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Connecting Community Security and DDR: Experiences from Burundi



Rens Willems (CCS)

Jesper Kleingeld (CICAM)

Mathijs van Leeuwen (CICAM)

Working Group Community Security and Community-based DDR in
Fragile States

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Working Group Members:

Centre for Conflict Studies (CCS), Utrecht University

Centre for International Conflict Analysis and Management (CICAM), Radboud University Nijmegen

Conflict Research Unit (CRU) of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael'

European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP)

IKV Pax Christi

Netherlands Ministry of Defense

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

PSO (Capacity Building in Developing Countries)

Dutch Council for Refugees

Authors:

Rens Willems (CCS)

Jesper Kleingeld (CICAM)

Mathijs van Leeuwen (CICAM)

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Executive Summary

This report is based on ten weeks of field research in Burundi, between April and June 2010. This research was one of the activities of the Peace Security and Development Network (PSDN) working group on community security and community-based Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR). The aim of this working group is to contribute to our understanding of how to connect community security and DDR programmes in a context specific way. The research in Burundi builds further on insights from an earlier report of the working group “Security Promotion in Fragile States: Can Local Meet National?” (Willems et. al., 2009), and a case study of eastern DRC (Rouw and Willems, 2010). The current report is based on a variety of research approaches, such as focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, key informant interviews, and participatory observation.

The report starts with a background on conflict in Burundi and the DDR programmes undertaken there. Subsequently, ex-combatants’ motivations for mobilization are explored as well as the relations between the different actors involved in the DDR process in Burundi. Compared to many other countries in which DDR programmes are taking place, in Burundi, economic motivations appeared to be relatively less important in combatants’ decisions to stop fighting. Relations between the Burundian government and the international community (especially the World Bank) have been problematic, leading to frustrations on both sides and delays in funding of the DDR programme, and consequently delayed payments of DDR benefits to ex-combatants. The fact that the DDR programme from the start prioritized working through the national government had important consequences for the extent to which the programme was rooted and embedded at the sub-national level. Indeed, in the case of Burundi, we encountered a lot of frustration about the lack of involvement of local actors, such as local NGOs, community members and ex-combatants themselves.

Looking at how DDR has been perceived on the ground, one must conclude DDR in Burundi has not been successful in terms of economic reintegration. While the primary motivation for demobilization for many combatants was their idea that they had achieved the political aims for which they had initially taken up arms, after demobilization, the way in which the programme assisted them economically certainly became more important to them. Indeed, there is discussion internationally on whether DDR should have the simple and short-term aim of deterring ex-combatants from playing a ‘spoiler’ role after conflict, or rather should have a longer-term character and indeed aim to assist ex-combatants to become productive and participating members of society. Yet, even if we consider DDR to have a very limited role in the long-term economic reintegration of ex-combatants, directly or through associated programmes, we cannot but conclude that economic reintegration of ex-combatants in Burundi has been highly inadequate. The real needs of ex-combatants were high. In addition, rumors and miscommunications further raised expectations, and subsequently raised the frustrations of ex-combatants.

The idleness and economic problems of many ex-combatants further hamper their social reintegration, as those contribute to stigmatization and perceptions of ex-combatants being criminals. Whereas economic motivations often were not the main reason for demobilizing, the lack of economic support does affect the reintegration process. In addition, at first sight social reintegration has gone relatively smoothly, and it was indicated that problems between ex-combatants and communities decreased over time. Yet, depending on what qualifies as successful reintegration, critical remarks can be made on the level of social reintegration in Burundi. Efforts have primarily focused on providing ex-

combatants and communities with tools to resolve conflict and prevent stigmatization. Hardly any attention has been given to psycho-social rehabilitation and reconciliation. Of course, the question is in how far addressing the past and healing relationships is a realistic goal in the short-term, and whether this should be considered part of DDR. However, in the communities visited, it turned out that reconciliation is an inevitable part of the long-term process of social reintegration. Thus, if DDR is to contribute to community security and to be sustainable in the long-term, reconciliation has to be taken into account.

After discussing the experiences with DDR in Burundi, the report focuses on local security. DDR is expected to have significant consequences for local security. At the same time, improved security at the local level is a key prerequisite for successful DDR. Both ex-combatants and other community members interviewed considered security to be a very broad concept, ranging from the absence of theft and violence to security within the family and the ability to work and eat. While security has improved in comparison to the violent past, insecurity remains common. It is mostly related to crime, such as theft and armed robberies, violence related to land conflicts, and violence related to politics. Statutory security actors are often incapable to provide for the security needs of communities. The police is under-equipped and ill-trained and corruption in the judicial system is rampant. At times the police has appeared to be under the tutelage of political elites or been known to side with criminals. In many parts of the country, people do not contact the police directly, but through local state functionaries, such as the *chef de colline* or *chef de zone*. This hinders more positive working relations between the police and communities. Part of the problems is also the fact that people are not always familiar with the structure of security provision by the state and who to turn to in case of particular security problems. Misunderstanding about the motivations and decisions of state security actors further increases perceptions of their corruption and their unwillingness to provide security. Another issue hampering the relationship between the police and communities is its history of being an oppressive force, first of the colonial powers and later of the ruling Burundian elites. This, however, has dramatically improved in many parts of the country. Nevertheless, due to the police's incapacities to provide security the first reaction of communities is still to manage security issues themselves. This is done through organizing neighborhood patrols, which sometimes escalate in mob violence. In other instances, initiatives are more peaceful, for instance local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that set out to resolve local security problems through dialogue. However, it remains problematic that such latter initiatives lack legal grounds. Also the local institution of the *Bashingantahe*, once important in maintaining peace in the communities, has eroded over time and has lost legitimacy in the eyes of the population. Nonetheless, as the state judicial system is operating poorly, it may still have a role to play in contributing to community security in Burundi. Although their current influence differs per region, in many places the *Bashingantahe* are seen to represent well-respected traditional values of Burundian society.

Another issue affecting community security is the number of firearms in circulation. Although estimated numbers are contestable, it is clear that a large number of civilians continue to have access to firearms. Complete civilian disarmament is unlikely to be achieved within the current political climate and with a security apparatus incapable of providing the security desired by the people. Nevertheless, people emphasized the importance of civil disarmament, and pointed out how past civilian disarmament efforts have positively contributed to security. Efforts to limit the number of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) should therefore continue.

When assessing the overall contribution of DDR to community security, regarding disarmament it should be said that while there were relative improvements the overall impact of disarmament efforts in Burundi has been limited. With regard to demobilization, political tensions in the electoral period

have obstructed the dissolution of former military ties. And while reintegration appears to be successful at first sight – i.e. people seem to live together in relative peace – failing economic reintegration fuels stigmatization while violence and crimes committed by ex-combatants during the war remain an unresolved issue. At the same time, the DDR programme did indeed also contribute to security in Burundi. The cohabitation trainings have been well-received. And though it has been problematic in many cases, reintegration support has facilitated the return of many ex-combatants. The effectiveness of the DDR programme in contributing to community security is also highly dependent on the context: the year in which fighting has ended, the extent to which property has been destroyed, and the degree of trauma caused by the war in a particular region. Important is also the role of local authorities: by facilitating dialogue between ex-combatants and the community reintegration problems can be overcome. Finally, the presence of local organizations involved in sensitization efforts has had a positive impact.

Based on the analysis of perceptions and experiences of the actors involved in DDR in Burundi, especially ex-combatants and communities, the report concludes with a series of recommendations. Considering that there is a large discrepancy between ex-combatants' expectations and experiences, expectation management and improved communication is required. As economic reintegration is vital for social reintegration, it should receive more serious attention, for instance in the form of vocational training efforts and follow-up. Social reintegration has to be promoted and more attention should be given to the sensitization of ex-combatants *and* receiving communities, before *and after* ex-combatants return in the communities. In this regard, involvement of local NGOs and church-based organizations has proven to be very valuable – e.g. through providing forums for dialogue between ex-combatants and community members – and their involvement in the DDR process should be stimulated. Reconciliation also proved to be an important element for successful social reintegration and should be given more attention. One must be careful to derive inferences from the fact that people live together in relative peace. If reconciliation is not undertaken or cannot be undertaken in the immediate post-conflict context, it should be realized that the success of social reintegration will remain limited. At the same time, those responsible for planning DDR programmes should be very careful to assume that DDR indeed contributes to reconciliation. Although complete civilian disarmament is highly unlikely to result from current short-term efforts, efforts to promote civilian disarmament should continue. Finally, our findings on DDR also have an important implication for future efforts for SSR. As it turned out, in many communities the relationship with the police is problematic. Even if a core objective of SSR is to improve police capacities through training and resources, this will not be effective if not accompanied by efforts to improve relationships between the police and local communities.

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Abbreviations

AGR	<i>Activités Génératrices Revenus</i>
APPM	Armed Parties and Political Movements
BINUB	<i>Bureau Intégré des Nations Unies au Burundi</i>
CCDC	<i>Comité Communal de Développement Communautaire</i>
CCS	Centre for Conflict Studies (Utrecht University)
CDCDPA	<i>Commission de Désarmement Civil et de lutte contre la Prolifération des Armes légères</i>
CEDAC	<i>Centre d'Encadrement et de Développement Des Anciens Combattants</i>
CICAM	Centre for International Conflict Analysis and Management (Radboud University Nijmegen)
CNDD- Nyangoma	<i>Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie – Nyangoma</i>
CNDD-FDD	<i>Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie – Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie</i>
CNDRR	<i>Commission Nationale de Démobilisation, Réinsertion et Réintégration</i>
CRU	Conflict Research Unit (Clingendael)
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECCP	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
FAB	<i>Forces Armées Burundaises</i>
Fbu	<i>Franc burundaise</i>
FDNB	<i>Forces des Défenses Nationales de Burundi</i>
FNL	<i>Forces Nationales de Liberation</i>
FRODEBU	<i>Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi</i>
FROLINA	<i>Forces de Liberation Nationale</i>
HIMO	<i>Travaux á Haute Intensité de Main d'Oeuvre</i>
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ITS	<i>Indemnité Transitoire de Subsistance</i>
JCC	Joint Cease-fire Commission
MDRP	Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme
MIPAREC	Ministry for Peace and Reconciliation
MSD	<i>Mouvement pour la Solidarité et la Démocratie</i>
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
Palipehutu	<i>Parti pour la liberation du peuple Hutu</i>
PCDC	<i>Plan Communal de Développement Communautaire</i>
PNB	<i>Police Nationale du Burundi</i>
RPA	<i>Radio Publique Africaine</i>
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SSD	Security Sector Development
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPRONA	<i>Union pour le Progrès National</i>
WFP	World Food Programme

1. Introduction

“We, the youth, have destroyed a lot during the conflict, but we now have the chance to rebuild the country again.”¹

“It is just like we are in the bush now because we have no means.”²

This report is the result of ten weeks of field research in Burundi under the auspices of the working group on Community Security and Community-Based DDR in Fragile States of the Dutch Peace, Security, and Development Network. This network constitutes a partnership between the Dutch government, civil society and universities. The Dutch partners involved in this working group are: the Centre for Conflict Studies of Utrecht University (CCS), IKV Pax Christi, the Centre for International Conflict Analysis and Management (CICAM) of the Radboud University Nijmegen, the Conflict Research Unit of the Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’ (CRU), the European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP), PSO (Capacity Building in Developing Countries) and Dutch Council for Refugees, and the Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence. The fieldwork in Burundi has been carried out by CCS and CICAM.

