154</sup> Report of the Secretary-General, "Gender Mainstreaming in Peacekeeping Activities" A/57/731 (New York: United Nations, 13 February 2003), p. 11.

<sup>155</sup> MDRP, "Technical Annex", p. 16.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid, 17.

Much more than for demobilization, the MDRP plans explicitly recognize the need to provide both for women and men in the reintegration process. While recognition is an important first step, it remains to be seen how this will be operationalized. The gender dimension in multiple aspects of reintegration efforts to date in the DRC will be explored, including access to benefits, and economic, social and political reintegration.<sup>157</sup>

#### *Access to reintegration benefits*

Reintegration benefits range from individual assistance packages to measures benefiting the wider community. ‘Immediate assistance kits’ in the DRC include a clothing kit (bag, blankets, shoes, trousers, t-shirts and underwear); domestic kit (soap, glasses, plates, pots, jerrycan); food kit (corn flour, vegetables, vegetable oil and iodized salt); and sanitary kits (condoms and brochure on sexual health).<sup>158</sup> The reintegration kits for women also include female condoms, while pregnant women receive soap, plastic sheeting, razor blades, cord, brochure on healthy birthing, bag and cotton cloth.<sup>159</sup> UNDP plans to, in consultation with women’s organizations, put together special kits for women.<sup>160</sup> A noticeable omission from the current kits for women is sanitary napkins.<sup>161</sup>

In addition, the MDRP plans to pay the ex-combatant two further cash instalments once the ex-combatant registers for reintegration.<sup>162</sup> Previous DDR programs have seen men abduct women to pose as ‘wives’, collect reintegration money, and then abandon the women.<sup>163</sup> Again, if women do not have the opportunity to discuss or receive payment

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<sup>157</sup> de Watteville, “Addressing Gender Issues in Demobilization and Reintegration Programs”, p. 12.

<sup>158</sup> MONUC PowerPoint on DDR, “The Spontaneous and Voluntary Disarmament Programme”.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> UNDP, “Reinsertion of Ex-combatants in DRC Begins with Distribution of Assistance Kits”, (UNDP: Kinshasa, 24 April 2004).

<sup>161</sup> This is also an established principle for refugees, for example in UNHCR’s “Five Commitments to Refugee Women”: “The provision of sanitary materials to all women and girls of concern to UNHCR should become a standard practice in UNHCR’s assistance programmes.” UNHCR, “Sexual and Gender-Based Violence against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Guidelines for Prevention and Response,” (Geneva: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, May 2003), p. 30.

<sup>162</sup> MDRP, “Technical Annex”, p. 16.

<sup>163</sup> McKay and Mazurana, “Where are the girls?”, p. 192.



away from the men, there may be risk of exploitation.<sup>164</sup> It does not appear from MDRP's plan that there is any provision for this.

### *Economic reintegration*

Females participating in reintegration processes have identified skills training and education as *the most important factor* in assisting their reintegration.<sup>165</sup> However, access to education in the DRC is worse for girls than boys, due to cultural traditions such as early marriage, need for girls' labour, and parent's concern for their safety.<sup>166</sup> In addition, women often cannot benefit from programs, as they may be forced to do traditional female activities rather than participate in programs to gain marketable or transferable skills.<sup>167</sup> Such programs should include incentives for mothers, including feeding programs, day care, and micro-economic schemes.<sup>168</sup>

In the DRC, MDRP identifies aspects of economic reintegration community reconstruction, as 'labour programmes',<sup>169</sup> income generating activities, micro-projects, training and micro-credits.<sup>170</sup> Of the projects in DRC described in the press, there are several that encourage access for women to improve their economic situations. A joint AVSI (Volunteer Association for International Service) and MSF-H (Doctors Without Borders) project distributes seeds and implements for market gardening to women, and establishes eight one-hectare community plots for widows and 'vulnerable' women with malnourished children to cultivate.<sup>171</sup> In addition, the International Committee for the Red Cross, through a Quick Impact Project (QIP), trains 'vulnerable' women in Bunia to

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<sup>164</sup> UNIFEM "Gender-aware DDR: A checklist", p. 7.

<sup>165</sup> McKay and Mazurana, "Where are the girls?", p.106.