The working group was established after the signing of the Millennium Accords in June 2007. The objective is to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in fragile states. Several cross cutting themes were identified and working groups were formed along these themes. The mission statement of this particular working group is “to understand the context-specific dynamics of community-based security and DDR programmes and contribute to adequate policies, strategies and programmes for effective design, implementation and coordination of community-based security and DDR in post-conflict countries.”³ As a result, the working group has three main objectives. First, it aims to examine the current state of affairs with regard to DDR policies and programs, both initiated from “above” by (inter)state actors and from “below” by grassroots initiatives as well as local populations themselves. Second, it investigates the feasibility of a context-specific approach for community-based DDR. Finally, the working group wants to share and disseminate the results of its research as widely as possible.

Before the start of the field research phase, the working group has published a desk study⁴, to investigate the current state of affairs with regard to DDR, and identify issues and questions for the field research. Key findings from this desk study were that internationally supported national DDR programmes tend to take a very top-down approach. There is often little time, nor inclination, for participatory approaches, resulting in limited involvement of local communities in DDR programmes, and disregard of the particularities of local situations. Moreover, such national DDR programmes tend to be designed to promote national security. Consequently, they fail to ensure the human security of the ex-combatants, as well as that of the local population. Yet, local security turns out to be a key prerequisite for assuring successful DDR. For instance, only if people feel secure they might be willing to hand in their weapons. At the same time, due to their top-down approach and focus on national

¹ Ex-combatant, Kinama, Bujumbura Mairie, 14 April 2010

² Ex-combatant, Muramvya, Muramvya, 28 April 2010

³ See PSDN website: www.clingendael.nl/psdn

⁴ Willems et al. (2009) Security Promotion in Fragile States: Can Local Meet National?

security, DDR programmes miss opportunities at community level that might effectively contribute to peace and security. Literature shows that people tend to organize themselves for their own security, but such local security mechanisms are seldom taken into account into DDR programmes. A key challenge to DDR programmes rising from this desk study is thus how to better take account of community security and local security mechanisms.

The current case study aims to identify practical ways to connect community security with DDR programs. In order to achieve this objective, the field research identified:

- local security perceptions and the diverse ways in which communities organize their own security;
- local experiences with national DDR programmes and related donor interventions, and in what ways they impact local security and community security mechanisms;
- actual and possible linkages between national DDR programs and community security mechanisms and institutions.

As the experience was that many policy documents on DDR are mainly written from the perspective of international donors and implementing agencies, in the case studies it was deliberately chosen to focus on the perceptions and lived experiences of local communities with DDR.

Field research has now been completed in Eastern DR Congo and Burundi and further research is planned in Colombia and South-Sudan. The current report on the Burundi case argues that despite the very limited support received from the DDR program, the return of ex-combatants to the community has not been problematic in every community. Social reintegration has been fostered in those communities where reunions have taken place between ex-combatants, community-members, local administrators and police officers. Such reunions have promoted a degree of trust and have been instrumental as a confidence-building measure in the first period after return. However, such gains can be easily undone if economic reintegration does not follow suit. When ex-combatants remain impoverished they may resort to criminal lifestyles because it is more lucrative. Currently this is the case in some communities where ex-combatants commit banditry, theft and paid killings. And in regions where ex-combatants are less involved in criminal activities, many communities nevertheless believe they are. This also points to the role of stigmatization of ex-combatants, which is another factor hampering the reintegration process. This is further aggravated by the fact that ex-combatants possess few vocational skills and find it hard to return to productive life. Against this background is also the sentiment that in a generalized environment of poverty, favouring ex-combatants by specifically targeting them through DDR programs is not appreciated by local communities who also suffer from a lack of job opportunity. Moreover, under the surface the past violence inflicted by ex-combatants remains a potential spoiler for proper social reintegration.

Therefore, community security is fragile and easily reversible, and the progress made in terms of social reintegration must be strengthened by economic reintegration. Crimes such as banditry, armed robberies, theft, murder and harassment continue to put community security at risk. Combating crime is an arduous task due to weak law enforcement and a poorly functioning judicial system. Corruption is said to be endemic at the expense of a fair, swift and impartial application of the law. The police is not much trusted and is said to be often late on the crime scene. It does not necessarily protect the people, but rather works for personal and political interests. In addition, the police is not necessarily regarded as the default security provider by Burundians. Traditionally, local leaders, such as the village chief (*chef de colline*), village administrators and elderly (*Bashingantahe*) have fulfilled this role by mediating disputes and dispensing justice. There remains a tendency to regard the police with

suspicion and there is not much faith in the police ability to protect against insecurity. Because of their low pay and abusive behaviour they rather contribute to insecurity.

This argument is made as follows. First, in chapter 1, a short conflict history of Burundi is given, providing in particular some background on local security, and an introduction of DDR programmes in Burundi. This is followed by a discussion of local experiences with DDR programmes, analyzing the impact of its different components, and analyzing the local perceptions of such programmes. In chapter 4 the analysis focuses on the economic side of reintegration, and chapter 5 investigates the social aspects of reintegration. Then, the focus turns to community security. In chapter 6 it is explored how local actors understand (in)security, and chapter 7 looks at what actors and mechanisms related to security exist at the local level. We will also explore the topic of civilian disarmament, as this is a key component of community security. Here, we also discuss how DDR programmes impact on local security. The conclusions then relate the issues discussed to practical recommendations. Some of our findings suggest that:

- There is a large discrepancy between ex-combatants' expectations and experiences. Expectation management and improved communication is required, even though a certain tension between what is expected and what a programme delivers is unavoidable.
- Economic reintegration is vital for social reintegration and should be given more serious attention through vocational training efforts and follow-up.
- To promote social reintegration, more attention should be given to the sensitization of ex-combatants *and* receiving communities, before *and after* ex-combatants resettle.
- Local NGOs and church-based organizations have proven to be successful – e.g. by providing forums for dialogue between ex-combatants and community members – and their involvement should be stimulated.
- Reconciliation proved to be an important element for successful social reintegration and should be given more attention. One must be careful to derive inferences from the fact that people live together in relative peace and those responsible for planning DDR programmes should be very careful to assume that DDR indeed contributes to reconciliation. If reconciliation is not undertaken or cannot be undertaken in the immediate post-conflict context, it should be realized that the success of social reintegration will remain limited.
- Efforts to promote civilian disarmament should continue and remain aware of, the obstacles that are hampering disarmament (i.e. the reasons people choose to remain armed).
- With regard to SSR it is important to keep in mind the relationship communities currently have with the police. While the improvement of police capacities with training and resources is important, more attention should be given to the improvement of the relationship between the police and local communities.

Methodology

The data for this report have been retrieved during eight weeks of fieldwork throughout Burundi between 12 April and 4 June 2010. In total we conducted 50 focus group discussions in 26 different communities (see annex 4 for a map indicating the communities visited). Our visits lasted typically for half a day, during which we held two group discussions: one with about ten ex-combatants and another with ten members of the same community. In this way we could take account of security perceptions and DDR experiences of both ex-combatants and community members, triangulate findings, and ensure that people from both groups felt at liberty to speak. In total we have talked to 246 ex-combatants and 203 community members, including 341 men and 113 women. In total we interviewed 79 ex-combatants of the *Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie – Forces pour la*

Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD-FDD), 79 ex-combatants of the *Forces Nationales de Liberation* (FNL), 69 ex-members of the *Forces Armées Burundaises* (FAB – the former national army), 8 ex-members of community militias – so-called *Gardiens de la Paix* – 6 ex-combatants of the *Front de Liberation Nationale* (FROLINA), and 5 ex-members of the CNDD-Nyangoma, a split off from the CNDD-FDD. In addition, we have conducted 11 separate individual interviews with community members to verify group data. These included 4 male community members, 5 male ex-combatants and 2 female ex-combatants; 1 from FAB, 2 from FNL and 4 from CNDD-FDD. Further, we have held 33 interviews with key informants, including representatives from the Burundian government, intergovernmental actors, NGOs, and civil society representatives (see Annex 2 for an overview of key informants).

Our research was carried out during the electoral period in Burundi. On May 24 *commune* elections were held and one week after our departure on June 20 presidential elections were held on June 28. There were some instances of violence related to the elections, such as intimidation campaigns by political parties' youth wings. However, it was nevertheless only a week after the *commune* elections that the situation became increasingly tensed and a number of grenade attacks and politically motivated killings occurred. During our research, when we asked about what people regarded as security and insecurity, people responded in far wider terms than relating their (in)security experience solely to insecurity events related to the elections. References were also made to security issues relating to the elections and the elections indeed impacted security in Burundi. We nevertheless feel that our data have not been biased to an extent it negatively impacts on the internal and external validity. During the field research we continuously aimed to identify what issues were specific to this election period. On the other hand, while tensions may have been raised by the elections, many security issues – including political ones – are characteristic for the post-conflict context.

Throughout the report, we have included quotations. We have included them to provide the reader with a sense of how people expressed themselves on the topics we discussed, and to enliven and illustrate our analysis. Unless stated otherwise we have consistently tried to select those quotations that recurred in other wordings in more than one interview, rather than those representing the perspective of particular individuals. As such, these quotations are used to illustrate the story of our analysis. The quotations at the beginning of the chapters, however, are sometimes chosen precisely because they provide a provocative perspective on the topic.

Moreover, while the report touches on the *intentions* and the *effects* of programmes, we are particularly interested in the *experiences* and *perceptions* of people affected by the DDR programme. In many instances, there were differences between what programmes intended to achieve, and how programmes were perceived in the communities. This does not necessarily mean that those programmes did not realize what they intended. The actual actions undertaken as part of the DDR programme and recipient perceptions thereof may be close, but are not the same. On the basis of those perceptions we can thus not draw conclusions on what programmes actually did. Yet, they provide important insights on how programmes are experienced, which have true consequences in terms of people's apprehension of, and finally, satisfaction about those programmes.

In our research we have worked together with three different local NGOs. We have visited eight different communities together with the *Centre d'Encadrement et de Développement Des Anciens Combattants* (CEDAC) in Bujumbura Rurale and Muramvya provinces. MIPAREC from Gitega assisted us in our visits to ten communities in Gitega, Ruyigi, Muyinga, Mwaro, and Ngozi provinces. Finally CED-Caritas facilitated our research in the provinces of Bururi, Bubanza and Cibitoke where we visited six different communities.

In the last two weeks of our field research, between 7 and 19 June, we returned to Mutimbuzi, Kabezi, Itaba and Kibimba communities, where we organized focus group discussions to present our findings to local stakeholders and verify them. In addition, we organized two workshops with Burundian NGOs – one in Gitega and one in Bujumbura – and hosted a separate workshop with international NGOs operating in Burundi. Finally, we presented our findings to and discussed them with donors and international organizations (see annex 3 for details on those verification sessions) .

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2. Background of the Conflict in Burundi

“People are tired of war, but politicians keep trying to use conflict for political ends.”⁵

“In the past it was war and now it is politics that influences the people.”⁶

The reintegration of former combatants into their home communities in Burundi takes place in a delicate transitional period from war to peace. While the country has come a long way from the rampant instability over the 1990s, and while all rebel movements have now laid down their weapons, the contested communal elections of 24 May 2010 – the second since the end of civil war – underscore the continuing political instability in the country. Stability at the local level is further affected by the return of hundreds of thousands of refugees from neighboring countries, and internally displaced people to their home communities. With the political climate in Burundi becoming more stable in the new millennium, about 500,000 refugees and numerous internally displaced people have returned home.⁷ The civil war left the country in a situation of enduring poverty. Due to extreme poverty and the high number of small arms in civilian hands, criminality remains high.

Since independence in 1962 the country has been plagued by ethnic tensions between the dominant Tutsi minority and the Hutu majority.⁸ Like Rwanda, which was also colonized by the Germans and since 1916 under Belgian tutelage, there were tensions between those groups preceding colonization. However, during the colonial period more dynamic relations between these two groups became frozen and antagonism was fuelled. The Belgian colonizers relied on the Tutsi minority to rule the Hutu majority. They coated this arrangement in dubious myths of ‘racial superiority’ and a ‘traditional domination’ of the Tutsi over the Hutu, transforming the organization of society to reflect these myths.⁹ Yet, the situation in Burundi was rather different from that in Rwanda, where the 1959 ‘Social Revolution’ brought power to the Hutu majority. In Burundi, power was in hands of princely lineages, the so-called Baganwa, who had managed to transcend ethnic difference to a certain extent. Decolonization in Burundi was less abrupt than in Rwanda and initially did not affect the monarchy. Yet, after the death of prime minister and prince Louis Rwagasore, ethnic polarization sharpened, due to the demonstration effect from the Rwanda ‘Social Revolution’, increasingly ethnicized power struggles within the single ruling party UPRONA, and a Tutsi-led coup within the army. Since then, Tutsi minority rule has continued almost uninterrupted. Three military regimes have been in power successively, and the army became a bastion of Tutsi power. Emerging rebellion met with harsh retaliations from the army, leading to major bloodshed and large outfluxes of Hutu refugees in 1965, 1972, 1988 and 1991.

⁵ Ex-combatant ex-FAB, Bujumbura Mairie, 14 June 2010

⁶ Community member, Rugombo, Cibitoke, 3 June 2010

⁷ In the peak-year 2000, the UNHCR estimated the number of Burundian refugees at about 570,000, of which the majority were living in Tanzania (UNHCR 2005: 277). In 2010, there were still 94,000 refugees residing abroad (UNHCR 2010). Civil war violence further resulted in massive internal displacement, with about half a million displaced people halfway the 1990s (UNHCR 2005: 277). Currently, UNHCR estimates that 100,000 people have not yet returned to their communities of origin (UNHCR 2010).

⁸ Apart from these two groups, there is the minority ethnic group of the Twa, comprising about 1% of the population. Their role in the history and present politics is not included in this report.

⁹ Prunier (1997/1995: 1-4); Malkki (1995); Reyntjens (1994).

When the Third Wave of Democratization rolled over Africa, a new constitution providing for multiparty democracy was adopted, and military rule came to an end. The first democratic multiparty elections in 1993 were won by Melchior Ndadaye's FRODEBU, a pro-Hutu party. Tragically, the assassination of Ndadaye by Tutsi soldiers led to revenge killings by FRODEBU members, and a spiral of Tutsi massacres and army reprisals began. The civil war that ensued has probably cost some 300,000 lives. In the central parts of the country the population got ethnically segregated, with Tutsi fleeing to displacement camps around the communal offices, while whole neighbourhoods of the capital Bujumbura became mono-ethnic. Part of the political leaders from FRODEBU fled to the exterior and formed the CNDD, with the FDD as its armed wing, which started attacks on Burundian soil. Another major rebel movement was the Palipehutu-FNL, the armed wing of the political party Palipehutu, established in the 1980s in the Tanzanian refugee camps. While Palipehutu-FNL had its support mainly in the central region of Muramvya and along Lake Tanganyika, CNDD was mainly supported in the southern regions of Bururi and Ruyigi. Both movements experienced factional infighting and schism.

In response to the unrest, former military ruler Buyoya staged a coup in 1996, thereby suspending the constitution and effectively ending democracy. The coup led to an international boycott that further crippled Burundi's economy. Since 1998 a careful transition towards peace was initiated by Buyoya, who installed a government with more representatives from the Hutu. After failed talks under the leadership of former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, in 2001, Nelson Mandela managed to negotiate a transitional government, in which Hutu and Tutsi leaders would share power. President Buyoya took up the presidency for the first half of the interim period, after which Domitien Ndayizeye took over. Minister posts in this period were divided equally among the two ethnicities. Yet, the main Hutu rebel groups CNDD-FDD and the Palipehutu-FNL refused to sign the ceasefire and fighting continued, including a major rebel assault on Bujumbura in July 2003, and an attack on Gatumba transit camp, in which 150 Banyamulenge from the DRC were killed and for which FNL claimed responsibility. Only towards the end of 2003, an agreement was reached between the government and the CNDD-FDD. FDD leader Pierre Nkurunziza and other FDD members got some ministerial posts. In 2004, a UN peacekeeping force took over from African Union troops and a disarmament and demobilization programme started. A new national army was to be formed, incorporating former government soldiers as well as former fighters of the CNDD-FDD.

In 2005, in the first democratic elections since the civil war, the CNDD-FDD won parliamentary elections, and Nkurunziza was elected president. Most minister posts came in hands of CNDD-FDD, though FRODEBU and UPRONA also became part of the government. The installation of Nkurunziza implied an end to the transitional period. Nkurunziza promoted a policy of unity and reconciliation, and hoped to encourage the return of refugees from exile. He also took on a reconciliatory stance towards the FNL, and in the end of 2006, a ceasefire was signed with the government. The truce had to overcome several hurdles, including clashes between rival FNL factions in Bujumbura and raids in the north-west of the country, until end 2008, when a peace agreement was signed. A political hurdle was also the change of name of the movement (the name Palipehutu-FNL was against the constitution as it emphasized ethnic background) and the liberation of political prisoners and prisoners of war. FNL leadership returned from exile in Tanzania and the movement was officially transformed into a political party. Since mid-2008, no large security incidents have taken place anymore. In January 2009, civil war was officially declared to be ended.

Nkurunziza's government faces enormous tasks in a country that is in economic debris, and continuing political disunity and instability. Nkurunziza's government has been accused of becoming more and more authoritarian (ICG: 2006). Early 2007, a political crisis emerged, when the former head

of the governing party, Hussein Radjabu, was accused of plotting armed rebellion and insulting President Nkurunziza, and was put in prison. For most of 2007, parliament was paralyzed as a result of a boycott by the main opposition parties and a faction of the CNDD-FDD. Nkurunziza consolidated his power by replacing Radjabu's supporters in parliament by his own. Civil organizations and the international community got increasingly concerned about political and civil liberties in Burundi. In 3 November 2008, Alexis Sinduhije, former journalist of Radio Publique Africaine (RPA) and leader of the newly to be established political party *Mouvement pour la Solidarité et la Démocratie* (MSD) was arrested and detained. In June 2010, presidential elections were held. Yet, President Nkurunziza was the only candidate after all the opposition candidates pulled out complaining of fraud in the communal elections.

At the local level, many Burundians live in a precarious situation. People in the countryside are predominantly dependent on agriculture for making a living (Sabimbona, 1998: 3; Oketch and Polzer, 2002: 120; Kamungi et al., 2004: 1). In one of the most populous countries of Africa,¹⁰ land is increasingly becoming scarce.¹¹ Land conflicts have multiplied exponentially. More than 80% of conflicts that arrive before the tribunals are related to land. There is a large diversity in land conflicts, ranging from those resulting from the division of the family inheritance and border disputes, to conflicts related to the occupation of land by displaced people, conflicts resulting from development programmes in the 1980s which resulted in a thorough reshuffling of properties, or conflicts resulting from land grabbing by government representatives and army officials during the civil war (Van Leeuwen, 2010). Often, the return of the refugees and the reclamation of their land, which in the meantime has been occupied by others, is considered a core risk for the maintenance of the fragile peace. Events in 1993 had shown that reinstalling refugees was a politically sensitive issue. One of the triggers of the violence and ensuing civil war was the expected massive return of Hutu refugees and their land reclamation (Oketch and Polzer, 2002; ICG, 2003). Yet, land conflicts are not just a temporary problem related to returnees, it is not a short-term, war-related problem, but a long-term issue. In fact, most serious land disputes seem to take place within families, rather than between different ethnic groups (Van Leeuwen, 2010; CARE et al., 2004:30-1).

Dealing with those disputes is difficult. Despite the existence of a Land Tenure Code, land holdings remain largely unregistered (less than five per cent) (Kamungi & Oketch 2004), while the legitimacy of title deeds has been undermined by corrupt practices and nepotism in the Ministry of Lands. Many instances exist in which two titles exist for the same plot of land. While the Arusha agreement has called for a revision of the Land Code, this is still in process. Further, the judicial system appears not equipped to deal with the task placed upon it, due to corruption, limited juridical expertise of the magistrates at the tribunals, lack of coordination between government institutes involved in the issue, and incompleteness and contradictions in legislation (Dexter, 2005).

Other issues affecting security at the local level are the criminality related to the high number of small arms, and continued fear and distrust, in particular in those communities where violence had strong ethnic dimensions. Distrust is still a reason for the continued existence of displacement sites. Finally, the civil war left the country in a situation of enduring poverty. Burundi experiences high levels of food insecurity (WFP, 2010). According to WFP figures, only 28 percent of the population is food-secure and half of the population is chronically malnourished. Food security is threatened by population displacement, poor infrastructure and insecurity, loss of soil productivity and plant

¹⁰ Burundi has a population density of 297 inhabitants/km² on average (PNUD 2005)

¹¹ Over 80% of rural households have less than 1.5 ha of land (Leisz, 1998: 149; Huggins, 2004: 3; Kamungi et al., 2004: 1), while 15% of the population is landless (Nkurunziza, 2002, in: Jackson, 2003: 8).

diseases. Erratic rainfall has resulted in drought and famines in the north, while climatic changes are blamed for large-scale flooding in 2007 and 2009. Agricultural extension services are only slowly recovering since the war.

To conclude with, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants in Burundi takes place under dire circumstances. Continuing political instability, a difficult transition to a more inclusive and democratic system, but also the return of large numbers of refugees and displaced, the massive occurrence of land disputes, continuing insecurity and systematic poverty at the local level pose a challenging environment for programmes addressing ex-combatants and recipient communities

3. Background of DDR in Burundi

“Communities are not well prepared for the reintegration of ex-combatants, and neither are the ex-combatants themselves.”¹²

“We don’t usually assess reintegration because it is difficult to measure, as this is something in the long term. We assess after one or two years at most.”¹³

In August 2000 the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreements were signed, which required among other conditions: the formation of the new *Forces des Défenses Nationales de Burundi* (FDNB), a police force, and the disarmament and demobilization of those who were not eligible¹⁴ to join these new forces. Preparations for the DDR programme started immediately and were organized under the umbrella of the Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP).¹⁵ The new security forces were to be established according to the principle of 50/50 ethnic representation, which meant the demobilization of a large part of the FAB to make room for members of the Armed Political Parties and Movements (APPMs). The Arusha requirements also included the formation of the *Police Nationale du Burundi* (PNB), which now for 89 percent consists of former military and paramilitary forces, of which about half are former rebel combatants (CIGI, 2009: 5). The target was to create an army and police force of 25,000 and 15,000 respectively.

In January 2003 the transitional government started with the design of a national DDR plan with support of the World Bank, and in August 2003 the *Commission National de Démobilisation, Réinsertion et Réintégration* (CNDRR) was established. The programme was officially launched on 2 December 2004. The CNDRR set up an office in each of Burundi’s 17 provinces and used an ex-combatant as a focal point in each of the country’s 117 communes. The focal points were elected by the ex-combatants in their respective communes, and had caseloads of 30 up to 500 ex-combatants they had to represent, depending on the number of ex-combatants in their commune. They were elected for a term of one year and received a stipend to cover logistical and communication costs and were given a bicycle (Douma and Gasana, 2008: 17). The CNDRR was responsible for the overall programme coordination, the Joint Cease-fire Commission (JCC) was in charge of monitoring the process, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) was in charge of attending to child soldiers, and *Bureau Intégré des Nations Unies au Burundi* (BINUB) assisted with the implementation of the DDR programme, with the cooperation of the African Union and the World Bank.