<sup>166</sup> Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, "Global Survey on Education in Emergencies," (February 2004), p. 38.

<sup>167</sup> Farr, "The importance of a gender perspective to successful DDR processes", p. 33.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> "Labour programmes" are High Labour Intensive Micro-projects for rehabilitation of community services or structures (for example, access to clean water, sanitation, road rehabilitation, schools, health clinics, etc).

<sup>170</sup> MONUC PowerPoint: "DDR in the DRC: Demobilization and Community Reintegration Programme (DCRP) for Ituri".

<sup>171</sup> "DRC: Special Report On OCHA's Emergency Field Unit", (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 30 April 2004).

become hairdressers.<sup>172</sup> Regarding education, the African Development Fund has approved a US \$7.74-million education grant for the DRC, from which boys and girls of school-going age will benefit.<sup>173</sup>

If training, educational and employment provisions do not empower both men and women,<sup>174</sup> women may be forced to trade sex for necessities or engage in prostitution to make ends meet.<sup>175</sup> In addition, educational opportunities will help the women develop a positive role within the community and a personal ‘self-efficacy.’<sup>176</sup> It is important not only to provide a few ‘token’ programs for women and girls, but also to integrate gender mainstreaming in all economic reintegration projects.

### *Social reintegration*

Key to this stage is addressing “social integration and disintegration.”<sup>177</sup> Gender roles, both in the family as well as in the wider society, have often shifted, yet women are expected to resume traditional gender roles.<sup>178</sup> The reintegration stage has significant gender implications for the social fabric of the DRC, where rape and sexual violence have been so prevalent in the conflict.

A community approach<sup>179</sup> to social reintegration is essential, as it will prevent the risk that certain community members will perceive the reintegration process of ex-combatants as unfair.<sup>180</sup> Often, when men return from war, the members of the host communities may lose their jobs, experience a deterioration of law and order, or be subjected to increased domestic abuse and sexual violence, as a result of unemployed, demobilized young men, “socialized to violence and brutality during war.”<sup>181</sup> Community approaches could

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<sup>172</sup> Malu Mande, Roger and Tshibangu, Mamy H. “Bunia: un centre de formation en coupe et couture pour les femmes vulnérables,” MONUC, Bulletin 96 (Kinshasa: MONUC, 25 June 2004), p. 25.

<sup>173</sup> All Africa, “DRC: Kinshasa Gets US \$7.74 Million Education Grant” (Nairobi: IRIN News, 18 March 2004).

<sup>174</sup> UNIFEM “Gender-aware DDR: A checklist”, p. 7.

<sup>175</sup> Higate. “Gender and Peacekeeping” and Alusala and Thusi, “A Step Towards Peace: Disarmament in Africa”, p. 40.

<sup>176</sup> McKay and Mazurana, “Where are the girls?”, p. 46.

<sup>177</sup> de Watteville, “Addressing Gender Issues in Demobilization and Reintegration Programs”, p. 22.

<sup>178</sup> McKay and Mazurana, “Where are the girls?”, p. 10.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>180</sup> MDRP DRC Mission Report, p. 3.

<sup>181</sup> de Watteville, “Addressing Gender Issues in Demobilization and Reintegration Programs”, p. ix.

include welcoming and cleansing reintegration rituals (when appropriate), the strengthening of local conflict resolution mechanisms, encouraging community dialogues, as well as the provision of community benefits, such as reconstruction of local infrastructure. Such measures can facilitate reconciliation and help to mitigate feelings of resentment.<sup>182</sup>

Community approaches are also necessary to rehabilitate the women and girls who have experienced sexual violence and rape, and who face stigma including rejection by their families and friends. Psychosocial counselling should accompany other programs, such as meeting basic needs of food, shelter and medicine.<sup>183</sup> In DRC, there are several examples of services offered to assist women to cope with their experiences. USAID provides medical, psycho-social, judicial, and socio-economic support to many survivors of sexual violence in several provinces.<sup>184</sup> DOCS (Doctors on Call for Service) and Panzi hospitals provide medical treatment to rape victims and train young Congolese gynaecologists to handle cases of sexual violence.<sup>185</sup> MONUC, through QIPs, assist female victims of sexual violence and train local NGOs and women leaders in preventive measures.<sup>186</sup> MONUC's OGA works with the Olame Centre in Bukavu, a local NGO and member of the Coalition on Violence Against Women, for assisting and supporting rape victims, through counselling services, trauma healing, as well as health and humanitarian assistance.<sup>187</sup>