The disarmament and registration was the responsibility of the government and supported by BINUB, and the JCC, while the CNDRR was charged with registration of combatants after disarmament. The disarmament of former FAB members fell under the responsibility of the government. Once people volunteered or were selected for demobilization, they were disarmed in their barracks and

¹² Representative local NGO, Bujumbura, 15 April 2010

¹³ UN official, Bujumbura, 31 May 2010

¹⁴ Eligibility was based on vetting standards, such as health condition, age, and in case of FAB soldiers the number of faults made during their career.

¹⁵ The MDRP – which focused on Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda – has now dissolved into national programmes. These are now supported by the successor of the MDRP: the Transitional Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (TDRP)

transported to the demobilization centre where their status was formally changed to civilian. This process was implemented by the CNDRR and supported by the MDRP, BINUB and UNICEF. During their stay in the demobilization camp ex-combatants received a training, and when discharged from the camp they received a reinsertion package (*Indemnité Transitoire de Subsistance - ITS*), which equalled 18 months of salary and consisted of a minimum total amount of 566,000¹⁶ fbu, depending on military rank. This reinsertion package was paid in instalments. The first installment was paid in cash at the demobilization centre, while the remainders of 3 instalments were paid through the banking system in their community of choice over a 10-month period (Boshoff and Vrey, 2006: 22). After this, demobilized combatants had five options with regard to their reintegration support: 1) return to their former employment situation (re-employment); 2) go back to formal education at school; 3) engage in vocational training; 4) receive entrepreneurial support; or 5) receive Income-Generating Activities support (*Activités Génératrices de Revenus - AGR*). The large majority opted for the last, which included goods of their choice (e.g food items for trade, animals, equipment, etc.) with a value of 600.000 fbu and some information on how to set up a project with this whilst at the demobilization site (Douma and Gasana, 2008: 6).

The first DDR process was undertaken from 2004 to 2008 and was to demobilize a total of about 78,000 ex-combatants. This number consisted of: 41,000 effectives from the Burundian Armed Forces; 15,500 combatants from different APPMs, such as CNDD-Nyangoma, CNDD-FDD-Jean Bosco, CNDD-FDD-Nkurunziza, Palipehutu-FNL, Palipehutu-FNL-Mugarabona and Frolina; and 21,400 militias from groups *Gardiens de la Paix* (11,733) and *Combattants Militants*¹⁷ (9,668) (Escola de Cultura de Pau, 2008 : 4). The Palipehutu-FNL (although included in the abovementioned numbers) remained the only party in conflict with the government and did not participate in this programme. When the programme closed in December 2008, 23,022 adults were demobilized, all of which received reinsertion support and 21,966 received reintegration support, and 18,709 *Gardiens de la Paix* received reinsertion support called "*allocations de reconnaissance de service.*" Also, 3,261 children were released from armed groups, of which 3,017 received reinsertion and 2,590 also received reintegration support, and 1,195 ex-combatants received socio-economic reintegration support (MDRP, 2008). The estimated costs of the programme are 84.4 million dollars, which amounts to an average cost of 1,325 per person, excluding the costs for disarmament (Escola de Cultura de Pau, 2008: 5).

A second programme started in 2009 and focused on the combatants of the Palipehutu-FNL of Agathon Rwasa, the last active rebel group who signed a cease-fire agreement with the government in 2006 and laid down its weapons in 2008. This programme also included a small number of ex-combatants from the previous programme, and is to be completed in 2011. From the FNL 2,100 combatants were to be reintegrated into the army, 1,400 into the police, and 5,000 were to enter the national DRR programme under the same definitions of who was considered a combatant as in the previous programme. Yet, a special category of *Adultes Associés* was created to deal with the large number of people associated with the FNL who had not been combatants. Compared to other armed groups in Burundi the FNL used more guerrilla tactics and support of civilians. These civilians often did not partake in direct combat, but supported with transport, food, housing, etc. This group consisted of 11,000 people, of which 1,000 are women. After registration this group received 50,000 fbu, a small reinsertion kit consisting of some clothing and house supplies, and transport back to the

¹⁶ Average exchange rates of Burundian francs per dollar were 1,228 (2009), 1,198 (2008), 1,065 (2007), 1,030 (2006), 1,138 (2005)

¹⁷ The *Gardiens de la Paix* were civilians supporting (often part-time) the national army with material support from the government. *Combattants Militants* were civilians offering similar support to rebel groups (mainly the FNL). This group is also referred to as *Adultes Associés*.

community of origin. After a few months they received another 50,000 fbu and could register for a UNDP development project. These *Travaux à Haute Intensité de Main d'Œuvre* (HIMO) projects are aimed at the reconstruction of community infrastructure and include 70% *Adultes Associés* and 30% community members. The projects are based on the *Plan Communal de Développement Communautaire* (PCDC), a community development plan which is written by the *Comité Communal de Développement Communautaire* (CCDC). The members of this local committee are not directly chosen by the people in the *commune*, but the PCDC is to some extent discussed with the community members. To ensure HIMO projects take into account the local development priorities, they are chosen from the list in this PCDC but choices are limited to those fitting the HIMO profile.¹⁸ Although intended as a temporary solution to keep people busy during the elections instead of bringing about a durable solution, it does involve communities more actively than previous DDR efforts – by including 30% community members and selecting the projects based on the PCDC.

With regard to SALW in the hands of the civilian population, the *Commission de Désarmement Civil et de lutte contre la Prolifération des Armes légères* (CDCPA) organized a civilian disarmament campaign in cooperation with MAG. Trainings were given through which people were taught how to undertake sensitization, and the programme provided incentives for weapons to be handed in, such as pieces of cloth and bags of cement. The programme was undertaken during a 2 month amnesty period, as the possession of SALW by civilians is officially restricted by law.

Summarizing, from the peace agreements of 2000 onwards there have been continuous efforts to disarm non-state actors and to support former combatants in the reintegration in civilian life. Below the report will take a closer look at how these efforts have been experienced by those who are affected by it.

¹⁸ These include the rehabilitation of small dirt roads, bridges, small socio-economic infrastructure (e.g. markets) and playfields, reforestation, drainage construction/rehabilitation and chalking administrative buildings.

4. DDR Experiences on the Ground

“Reintegration keeps failing, but nothing changes.
I hope that with your research you will be able to change these policies of the World Bank.”¹⁹

“My father was murdered in ‘92. Then in ‘93 the crisis started and many people fled to Tanzania. There the armed groups were formed and I decided to join them to be able to return to my country.”²⁰

This chapter explores local experiences with DDR programmes. To properly understand DDR in the context of Burundi, motivations for mobilization and demobilization as well as the relations between actors involved in DDR are discussed. The chapter then continues with the experiences with DDR and looks into how both ex-combatants and other people in the communities perceive such programmes. The focus here is mainly on the economic aspects of reintegration, whereas the following chapter focuses on the social aspects of reintegration.

A first issue of importance are the motivations ex-combatants had for mobilization and demobilization. The primary motivations ex-combatants gave for joining the army, a rebel group or militia, were political grievances, such as wanting to fight for an ethnically balanced government and army, freedom for Hutus, or fighting for peace stability in the country. As an ex-combatant explained: “We wanted democracy but then Ndadaye was killed and the crisis began. People wanted change but that was resisted. I joined the CNDD-FDD to protect myself and help to achieve more democracy.”²¹ Other important reasons were finding security, to be able to return to Burundi after having fled to neighboring countries during the crisis, or to revenge murdered family members. People also said they were forced to join. This included people that were directly forced by an armed group to fight or support the group with transport, supplies and housing; or people feeling they simply did not have another option, given the security situation on their *colline*, or because an armed group was controlling it. Economic motivations were also mentioned, but less frequent, and often by ex-FAB soldiers who had joined the army for a career before the start of the crisis. Similar observations on fighter’s motivations are made by Uvin (2007), although our findings place less emphasis on economic motivations for those who joined the rebel movements. As argued by others, we find that the Burundian case proves that political grievances can indeed be more important than economic motivations and that in Burundi “the fixation on ‘material opportunity’ rather than grievances would be misguided” (Samii, 2007: 3).

That the majority of motivations for mobilization were based on political goals seems to have facilitated the process tremendously. A large part of the people who demobilized did so voluntarily. Many of them said to be tired of the war and fighting, but more notable, a lot of ex-combatants said to have demobilized because the goals that were being fought for were attained.²² “When the CNDD-FDD had come to power in Bujumbura I found it no longer necessary to be in the CNDD-FDD, so I quit to demobilize. After we had reached our goals I thought it was time for me to rest.”²³

¹⁹ Representative local NGO, Bujumbura, 15 April 2010

²⁰ Ex-combatant Frolina, Ruyigi, Ruyigi, 7 May 2010

²¹ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Rutegama, Muramvya, 28 April 2010

²² The consequences of this will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 5.

²³ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Itaba, Gitega, 6 May 2010

Interestingly, ex-FAB soldiers gave similar reasons for demobilizing: “I saw there were many killings and Burundi was in crisis. That’s when I joined the army to bring peace and security to the country. Thanks to God that goal has been reached so I demobilized voluntarily.”²⁴ The fact that many ex-combatants decided to demobilize voluntarily and that the goals for mobilization were supported by a large part of the population has eased the process of social reintegration.

Of course not all combatants demobilized voluntarily. Also, rank harmonization in the new national army was for some former rebels an extra reason to demobilize, in order to hold on to their old military rank. As promotions were given with greater ease in the rebel groups compared to the army, many combatants from rebel groups were degraded upon integration into the newly formed army; something which proved to be unacceptable for some combatants we interviewed. Part of the ex-combatants were forced to demobilize, because of the limited number of the rebels who could join the new national army or, in case of ex-FAB soldiers, because of age, handicaps caused by the war, or insubordination (i.e. the number of ‘faults’ in their record). Yet, for the majority of ex-combatants the goals of the war were reached and demobilization was a logical step. And although there were economic needs on the side of the ex-combatants, the economic benefits that were promised in the DDR programme were not the principal reason for demobilizing. This contrasts with for instance eastern DRC, where currently the reasons for mobilization, fighting and demobilization are for the majority economic.²⁵

In fact, this implies that in Burundi the role of the DDR programme in enticing people to enter demobilization was limited. Giving economic incentives for disarmament and demobilization implies that DDR programmes are set up under the assumption that joining demobilization is a rational, basically economic, choice. DDR programmes are seen to offer combatants an alternative livelihood for fighting, and so they are valued as for significantly reducing the numbers of armed groups. Yet, reasons given for demobilization by ex-combatants in Burundi suggest that the economic incentives of DDR programmes have a far more limited role in motivating people to demobilize. Rather, ex-combatants often decided to demobilize because of the political circumstances they had arrived at. Consequently, community members do not so much evaluate the DDR programme on the extent to which it has motivated demobilization and so contributed to security, but rather on what the programme has brought in terms of assistance for economic and social reintegration. It should be noted, however, that while ex-combatants did not always mention economic benefits of DDR as a motivation for demobilization, they did see economic support as necessary for their reintegration.

A second issue of importance are the relationships between the actors involved in DDR. Notable here is the relationship between the Burundian government and the international community. As a consequence of the international community’s concern for national ownership, all assistance is channelled through the government. In a country that has just emerged from civil war and with a government that is considered to be incapable and corrupt this dependence on the national government creates problems. On the ground there is little trust in the government and the CNDRR, and corruption is seen to be rampant. The replacement of the previous *Sécretaire Exécutif* of the CNDRR in 2008 due to a corruption scandal has not improved the perception of the CNDRR of being corrupt. As a result of this not all payments to ex-combatants have been made in full, and what was paid endured many delays. “If you give support to the government the money doesn’t end up here and only the people up there are profiting.”²⁶ The delayed payments of benefits to ex-combatants by

²⁴ Ex-combatant ex-FAB, Ruhoro, Ngozi, 10 May 2010

²⁵ See for instance, Rouw and Willems (2010: 25)

²⁶ Community member, Kiganda Kanerwa, Muramvya, 27 April 2010

the CNDRR have caused several manifestations by protesting ex-combatants in front of the CNDRR office. Apart from corruption, payments have been delayed to the government by the World Bank when the programme proposals for DDR handed in by the CNDDR were not yet considered to be in order. On the other hand, not all problems can be blamed on corruption and incapacity on the side of the Burundian government. One government official explained that because of the bureaucratic processes delays are just a fact when you work with the World Bank,²⁷ and another complained that “they are not the easiest to work with.”²⁸ Complaints were made that the procedures are excessive and time consuming,²⁹ and that “donors are demanding things to go as they propose them while their ideas do not always match the realities and needs on the ground.”³⁰ Another problem is that while there are many international donors (both multilateral and bilateral) active in reintegration, according to a UN official there is no mapping of who does what where.³¹

In this respect, the situation in Burundi is not atypical. Many DDR programmes are frustrated by the weaknesses of post-civil war governments. Yet, the fact that the DDR programme from the start prioritized working with the national government has important consequences for the extent to which the programme was also rooted and embedded at the local, sub-national level. Indeed, in the case of Burundi, we experienced a lot of frustration about the lack of involvement by some local actors. Ex-combatants aired their grievances of not being sufficiently implicated in the execution of the programme and the way decisions on the programme were made. Despite the system of focal points – ex-combatants who represented the ex-combatants in a commune at provincial and national levels – and the free choice the programme intended to give ex-combatants on their reintegration kit, many felt that the programme was forced upon them.

*Demobilized are not being implicated in the programme and we can't make any choices. They should allow us to choose ourselves, but now it is like a dictatorship. We are treated as children, and they are like a father who buys pants for his son, but doesn't care whether it is red or blue. But it matters for the child. We should be more involved in the decision making.*³²

In general, many ex-combatants feel they can play a more active role in the DDR process and support the development of the country, but – like other community members – they generally find they need to be given material support to enable them to do so.

Similar complaints about being neglected in the programme have been made by community members. The focus of the DDR programme was primarily on individual combatants, and the communities in which these ex-combatants were to be reintegrated were not involved in the decision of what benefits were to be granted. As a representative of an NGO explained, this lack of involvement resulted in projects that did not match the context in which it had to be implemented: “Car mechanics was given to someone in a region where only the bishop and the governor had a car.”³³ Communities were also hardly prepared for the arrival of ex-combatants and not supported in receiving them. Yet it was observed that “an approach that includes the community is needed because reintegration is much easier when the ex-combatants are understood.”³⁴ In some communities local NGOs filled this gap

²⁷ Government official, Bujumbura, 16 June 2010

²⁸ Government official, Bujumbura, 19 May 2010

²⁹ Government official, Bujumbura, 16 June 2010

³⁰ Local NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 16 June 2010

³¹ UN Official, SSR/SA Unit, Bujumbura, 31 May 2010

³² Ex-combatant ex-FAB, Muyinga, Muyinga, 11 May 2010

³³ International NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 17 June 2010

³⁴ International NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 17 June 2010

and helped sensitize and prepare communities, yet these organizations often had very limited resources and it was not a widespread phenomenon. Communities themselves are very poor, which not only hinders the reintegration but can also create more frustrations over the benefits given to ex-combatants when they are not properly involved. Moreover, other projects have shown that crime dropped significantly when different vulnerable groups in a community were put together in projects.³⁵ Potentially communities can be much more involved in the identification of projects and sensitization efforts. The projects including *Adults Associés* based on the PCDC community development plans as discussed in chapter 3 are a positive step towards more community involvement in deciding what projects are implemented where.

With regard to local NGOs again the same grievances were aired. There have been some local NGOs involved in the sensitization of communities and ex-combatants and supporting of dialogue, but this number has been limited. This is an unexploited source as local NGOs can play a big role in supporting the reception of ex-combatants in communities. One local NGO explained their work with regard to IDPs, by using local peace committees who sensitize both the receiving community and the IDPs in the camp, both before the IDPs actually return. "The main issue of this example is that we work at the basis, and that we work from two sides. In the DDR programme people were imposed on their communities without sensitization."³⁶

4.1. DDR Experiences

Overall, the experiences of ex-combatants with DDR were rather negative because it did not meet their expectations. One ex-combatant explains the difficulties: "for me reintegration is finding back civilian life. It is getting job training and learning how to live together again. I am traumatized, I have no family and I have four children to feed."³⁷ Many of the complaints had to do with the support that had suffered many delays or sometimes was not (or not completely) delivered as promised. This gave some ex-combatants the feeling that DDR "was only there to excommunicate [*sic.*] us from the armed groups."³⁸ Even when all support was given as promised, ex-combatants felt it was very difficult to start a life with the benefits they had received. In some cases ex-combatants returned to find their houses destroyed and their family killed. Moreover, due to the delays of the payments many ex-combatants had acquired debts. "We have a lot of debts now because in the transit site they told us to borrow money rather than to steal. There was no alternative so the interest rate was very high."³⁹

Many ex-combatants also complained about the fact that the money was given in a number of instalments and that the kit had to contain goods instead of money. They argued that if the sum was given at once and in cash, it would have been easier to construct a house or start a business. Another problem with the kit was that in the view of ex-combatants they were being cheated by the merchants used by DDR programmers to supply their benefits. According to the programme, the kit had to be in goods, but could be freely chosen by ex-combatants for a value of 600,000 fbu. In some areas, however, merchants used by the DDR programme were believed to have artificially raised the prices on the market for the ex-combatants. "They had given us 1 litre of rice for 900 fbu while on the market it was only 700 fbu for a litre."⁴⁰

³⁵ International NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 17 June 2010

³⁶ Local NGO meeting, Gitega, 10 June 2010

³⁷ Ex-combatant FNL, Mutimbuti, Bujumbura Rurale, 23 April 2010

³⁸ Ex-combatant Ex-FAB, Muyinga, Muyinga, 11 May 2010

³⁹ Ex-combatant, CNDD-FDD, Rutegama, Muramvya, 28 April 2010

⁴⁰ Ex-combatant ex-FAB, Kibimba, Gitega, 12 May 2010

All these frustrations can potentially cause problems, because it could increase susceptibility on part of the ex-combatants to be manipulated by politicians. "After all the fighting it is hard to go back into civilian life. I realise that life was much easier as a combatant. Of course it was hard, but at least I had food and could drink whenever I wanted. Now I sometimes think to pick up a weapon again."⁴¹ This will be discussed in further detail in chapter 9.

4.1.1. Unrealistic Expectations or Justifiable Complaints?

What became clear during fieldwork is that there is a large discrepancy between the expectations and the experiences ex-combatants had with regard to DDR. To some extent the expectations have been unrealistic and were raised by false promises. For instance, Ex-FAB soldiers believed they would continue to be entitled to free health care as they were used to while in service, while the government rejects such promises were ever made. Nevertheless, many combatants claim officials from the ministry of defence and the CNDRR promised them the moon. Also the armed groups spread the word that DDR would reward their combatants, in order to inflate the number of their ranks and to assure they would be taken serious in the peace negotiations (Nindorera, 2008: 12). Expectations have also been raised due to miscommunications and rumors. For instance, at one point the president was talking on the radio about benefits that had already been paid, which created the perception that these benefits would again be paid out.⁴² And others claimed the magazine *Jeune Afrique* had published an article talking about a higher amount than was given to them.⁴³ Rumors were also circulating that benefits in other countries had been much higher. "They promised a lot but what we got didn't match the hard work we had done. The people in Congo got 6 million fbu when they were reintegrated and the demobilized in Rwanda are living in nice houses with water and electricity."⁴⁴ And ex-combatants also talk to UN peacekeepers and start comparing their DDR benefits with the benefits UN blue helmets are entitled to when they return home after having served. Raised expectations over what the DDR programme would bring in benefits are thus for a large part caused by the context of mouth-to-mouth communication in which rumours easily spread. Affected by the '*radio trottoir*' (i.e. rumors on the street) DDR programmes should therefore aim to limit raised expectations but can never prevent them.

While on the one hand unrealistic, expectations are on the other hand to a certain extent also justifiable. After having spent years in the bush, sometimes having lost their family and land, and having to rebuild their lives from nothing, the needs of ex-combatants can indeed be very high. Illustrative is a story we came across of ex-combatants that had benefited in the first phase of the first DDR programme. Some went as far as cutting off their thumb, hoping they could benefit also from the second phase of the programme, where for identification fingerprints were used to determine eligibility.⁴⁵ Whether a true story or not, it does show the needs of ex-combatants were considered to be very real. Further, the very name of DDR sets 'reintegration' as one of the goals of the programme. Consequently, to many community members, the programme raised far going expectations about the extent of assistance for the reintegration of ex-combatants in society. Yet, even among those responsible for the programme there is no shared understanding of what reintegration exactly should entail and what its scope was, and how a programme such as DDR can contribute to this. As one UN

⁴¹ Ex-combatant FNL, Kabezi, Bujumbura Rurale, 28 April 2010

⁴² Local NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 16 June 2010

⁴³ Ex-combatant ex-FAB, Muramvya, Muramvya, 28 April 2010

⁴⁴ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Mutaho, Gitega, 10 May 2010

⁴⁵ World bank representative, Bujumbura, 21 April 2010

official explained: “There are many factors involved in reintegration and we still don’t know how to do reintegration.”⁴⁶ The impact DDR has with regard to reintegration is hardly ever properly assessed, and it can be questioned whether reintegration can be achieved through DDR. In effect, the name of the DDR programme sets a promise it perhaps cannot keep. And even when, according to a UN official commenting on the programme for AA, it was tried “not to make any hard promises,”⁴⁷ the flyer handed out to ex-combatants reads that in the end of the programme there will be “*opportunités de réintégration socio-économique durable a base communautaire.*”⁴⁸ Yet the *Adultes Associés* programme does not have the funds for this and, as mentioned earlier, only includes a three month job opportunity with high intensity labor. Moreover, as one ex-combatant explained, “there is not enough talked about the support that is needed for reintegration: things are just given.”⁴⁹

Another issue is that while the support given to ex-combatants is not insignificant in terms of finances, many seem to have trouble to properly use this support for reintegration. As a representative from an international NGO explained, “after two weeks, they were supposed to be capable of writing a small project, which is something that is even for us here not something easy to do, and we are used to it.”⁵⁰ The capacities of ex-combatants have not been taken into account during the planning and implementation of the DDR programme. “We, the international community and the Burundian government set up the ex-combatants to fail. They didn’t receive any training when they were demobilized. We need to change our mental picture of what reintegration actually entails.”⁵¹ Based on his observations, a representative of a local research institute made the following cynical conclusion:

*I think their priority was to decrease the armed forces in order to decrease the security budget. I’m not sure, but I think that was the main goal. Reintegration was more of secondary concern. For instance, there was one day I was talking with a representative of the World Bank and I told him, all this money you are going to give these ex-combatants, they will just use it to buy beers and drink if you don’t give them other support. And his reaction was: that doesn’t matter, because if they use it for beers, it goes into the local economy and that helps too. I don’t want to make a caricature out of them, but I think the only point was to make cuts in the national security budget. Not reintegration.*⁵²

4.2. Differences in Experience and Context

It should be emphasized that there are large geographical differences in how DDR is experienced. Differences in how DDR was experienced had to do with the particularities of the region to which ex-combatants returned,⁵³ their personal situation regarding their homes and families, and whether they were considered to be part of a vulnerable group and the way this group was treated.