Justice for the countless cases of sexual violence will be a key element of successful social reintegration. Disturbingly, women are being reintegrated into communities alongside those who have perpetrated the rapes.<sup>188</sup> Possible mechanisms that may be able to address this are the International Criminal Court (ICC), to which the DRC is a party and rape is considered a violation of international law classified as a crime against

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<sup>182</sup> IPA, "A Framework for Lasting DDR of Former Combatants in Crisis Situations", p. 7.

<sup>183</sup> McKay and Mazurana, "Where are the girls?", p. 67.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Fifteenth report of the Secretary-General on MONUC, p. 15.

<sup>187</sup> Nadine Puechguirbal, "Women and Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo : An Inclusive Approach to Peacekeeping in the DRC," Conflict Trends 3, (African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), October 2003), p. 24.

<sup>188</sup> "DRC: Focus on rampant rape, despite end of war," (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 18 June 2004).

humanity,<sup>189</sup> or the anticipated Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in the DRC.<sup>190</sup> Until mechanisms are in place, steps can be taken to collect evidence. For example, the Joint Initiative on the Fight Against Sexual Violence Towards Women and Children has created a legal aid fund to launch inquiries into these crimes, and to support lawyers and judges in their prosecution.<sup>191</sup> Global Rights, a consortium of human rights organizations, is working with many key women's organizations, to combat impunity, change existing laws that do not protect women, and raise awareness.<sup>192</sup> For women rejected from their communities, justice, including prosecution of perpetrators, will be essential for the society to heal and move forward after such devastating use of sexual violence in the conflict.

Local NGOs will play a key role in facilitating social reintegration. Due to their familiarity with local politics and cultural situations, local NGOs are the best means to help facilitate this process. In addition, the timeframe of international commitment to DRC's recovery, such as a 3-year commitment from MDRP or a year-by-year commitment from MONUC, suggests that the capacity of local NGOs will need to be strengthened to ensure sustainability, as the reconciliation process will most likely take generations.

### *Political reintegration*

Women and men do not have equal decision-making power in the DRC, whether in the national governmental, communities, or family units. As mentioned earlier, women are starkly under-represented in the Transitional Government. In addition, the status of women under Congolese law is that of second-class citizens, as the Family Code defines the husband as the head of the household and determines that his wife has to obey him.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> "National consultations on DRC Truth and Reconciliation Commission," (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 19 February 2004).

<sup>191</sup> "DRC: Focus on rampant rape, despite end of war," (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 18 June 2004).

<sup>192</sup> Pratt and Werchick, "Sexual Terrorism: Rape as a Weapon of War in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo", p. 20.

<sup>193</sup> ECOSOC Commission on Human Rights, "Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women," (2003): 43.

In efforts to increase political empowerment, capacity building and promotion of women's rights, MONUC's OGA, UNIFEM and UNDP, and international women's groups such as Femmes Afrique Solidarité<sup>194</sup> work with the many local women's organizations.<sup>195</sup> The OGA works with DYNAFEP (Dynamics of political women in the Democratic Congo), representing women from all political factions, who articulate women's political views on the transition process and work to increase women's participation in the elections.<sup>196</sup> Reinforcing the point of political participation, on 22 May 2003, UNIFEM Executive Director Noeleen Heyzer met with Congo President Kabila in Kinshasa, relaying the message that Congolese women expect to play an important role in the reconstruction of communities and of the country.<sup>197</sup> UNDP has also been advocating for the political empowerment of women, through support for the National Program for the Promotion of Congolese Women (PNPFC).<sup>198</sup> The DRC is currently struggling to foster democracy on many levels, whether between ethnic groups, social classes and gender, yet promoting an equal voice for all citizens is essential for a peaceful and democratic reintegration process. Alarming, it does not appear that the Transitional Government is taking gender equality seriously. For example, in the decree signed by President Kabila on 16 May 2004, of the eleven provincial governors selected, there are no women. Of the eighteen vice-governors, only three are women.<sup>199</sup>

Upon examination of the economic, social and political reintegration efforts in the DRC, ambiguity surrounding categories of people qualifying for benefits may skew the complexity of existing gender roles in the DRC, and ultimately, exclude women who sorely need reintegration assistance.

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<sup>194</sup> Puechguirbal, "Women and Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo", p. 24.

<sup>195</sup> For a list of many of these organizations, see:

[http://www.peacewomen.org/contacts/africa/DRC/drc\\_index.html](http://www.peacewomen.org/contacts/africa/DRC/drc_index.html)

<sup>196</sup> OGA, "Activities report from the Office of Gender Affairs (OGA)".

<sup>197</sup> "UNIFEM urges President to include women in transition process" (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 21 May 2003).

<sup>198</sup> PNUD, "Appui à la promotion de la Femme congolaise," (UNDP: Kinshasa, 25 May 2004).

<sup>199</sup> Décret no. 04/038 du 13 mai 2004 portant nomination dans les catégories des officiers des forces armées congolaise, signés par le Président Kabila, RDC.

### *Gender Perspective of Resettlement and Repatriation*

The issues of resettlement and repatriation,<sup>200</sup> the remaining ‘R’s of the DDR(RR) process, have been a major stumbling block for political stability in DRC, as different factions have different views on who has the right to live where.<sup>201</sup> Repatriation activities are already underway, for example, as of 25 March 2004, a total of 6,437 Rwandan, Ugandan and Burundian combatants and 3,338 of their ‘dependents’ were repatriated through MONUC’s DDRRR programme.<sup>202</sup>

The repatriation of women requires particular consideration; particularly for the Congolese women accompanying foreign armed men. There may be differences in the family, for example, about whether a Congolese wife would rather remain in Congo than go to Rwanda.<sup>203</sup> While repatriation is technically voluntary, a lack of economic independence may influence a woman to remain with a man who abducted or abused her.<sup>204</sup> In these cases, women may need assistance to get away from their ‘captor husbands’, through support and opportunities to make best choices.<sup>205</sup> In cases where they choose to remain with their male partners, families are not to be separated involuntarily, making the repatriation camp the temporary home to women and children. However, these camps often do not have necessary services to accommodate these women.<sup>206</sup> An additional challenge for repatriation is when foreign partners have abandoned women. For example, Ugandan soldiers abandoned hundreds of Congolese ‘wives’ and children.<sup>207</sup> This is compounded by difficult asylum procedures in

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<sup>200</sup> Resettlement is the settlement of affected individuals in locations within their country of origin or to a third country, while repatriation refers to the return of affected individuals to their country of origin. This paper mainly addresses repatriation. OCHA, “Glossary of Humanitarian Terms”, [http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha\\_ol/civilians/resources/Final%20POC%20Glossary%20\(2%20Dec.03\).pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/civilians/resources/Final%20POC%20Glossary%20(2%20Dec.03).pdf).

<sup>201</sup> Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, *The Politics Of Citizenship In The DRC*, presented at States, Borders And Nations: Negotiating Citizenship In Africa Annual International Conference (May 19-20 2004). <http://www.undp.org/oslocentre/docs04/The%2520politics%2520of%2520citizenship%2520in%2520the%2520DRC.pdf>

<sup>202</sup> “DRC: 9,775 fighters and dependents repatriated to date, says MONUC,” (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 24 March 2004).

<sup>203</sup> Bernath and Edgerton, “MONUC: Flawed Mandate Limits Success”, p. 27.

<sup>204</sup> McKay and Mazurana, “Where are the girls?”, p. 192.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid*, 57.

<sup>206</sup> “Return to Rwanda: Reintegration and Resettlement,” (Washington, DC: Refugees International, 5 December 2002).

<sup>207</sup> Puechguirbal, “Women and Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo”, p. 24.

neighbouring countries: not only are men more likely to be granted asylum, but also it is easier for boys to enter a country than girls.<sup>208</sup>

Although MONUC addresses the repatriation of ‘dependants’ of foreign combatants, there is no systematic process in place.<sup>209</sup> MONUC mainly depends on NGOs and other agencies to provide needed services, such as food and non-food items, family counselling, and health services.<sup>210</sup> For example, a local NGO, Action pour la Protection et l’Encadrement de l’Enfant, is providing some food for children, but in most cases, the abandoned women and their children “are without means,”<sup>211</sup> rendering them vulnerable to exploitation. Making matters worse, there has been little coordination by MONUC with NGOs or other UN agencies to plan for that support.<sup>212</sup> This coordination must improve, along with extensive plans to provide adequate services for women at repatriation reception centers, including safety, health and trauma counselling.