Some communes have become mono-ethnic due to the conflict, which according to some ex-combatants made it easier for them to reintegrate. “My community was entirely Hutu so it was easy for me to reintegrate. The Tutsis in the area did not trust me because I had been in the rebel group for

⁴⁶ UN Official, SSR/SA Unit, Bujumbura, 31 May 2010

⁴⁷ UN Official, SSR/SA Unit, Bujumbura, 31 May 2010

⁴⁸ “Durable socio-economic reintegration opportunities at the community level”

⁴⁹ Ex-combatant FNL, Bujumbura Mairie, 14 April 2010

⁵⁰ International NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 17 June 2010

⁵¹ Representative international NGO, Bujumbura, 18 June 2010

⁵² Representative Burundian research institute, Bujumbura, 20 May 2010

⁵³ See annex 4 for a map with the visited locations in the field.

so long.”⁵⁴ Reintegration seemed also easier when ex-combatants returned to their own communities having fought somewhere else, as was for instance the case in Bururi. In contrast, in other regions, like in Bujumbura Mairie and surrounding regions in Bujumbura Rurale, rather than returning home to their own communities, ex-combatants have settled after the end of the conflict. Here, their reintegration is more problematic. Reintegration seemed also more difficult in regions that have seen much more violence – such as Bujumbura *Rurale*, Bubanza and Cibitoke – as compared to other regions – such as certain parts of Bururi where hardly any violence had taken place. Around Gitega, reintegration was also more difficult. Here, the number of ex-combatants is relatively high due to the fact a large transit site was situated there and many ex-combatants stayed after demobilization.

Another major difference influencing reintegration is the distinction between urban and rural regions. In the countryside there are less job opportunities, but nevertheless reintegration often failed because ex-combatants lacked the basic skills necessary to successfully reintegrate.⁵⁵ Also, as argued by Uvin (2007: 26) the costs of living are lower in rural areas, meaning the reintegration support could be put to more use than in urban areas.

Apart from the context in which ex-combatants have to reintegrate, also the personal situation in which ex-combatants find themselves is important for the ease and success of reintegration. The situation is more difficult for those ex-combatants who for whatever reason could not return to their own communities, for those that upon return to their communities find their land lost, their houses destroyed and their family killed, and for those whose family members have been displaced. Reintegration is easier for those ex-combatants who return to their own houses and have families who have been taking care of their land. Clearly, the latter group has less problems to continue their lives than the former.

Finally, of great influence for the success of reintegration was the amount of education and working experience before joining the army or armed groups. Many ex-FAB soldiers had completed their education before joining the army, which greatly improved their chances of finding a job after demobilization. “Luckily I have a diploma, otherwise my life would have been a disaster. Others do not, therefore they have it much more difficult. And because I was a captain I could not be ignored and I received 1,000,000 fbu. Others received less, because the rank-and-file can be ignored.”⁵⁶ Generally speaking, ex-combatants from the armed groups joined in an earlier stage of their lives than those joining the FAB, and therefore they are relatively disadvantaged. They often have had less education before joining the armed groups and have spent their adolescent years fighting.

4.2.1. *Different groups, different needs*

For certain groups reintegration can be particularly difficult, such as for children, self-demobilized, handicapped and women. Support for child soldiers, steered by UNICEF, has been more thorough than the support for adults. Almost all child soldiers have returned to their families, and others have been brought to guardians. And whereas with regard to adults the receiving communities were hardly prepared for their return, the families or guardians of child soldiers received extensive sensitization before (re-)unification. Their families also received financial support to cover costs of schooling and social expenditures. Uvin (2007: 30) suggests that “child soldiers have not become social outcasts, systematically rejected by their families and communities. There were few reprisals or violent

⁵⁴ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Gihanga, Bubanza, 2 June 2010

⁵⁵ See also in Douma and Gasana (2008: 7)

⁵⁶ Ex-combatant ex-FAB, Muramvya, Muramvya, 28 April 2010

rejections.” And an assessment made for the World Bank suggests that the targeted assistance for child soldiers reduced their vulnerability and that they are as well off as, and sometimes even better off than, their civilian peers (Tatoui-Cherif 2006: 7).

Nevertheless child soldiers also faced particular difficulties. Having joined at a young age, they often lack schooling. Therefore more problematic is also a large group of children that was self-demobilized. A representative of a local NGO supporting this particular group explained that a large number of children deserted from the armed groups.⁵⁷ Some left after being confronted with the violence and death on the battlefield, and others stayed at home after having been sent there by their commanders for medical support. Children are believed to form a large part the deserted combatants. Also, children were often left off the lists for DDR by the armed groups, as they realized it was regarded to be bad to have many children in their ranks.

Self-demobilized have not received any support, except in some cases from their families. According to Uvin (2007: 17), they feel more excluded than others and are more angry than their colleagues who have been through DDR. Potentially, therefore, they can also more easily be manipulated by politicians.

Another great difference is an ex-combatant’s health condition after demobilization. The estimated number of ex-combatants that is handicapped is estimated to be over 4,000 (Uvin, 2007: 26). The situation for handicapped ex-combatants is clearly more difficult, and there are many frustrations about lacking medical and financial support among them. A government official involved in DDR explained that there have indeed been problems between the government and a South African organization that was supposed to implement the support for handicapped ex-combatants. At the time of writing this report a new organization is to start a new programme.⁵⁸

Gender sensitivity

A particular weakness of the first DDR programme was that there was no specific support for women. Beforehand, a government official explained, it was not realized that there were also many women among the combatants, and in the second programme the reintegration kits for men and women were given different contents.⁵⁹ According to a local NGO supporting women’s rights, most women were forced into armed groups and are misunderstood and stigmatized when they returned to their communities.⁶⁰ And also female ex-combatants themselves explained this: “Women sometimes are not able to get back to their husband, because they married someone else during the war or because they did not want a woman who was in the armed groups so divorced them.”⁶¹ “People respond bad to women coming from the bush. Especially when she has gotten a child there.”⁶² Nevertheless, other women responded that there were no big differences between the problems of male and female ex-combatants.⁶³ However, overall it can be said that women do have more problems with regard to stigmatization in the community after they return from the bush.⁶⁴ And Douma and Gasana (2008: 31) found that while child mothers and war widows encountered problems with social rejection, other female ex-combatants were generally more successful in reintegration than their male counterparts.

⁵⁷ Representative local NGO, Bujumbura, 18 May 2010

⁵⁸ Government official, Bujumbura, 16 June 2010

⁵⁹ Government official, Bujumbura, 19 May 2010

⁶⁰ Representative local NGO, Bujumbura, 18 May 2010

⁶¹ Ex-combatant FNL, Kabezi, Bujumbura Rurale, 21 April 2010

⁶² Ex-combatant FNL, Bujumbura Mairie, 14 April 2010

⁶³ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Gihanga, Bubanza, 2 July 2010

⁶⁴ 31 out of the 246 ex-combatants interviewed were women, i.e. 12,6%

4.3. Different Needs, Differentiated Support?

It is clear that the needs of people in Burundi differ greatly. Between ex-combatants and the communities who receive them, and between ex-combatants themselves, depending on their personal experiences, region of return or particular sub-group. This could be interpreted as a call for more differentiated support. As the targeted support for child combatants has shown (Tatoui-Cherif 2006: 7), this can be rather successful.

Yet, on the other hand, after years of civil war almost everyone in Burundi is in need. As one community member explained, “everybody was affected by the war and we are all detached in some way. One person does not need more help than the other. When one group of people then receives more than another, that is difficult to accept.”⁶⁵ And as already discussed earlier, the focus on individual combatants has caused the receiving communities to be neglected in the DDR programme. When talking about differentiated support, there is also the problem of identification. UN officials complained that you can hardly tell whether someone is an ex-combatant or just someone who is interested in the benefits of the programme.⁶⁶ And a number of practitioners have also claimed the distinction between ex-combatants and unemployed youth is rather artificial in reality.⁶⁷ In the end, they both face the same problems and pose the same potential security risks. Also the distinction between ex-combatants and *Adultes Associés* has proven difficult on the ground, as people had trouble understanding it. People classified as *Adultes Associés* sometimes perceived themselves to be just as much FNL as the combatants receiving full DDR support, and felt undervalued.

Moreover, when talking about differentiated support it is almost impossible to identify what the priorities are and what reasonable support is, because it all depends on the perspective one takes. For instance, ex-combatants and community members who were victimized by them will have different ideas about what is reasonable reintegration support. And while in principle programme diversification might arguably be necessary, DDR is the result of a political process and agreed upon in the peace agreements. Also, differentiated support to ex-combatants still risks reinforcing stigmas and create jealousy. As a community representative of a local NGO explained, “support has to be geared towards reintegration. I’m afraid that if you just give things to ex-combatants this will not help the relationship.”⁶⁸

4.3.1. Political manipulation of DDR?

Finally, when discussing DDR and reintegration in the communities, many people interpreted differences in success of the programme in political terms, claiming that certain groups have been prioritized. In many instances, such assessments have to be related to the ongoing politicization of DDR in Burundi. In other instances, they are true to a certain extent.

Some regions are seen to have made more demands than others and would have profited more. Support in some regions started earlier than in others, creating feelings of neglect and tensions between regions, as a representative of an international development organization explained.⁶⁹ While in the past Bururi, the heartland of the ruling regime at the time, got more development, this can now

⁶⁵ Community member, Kabezi, Bujumbura Rurale, 15 June 2010

⁶⁶ UN official, Bujumbura, 20 April 2010

⁶⁷ Embassy official, Bujumbura, 20 April 2010; UN official, Bujumbura, 20 April 2010; Representative international development organization 20 April 2010

⁶⁸ Community member, Kibimba, Gitega, 9 June 2010

⁶⁹ Representative international development organization, Bujumbura, 17 May 2010

perhaps be argued for Ngozi and Gitega. According to some, there have also been cases where commanders increased the number of combatants under their command by enlisting friends from their home region for DDR support.

Ex-combatants of other groups than the CNDD-FDD often complained that they received less support than those belonging to the party in power. This complaint was justified to the extent that problems between the government and the World Bank did indeed delay payments to FNL ex-combatants. This created more frustrations on the side of FNL ex-combatants, and reportedly some have left without any support, thinking they would not get anything.⁷⁰

Much complaints were also registered about the special category of *Adultes Associés* in the FNL DDR programme. This category was thought up during the negotiations with Agathon Rwasa. The CNDD-FDD complained they never had been given the opportunity of having a special category.⁷¹ On the other hand, however, this special category of the FNL received less support than other ex-combatants, creating confusion and the idea among some FNL ex-combatants that they have received less. But the complaints that the CNDD-FDD has moved more support to its own combatants is not a complaint made by the *Adultes Associés* of the FNL, but also by ex-combatants from both FNL and other groups.

Finally, there appears indeed to be political manipulation of DDR support, where benefits are channelled to those related to the party in power in order to lure people to support it as well. As noted by Douma and Gasana (2008: 32), “the NCDDR from the outset was heavily politicized and gradually became the ‘bank account’ of the ruling party.” And at the same time other groups are claiming to be disadvantaged by the government in order to demand more support. Moreover, ex-combatants have taken over this discourse and to some extent use the possibility of them resorting to crime or being used by politicians for violence to make claims on support. For example: “They should help me learn a trade. Now I’m in a situation where I sometimes think I’ll start stealing. Maybe find some friends with guns and form a group to steal.”⁷² Political patronage is arguably more based on perceptions than factual evidence, but the effects of these perceptions are nonetheless very real. Feeling neglected, some ex-combatants may decide to keep opposing the ruling party, perhaps violently. On the other hand, with the CNDD-FDD firmly in control, others might just as well decide to switch camp in the hope to get some benefits.