As MONUC does not have a mandate in countries other than DRC, UNHCR is the main agency overseeing the repatriation of Congolese individuals residing in neighbouring countries back to the DRC. For example, UNHCR is planning for a voluntary repatriation program in July 2004 for more than 300,000 Congolese men and women in the neighbouring countries, facilitating their return to relatively secure areas.<sup>213</sup> UNHCR also faces challenges in this endeavour, including not having the military force of MONUC to prevent attacks committed by armed groups against camps with the aim of kidnapping women.<sup>214</sup>

Compounding this challenge is that countries do not always uphold commitments to international refugee law and protection standards.<sup>215</sup> As an example, the DRC authorities did not properly assist Congolese expelled from Angola to the DRC in May 2004.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Kent and McIntyre, “From Protection to Empowerment”, p. 7.

<sup>209</sup> “DRC: Disarmament programme gathers momentum,” (Kinshasa: IRIN News, 27 February 2004).

<sup>210</sup> Bernath and Edgerton, “MONUC: Flawed Mandate Limits Success”, p. 27.

<sup>211</sup> Kent and McIntyre, “From Protection to Empowerment: Civilians as Stakeholders in the Democratic Republic of the Congo” (2004): 7.

<sup>212</sup> Bernath and Edgerton, “MONUC: Flawed Mandate Limits Success”, p. 27.

<sup>213</sup> UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), DRC Information Bulletin1:1 (24 May 2004).

<sup>214</sup> Kent and McIntyre, “From Protection to Empowerment”, p. 7.

<sup>215</sup> This includes the principles of non-refoulement, the right to seek asylum and repatriation on a voluntary basis with international supervision. Amnesty International, “The Lusaka Protocol: what prospect for human rights?” AI INDEX: AFR 12/002/1996 (10 April 1996).

<sup>216</sup> Amnesty International Public Statement, “DR Congo/Angola: Forced repatriation leaves thousands destitute and facing human rights abuses” AI Index AFR 62/012/2004 (14 May 2004).

Under the pretext of being searched, Angolan security forces reportedly raped many women.<sup>217</sup> It is the responsibility of the DRC Transitional Government, in coordination with actors such as MONUC and UNHCR, to “urgently establish and implement a strategy to assist the returnees, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, and promote the integration of returnees into local communities.”<sup>218</sup> Repatriation is a tricky and politically volatile process, which must be addressed comprehensively as a means to restore law and order, hence improving the security conditions of girls and women facing sexual violence.

## **Section VI: Recommendations for Implementing Gender-Sensitive DDR**

Strategies for mainstreaming gender need to be systematically institutionalized both on the policy level and on the ground. The following are recommendations based on the DRC case to improve the gender mainstreaming of DDR(RR) processes:<sup>219</sup>

- *Allocate funding to standardize gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping* to develop operational tools, standard operating procedures and checklists.<sup>220</sup>
- *Strengthen the role of Gender Advisor both in the field and at UN Headquarters.* Mission OGA’s need more human and material resources to function properly. The position established of a Permanent Gender Advisor at UN headquarters will be important for institutionalizing gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> These recommendations are drawn from important work on gender and peacekeeping and DDR, including de Watteville, UNIFEM, Farr, Pratt and Werchick, Higate, Kent and McIntyre, Rehn and Johnson Sirleaf, and Secretary-General Reports.

<sup>220</sup> Report of the Secretary-General, “Implementation of the recommendations of the Special committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the panel on UN Peace Operations” A/56/732 (New York: United Nations, 21 December 2001), p. 10.