Concluding chapter 4

Taking all this into account, one must conclude DDR in Burundi has not been successful with regard to economic reintegration. A strong assumption behind DDR is that it provides combatants an economic alternative for fighting. Yet, what this economic alternative should look like in practice varies according to one’s viewpoint. Some view DDR as a programme with short-term security gains as the primary goals – implying economic support for ex-combatants is only there to keep them quiet during the first steps of the peace process – while others promote DDR to be an integral aspect of longer-term development goals. And even those viewing DDR as having only short-term goals generally agree that further development, albeit by other programmes than DDR, is required to maintain the momentum DDR is thought to provide.

⁷⁰ International NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 17 June 2010

⁷¹ UN Official, SSR/SA Unit, Bujumbura, 31 May 2010

⁷² Ex-combatant FNL, Kabezi, Bujumbura Rurale, 21 May 2010

Yet in Burundi, in comparison with many other countries in which DDR programmes are taking place, economic motivations were relatively less important to the decision of combatants to stop fighting. A large part of the ex-combatants we interviewed left because they considered that they had achieved the political aims for which they had initially taken up arms. Nonetheless, while the economic opportunities provided by the DDR programme were often no primary motivation for demobilization, the way in which the programme affected them economically certainly became more important to ex-combatants after demobilization. Of course, the dire economic situation of many ex-combatants is a given in most post-conflict contexts and DDR is certainly not designed for, nor capable of fully addressing that. Indeed, while the economic needs of ex-combatants may be very real, communities as a whole live in poverty and have high development needs. But even if we consider DDR to have a very limited role only in long-term economic reintegration of ex-combatants, directly or through associated programmes, we cannot other than conclude that economic reintegration of ex-combatants in Burundi has been highly inadequate. The real needs of ex-combatants were high and rumors and miscommunications further raised expectations, and subsequently raised the frustrations of ex-combatants.

5. Reinsertion, Reintegration or Reconciliation?

“What happens if you give 600,000 fbu for a project to someone who is illiterate and who has been in the bush for years?”⁷³

“We do not forget. We live peacefully together, but we never forget.”⁷⁴

Where the previous chapter focused on the economic side of reintegration, this chapter looks at social reintegration. First it starts looking at the extent to which social reintegration has been achieved. While at first sight relatively successful, the chapter continues with a more critical viewpoint. Depending on what qualifies as successful reintegration, critical remarks can be made on the level of social reintegration in Burundi.

5.1. What is ‘Social Reintegration’?

Among those in charge of the DDR programme, reintegration is defined as “the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income,” which “[...] is essentially a social and economic process with an open time-frame” (UN IAWG, 2009, 1:10: 2). And a Burundian ex-combatant described it as follows: “in the armed group we lived like wild animals. We had nothing to eat and drink. Reintegration means to start living like humans again, without violence and weapons, but with each other. For me DDR means to support me with that.”⁷⁵ Both these definitions, in their own ways, say reintegration is something long-term, including both economic and social reintegration. The debate in the literature, however, is to what extent DDR programmes can support this. Is DDR only to support social reintegration to the extent that people can live together in relative peace, or should it be deeply connected to efforts to deal with the past violence and grievances underlying the latent conflict? As will be discussed, also at the local level in Burundi the ways in which reintegration is defined vary, and different priorities for reintegration support are given accordingly.

Taking the perspective that reintegration is simply living together, at the surface social reintegration in Burundi seems to have been relatively successful. While there were problems of distrust when ex-combatants had just returned to civilian life, these have dampened over time and cohabitation has improved. Similar observations about social reintegration have been made by Uvin (2007:21). In addition, Mvukiyehe, Taylor and Samii (2006: 29) found that “only 12% of ex-combatants reported problems with family and 22% reported problems with neighbours or community.” Ex-combatants and community members claim that this can be attributed to the social cohabitation training given to ex-combatants in the transit site. According to many, problems with ex-combatants decreased over time, “because of the training they got. Some already put this in practice from the beginning and others did not but they helped each other and now they all improved their behavior.”⁷⁶ The relationship often improved when trust was regained and things remained calm. What also helped was if local NGOs had prepared the community for the arrival of ex-combatants, and when they

⁷³ Local NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 16 June 2010

⁷⁴ Representative Local NGO, Gitega, 10 June 2010

⁷⁵ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Kibimba, Gitega, 12 May 2010

⁷⁶ Community member, Bubanza, Bubanza, 2 June 2010

assisted the cohabitation by creating platforms for dialogue. “Today the relationship is good but when they first came here things were difficult and we were afraid of them. But we got a lot of information about living together which helped a lot. And when they came here they also showed they wanted to live together and their attitude helped a lot.”⁷⁷ Similarly, in places where local political leaders took more initiatives for dialogue – which they especially did when they had been ex-combatants themselves – there were less problems with social reintegration.

Contextual factors have also contributed to a better social reintegration. As discussed earlier, many ex-combatants said to have had political motivations for joining the army or armed groups and decided to demobilize when these goals had been attained. This is in contrast to for instance eastern DRC, where many combatants have more economic motivations (Rouw and Willems, 2010). Communities also often supported the goals of ‘their’ combatants, which caused less detachment between the communities and their ex-combatants. Nevertheless, in various communities social reintegration is not a complete success and by some even regarded as superficial. Economic reintegration has in many cases been highly problematic, which also causes problems for social reintegration. Moreover, issues with regard to violence in the past are often left unaddressed and thus unresolved, which could be fertile ground for remobilizing disenchanted youth in the nearby future. The remainder of this chapter will take a closer look at these issues and its consequences for the reintegration process in Burundi.

5.2. Needs in Social Reintegration Identified

During the fourteen days ex-combatants spent in the transit site ex-combatants received training on social cohabitation, human rights, HIV/AIDS, and how to handle money and use their kit. The question is in what different ways these trainings prepared ex-combatants for their return to their communities. The training on social cohabitation was usually positively evaluated, by ex-combatants and community members alike. People appreciated the focus on how to deal with conflicts and stigma. However, these trainings were nevertheless considered to be insufficient for a return to civilian life, as well as too theoretical. Moreover, these trainings differed greatly from one another, and while some ex-combatants said they had received a total of two weeks of training, others had only received three or four days. “When we were in the bush we were like wild animals. Three days is not enough to prepare yourself psychologically for a return to civilian life. Also, you can’t really use your kit after so little training.”⁷⁸ Therefore, although the total sum of the benefits given to ex-combatants was rather large, many of them found it difficult to effectively use it for their reintegration because they did not have the capacity to handle money. A government representative explained with regard to ex-FAB combatants that they had always been fed and clothed by the military. “They have no idea where their food comes from; they have never been to the market. And in the army all they ever had to use their money for was buying beer, so that is all they buy from their money now. It is a bad habit, but it is a sad reality.”⁷⁹

Vocational training was an option in the programme, yet only a small minority of the ex-combatants opted for this (Douma and Gasana: 2008: 27). An ex-combatant explained that the costs of the training were extracted from the 600,000 fbu kit.⁸⁰ On top of that, ex-combatants had themselves to take care of costs for housing, food and transport in Bujumbura where the trainings were given. Many complaints

⁷⁷ Community member, Mutaho, Gitega, 10 May 2010

⁷⁸ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Shombo, Karuzi, 13 May 2010

⁷⁹ Government official, Bujumbura, 16 June 2010

⁸⁰ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Bubanza, Bubanza, 1 June 2010

were also made about the lack of follow-up, and people felt they were abandoned after having had little training.

5.2.1. *Stigmatization and Economic Reintegration*

As a result of the lacking training and follow-up many ex-combatants have problems finding a job and sufficient financial means. On top of their financial difficulties, ex-combatants are also expected to bring home financial gains. “The fact that we fought during the war and came back without any support for the community is looked down upon. They expect us to come back from the war with something for the community.”⁸¹ People also heard about the financial support ex-combatants have received, which further raised expectations. When coming back without any benefits for the community and lacking capacities to find work and contribute economically, ex-combatants are considered futile or even a burden. Moreover, as ex-combatants have received support through DDR, in some communities they are excluded from community development projects and related employment opportunities.

*When NGOs come with projects we are being excluded by the community because they think because we had DDR we already have a lot of things. For instance, if the road needs to be repaired they don't ask us for it, but we are very capable of working. That's why we feel misled. But the community and the administrator himself do not accept us in this work.*⁸²

The argument for this is that the ex-combatants have already been given support, while the argument of ex-combatants is that their benefits are long gone and were intended for reinsertion purposes. Arguably the government should take more action to include all groups within the community. Indeed, where the *chef* or *administrateur* were ex-combatants themselves, there was often better cooperation and cohabitation within the community.

Ex-combatants are also mistrusted, and often perceived to be criminals. “When things are stolen, they always say it were demobilized who did it.”⁸³ And while indeed there are ex-combatants involved in crime, it is often the whole group that is pointed at. This is partially caused by their lacking economic reintegration.

*In Burundi it is normal for people to think bad things of people who do not work or go to school. Ex-combatants often do not have any work and when there are problems they are indeed often suspect. When they returned they fell into a situation where they have nothing to do. So when there is crime, people think it was them because they have nothing on their hands.*⁸⁴

Vice versa, where relationships were good between community members and ex-combatants, it was because, “they work here but elsewhere they have been stigmatized because they have no work.”⁸⁵ Notable in this regard is that when economic reintegration is lacking, this has a great influence on social reintegration, i.e. acceptance of ex-combatants in their communities. Whereas economic motivations often were not the main reason for demobilizing, a lack of economic support does affect the reintegration process.

⁸¹ Ex-combatant FNL, Kabezi, Bujumbura Rurale, 21 April 2010

⁸² Ex-combatant Frolina, Ruyigi, Ruyigi, 7 May 2010

⁸³ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Kiganda Kinerwa, Bujumbura Rurale, 27 April 2010

⁸⁴ Community member, Kibimba, Gitega, 9 June 2010

⁸⁵ Community member, Muramvya, Muramvya, 28 April 2010

5.2.2. Behavior and Psychological Problems

Further, in the reintegration package little accommodations were made for behavioral and psychological problems. Apart from economic problems, stigmas are also aggravated by the behavior of some ex-combatants. Some, especially those who were in rebel groups, feel excluded by communities or are afraid to return empty handed. They are then reintegrating in communities where they had not previously lived, which further complicates reintegration. Again others express a feeling of superiority. Members of the ex-FAB sometimes feel they have been members of a respectable institute, or ex-combatants feel they have fought for the rest of the community and deserve some credit for this. "Those that came from the woods came with the idea in mind that they had proven themselves, that they were something of a hero. In reality, he was dependent and rejected."⁸⁶ There is also still fear of ex-combatants and they are often believed to still have weapons and to be under the influence of their former commanders or politicians. "We are sometimes accused of military behavior. People use machetes to work the land but when they see an ex-combatant with one they think it is trouble. The relation is not good because we are regarded as some other type of human being."⁸⁷

Ex-combatants are also troubled by psychological problems and trauma. Frequently there were complaints about sleeping bad and having nightmares. Many have seen a lot of violence, have lost their houses, friends and family, and women have often also been raped. "There are still bullets and grenade fragments in our bodies and a spirit of war in our heads."⁸⁸ Every group has been affected by the war and many people have psycho-social problems, but ex-combatants arguably even more.⁸⁹ Overall, hardly any psychological support is given and "it is nature that has to solve things."⁹⁰ This can be problematic, as to some extent traumas need to be addressed before a start can be made with reconciliation.