<sup>221</sup> Roles the permanent Gender Advisor at UN Headquarters in New York could play include: developing an overall plan for gender mainstreaming; serving as a focal point for field missions seeking assistance; research and analysis; documentation and sharing of best practices, collection of data disaggregated by gender; further developing codes of conduct and disciplinary measures relating to sexual exploitation; and



- ***Actively recruit gender specialists.*** Committed and trained gender specialists should be recruited to enhance the level of gender awareness in all levels of peacekeeping operations.<sup>222</sup> Clearly the employment of one person to fulfil this role is not sufficient.
- ***Train peacekeeping staff to be gender sensitive.*** With the goal for all staff to be able to conduct gender analyses, mandatory gender training should be undertaken on how to reach target groups, communicate with them, identify specific needs, and to find appropriate solutions.<sup>223</sup>
- ***Increase gender balance of DPKO staff.*** There is an urgent need for gender balance among DPKO staff and peacekeepers, to promote gender equality and to help lower the levels of sexual violence in conflict zones.
- ***Institute a monitoring and evaluation process for gender mainstreaming.*** This is necessary to prevent institutional passivity allowing people to make a commitment to gender mainstreaming in paper, without adequately following it up on the ground.<sup>224</sup>

### **Recommendations specifically on the gender mainstreaming of DDR(RR) process<sup>225</sup>:**

Initial planning of the DDR(RR) process:

- Include governmental ministries, agencies and local NGOs concerned with women's issues in planning committees for DDR(RR);

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ensuring adequate monitoring, evaluating and reporting. Report of the Secretary-General, "Gender Mainstreaming in Peacekeeping Activities", p. 14.

<sup>222</sup> de Watteville, "Addressing Gender Issues in Demobilization and Reintegration Programs,"(2002), p. 25.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>225</sup> Many of these recommendations have been previously advocated for in one way or another by experts including de Watteville, Farr, Smythe, McKay and Mazurana, and UNIFEM.

- Incorporate provisions for needs of both men and women at early planning stages;
- Target sensitization campaigns on gender issues for both men and women.

### **Disarmament and Demobilization:**

- Protect women from sexual violence while the disarmament process is delayed;
- Define ‘target groups’ to correlate with those who require assistance (all female ex-combatant, abducted women and girls, and females associated with combatants);
- Offer the option at the initial stage of encampment for women and men to register separately, receive identification documents separately, and that data is recorded disaggregated by sex;
- Ensure at demobilization centers provide specific services to meet female needs, including physical security, separate shelter, sanitation facilities, trauma counseling, specialized services for rape victims, reproductive health services, HIV screening, and special provisions for transport from the camps.

### **Reintegration:**

- Provide reintegration assistance packages relevant to women’s needs;
- Give financial reintegration assistance to women away from the men so that they may choose how to best use such finances and not be subject to exploitation;
- Incorporate viable options for women to generate economic income, including access to education, training, tools and employment opportunities;
- Provide resources for psychosocial counseling and rape-specific health assistance to survivors of sexual violence and rape;
- Target awareness-raising campaigns to women on their human rights;
- Encourage methods for the entire community to benefit from reintegration;
- Provide counseling to women and men in receiving communities, addressing how to be sensitive and tolerant, fostering reconciliation;

- Facilitate political empowerment and capacity building for women;
- Include women in decision-making processes in all institutions of the community.

### **Resettlement and Repatriation:**

- Develop and implement specific strategies, provisions and services for women associated with foreign combatants who have been repatriated;
- Protect females associated with armed groups awaiting repatriation at transit centers;
- Assist women and girls who have been abandoned by foreign combatants;
- Develop and implement strategies, provisions and services to assist and protect Congolese female returnees vulnerable to sexual violence.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

- Pursue field research to discuss with local women if their DDR(RR) needs are being met, and act on suggestions they may provide for improvement;
- Undertake an independent monitoring and evaluation assessment on the inclusion of gender mainstreaming in the DDR(RR) process;
- Examine ways in which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission will address the perpetrators of sexual violence;
- Explore women and girl's coping mechanisms in post-conflict recovery.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has demonstrated that the Democratic Republic of the Congo presents a critical window of opportunity to integrate the needs of both men and women, thereby setting the standard for including gender provisions in future DDR(RR) processes. There are several policies, mechanisms, initiatives and activities in place providing ample

points of entry for transforming the notion of 'gender mainstreaming' from a mere theory to reality on the ground. Sustained political will and resources are required so that women and men can equally benefit from DDR processes. Only then will the full potential for post-conflict development be realized.

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