5.2.3. Reconciliation and transitional justice

When discussing what is needed for social reintegration, an issue that came to the surface was that of reconciliation and transitional justice. Communities often experienced a lot of violence, sometimes by the hands of the same groups – or even the same individual combatants – who are now living in these communities. Community members were forced to help armed groups with transport and supplies, villages were pillaged and women were raped. "Different things happened in the war. I myself was violated in front of my children. Now we continue to live together without talking."⁹¹ As discussed earlier in this report, at the surface social reintegration seems to be relatively successful and in general there is peaceful cohabitation. But under the surface problems from the past are lurking. "You may say that there is reconciliation because people are living together. But this does not mean that they are forgiven. People live together without loving each other, without having forgiven each other."⁹²

This raises the question of reconciliation and transitional justice, on which the opinions of community members, ex-combatants, and representatives of local and international NGOs differ greatly. On the one hand there are those who feel the need to discuss the past before there can be true reintegration and peaceful development. "We need to unearth the truth, after which people can pardon each other.

⁸⁶ International NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 17 June 2010

⁸⁷ Ex-combatant FNL, Musinga, Musinga, 11 May 2010

⁸⁸ Ex-combatant FNL, Kabezi, Bujumbura Rurale, 21 April 2010

⁸⁹ Donor meeting, Bujumbura, 18 June 2010

⁹⁰ Government official, Bujumbura, 19 May 2010

⁹¹ Community member, Mutimbuzi, Bujumbura Rurale, 15 June 2010

⁹² Representative local NGO, Gitega, 10 June 2010

If everybody knows what happened, there will be peace.”⁹³ On the other hand, there is a lot of fear that addressing past violence will create more problems. Not only are people afraid of raising tensions by addressing the past, but also do they fear repercussions by those who will be incriminated, either directly or after they have served their sentence. For such reasons they pragmatically argue that past crimes should just be forgotten. “They have stolen and killed during the crisis, but if you ask them to compensate that, you risk that they want to go back to the bush or go into crime.”⁹⁴ It was often heard that people rather wanted to move on than to talk about the past. And thirdly, there are also people that do not see anything that needs to be reconciled: “There is no latent conflict between the community and the demobilized. The social reintegration is indeed there and it is economic reintegration that is an issue.”⁹⁵

But even for those who argue that the past needs to be addressed, the question remains when and how this should be done. As mentioned above, it can be argued that psychological traumas need to be addressed before reconciliation can take place in a constructive manner. Another problem is timing, as perhaps more stability is needed to reduce the risk of renewed violence when dealing with the sensitive issues of the past. There was also no agreement about the level on which reconciliation and transitional justice should be addressed. Many people favoured an approach that focused on the community level, as they believed the issues are most urgent there. Others feared that when undertaken at a national level, transitional justice mechanisms would be used by the politicians in power to take revenge and bury their own crimes. On the other hand, it was argued that not addressing the issue at a national level will leave the higher politicians out of the loop, who arguably need to be punished if the process wants to bring about any change. Also, some people believed that at the local level there is no professional capacity to deal with issues such as rape and killings.

There are plans by the government to work on truth and reconciliation after the elections.⁹⁶ During a speech at the opening of the campaign period for the communal elections, President Pierre Nkurunziza explained that, “everybody here has endured hardship, and everybody has lost friends and relatives. We have to know why this all happened. [...] We can not just blame entire parties. We have to look for those individuals who were responsible for crimes.”⁹⁷ However, combined with the current political situation this promise to look at ‘responsible individuals’ indeed seems to hint at what many people are afraid of:

*Transitional justice is going to be very difficult because people will all lie. Innocent people will be jailed and the big fish will walk. For the local level this will have little impact on impunity as people will not believe in the process. It will be more a façade the government puts up for the international community.*⁹⁸

Concluding chapter 5

Summarizing this chapter, it was found that social reintegration has at first sight gone relatively well. Yet, looking deeper into the issue some problems became apparent. To a certain extent people are indeed living together in relative peace, but problems such as stigmatization and behavioral and

⁹³ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Bujumbura Mairie, 14 June 2010

⁹⁴ Community member, Ruyigi, Ruyigi, 7 May 2010

⁹⁵ local NGO meeting, Gitega, 10 June 2010

⁹⁶ Government official, Bujumbura, 19 May 2010

⁹⁷ President Pierre Nkurunziza, speech at the opening of the campaign period of the communal elections, Gitega, 5 May 2010, translated from Kirundi.

⁹⁸ Representative international development organization, Bujumbura, 21 July 2010

psychological problems remain prevalent. And where efforts have primarily focused on giving ex-combatants and communities the tools for conflict resolution and preventing stigmatization, hardly any attention has been given to psycho-social rehabilitation and reconciliation. Of course, it can be questioned to what extent addressing the past and healing relationships is an attainable goal in the short-term and therefore whether this should be part of DDR itself. However, reconciliation appeared during the research sooner or later as an inevitable part of the process of social reintegration. When looking at DDR from a community security perspective and focussing on sustainability in the long-term, reconciliation has to be taken into account. If reconciliation is not undertaken or cannot be undertaken in the immediate post-conflict context, it should be realized that the success of social reintegration will remain limited. Keeping this in mind, DDR should not be expected to bring peace by itself, but contribute to it. Moreover, linkages have to be made with organizations and projects that can address reconciliation issues to fill this gap.

6. Community Security: Security Perceptions

“To learn and know the law is one thing but it also has to be applied.”⁹⁹

“The problems are mainly caused by hunger. And the electoral process is also causing insecurity.”¹⁰⁰

In this and the following chapter the focus turns to local security. DDR is expected to have significant consequences for local security. At the same time, improved security at the local level is a key prerequisite for successful DDR. Yet, many DDR programmes focus on national rather than local security and tend to be organized in a very top-down way. Consequently, they not only fail to ensure the security of ex-combatants and local population, but also miss opportunities at community level that might effectively contribute to peace and security at the local level, thereby increasing chances for success of DDR. The following chapters thus focus on community security. The current chapter investigates security as it is experienced and perceived at the local level. Chapter 7 then analyses what actors and mechanisms exist at the local level to improve community security, the impact they have, and the extent to which they complement or substitute for state security provisions. Chapter 8 explores the topic of civilian disarmament, as this is a key component of community security. This then leads, finally, to a discussion of how DDR programmes in Burundi might better link to community security.

6.1. Local definitions of security

With regard to security perceptions, we found that people associate security in the first place with peace, and liberty and freedom. In the far majority of cases, irrespective of region, these two were the main response given to the question what security means to people. When further exemplifying what they mean by peace and liberty, people come up with a range of examples:

- The absence of theft, violence, harassment and intimidation. “Peace is being able to sleep peacefully.”¹⁰¹ Particular reference is made here to the security of women, in particular freedom from sexual violence or intimidation;
- freedom of movement, for instance being able to travel in the countryside without fear for criminality, but also without restrictions from the authorities (e.g. a state of emergency);
- political freedom, “security means to live freely, to express yourself freely without any fear”;¹⁰²
- peaceful cohabitation, good inter-community relations, no discrimination. Sometimes, reference is made here to ethnicity or to the relationship between demobilized and other community members;
- security within the family, absence of domestic violence;
- to be able to work, meeting primary needs such as food, housing and schooling. “Security is a state in which you are not lacking anything.”¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Representative local NGO, Bujumbura, 19 April 2010

¹⁰⁰ Community member, Isale, Bujumbura Rurale, 22 April 2010

¹⁰¹ Community member, Kanyosha, Bujumbura Rurale, 22 April 2010

¹⁰² Ex-combatant Bujumbura Mairie, 14 June 2010

Broadly speaking, security to Burundians means the absence of war and criminality so that one can enjoy one's freedom optimally. Yet, security is not exclusively related to the absence of war and violence, but includes elements of 'positive peace', such as progress and development, peaceful resolution of conflicts, and improved community relationships. At the same time, security perceptions are not restricted to state security provision. They also include a personal dimension of security experience. People in the communities often link security closely to individual well-being and the capacity to develop and realize one's ambitions. Such definitions remind of the human security paradigm current among international development actors. In other words, security according to the Burundian people can be broadly interpreted and encompasses more than a perspective that focuses on the security of the state.¹⁰⁴

6.2. Understandings of insecurity

Nevertheless, while security has improved compared to the violent past, insecurity remains common. It is mostly related to crime, such as theft, banditry, armed robberies, killings and alcohol and drug-inflicted harassment. Women also often mentioned gender-based violence as an issue of concern. It was observed how the abundant availability of small arms was a major cause of insecurity. Yet, insecurity was not exclusively related to direct violence, or seen as a consequence of the civil war only. Here, again, the importance of development and individual well-being was emphasized. Poverty, a lack of food, healthcare and schooling were seen as major factors of insecurity, and even as a direct cause of criminality. As a community member in Bubanza remarked: "Poverty is the beginning of insecurity. When people are not satisfied the insecurity starts,"¹⁰⁵ and an ex-combatant in Bujumbura Mairie: "Security means you have something to eat. Because if you don't have anything to eat you can easily be manipulated."¹⁰⁶ A prominent source of insecurity mentioned in most communities are land conflicts. Land conflicts were cited several times as an important – if not the major – motivation for killings taking place at community level. Rather than an inter-ethnic phenomenon, or an issue of returning refugees finding their land occupied by others, many of those disputes involve brothers or other family members. They include disputes about the division of the inheritance, land sales without consultation of other family members, or disputed access to land of orphans and widows (see also van Leeuwen, 2010).

Another source of insecurity is fighting between political parties. This was seen to have direct repercussions at the local level. This was particularly the case in the north-western provinces¹⁰⁷ where the dominant opposition party is most numerous and the war has lasted longest. People indicated that security was precarious and reversible. In particular after the communal elections people reported that the political situation was a critical determinant of (in)security levels. Ex-combatants were said to be under control of politicians and could easily resort to the use of intimidation and violence to further political goals. Such insecurity was seen to be on the increase leading up to and during the electoral period. Stories about intimidation to vote for particular political parties abounded. Accusations of fraud during the communal elections made by politicians at the national level strongly resonated at

¹⁰³ Community member, Kiganda Kanerwa, Muramvya, 27 June 2010

¹⁰⁴ Similar observations were made in Eastern DRC (Rouw and Willems, 2010)

¹⁰⁵ Community member, Bubanza, Bubanza, 1 June 2010

¹⁰⁶ Ex-combatant FNL, Bujumbura Mairie, 14 June 2010

¹⁰⁷ The north-west refers to Bujumbura Mairie, Bujumbura Rurale, Bubanza and Cibitoke. Whereas the CNDD-FDD signed the peace agreements, the FNL only laid down its weapons in 2008. During this period the fighting was mainly concentrated in the north-west of the country.

the local level. Several times, we heard accounts of ex-combatants being paid to mess up rallies of opposing political parties. In connection to this, people also referred to the importance of rumors as a source of insecurity. "There is insecurity when there is fear, fear of another war. Rumors bring insecurity," as someone said in Gihanga.¹⁰⁸ For instance, rumors abound about rebel-movements-turned-political-parties maintaining hidden weapon stocks, or community members being provided with weapons by political parties.

It is important to notice that not in all communities political developments at national level played a role in local level (in)security. Invariably, at local level, security strongly depended on the relationships between local government representatives, the police, local leaders, and the population including the demobilized. The nature of relations between local population and their authorities affected the quality of security provision as well as security perceptions. For instance, in Itaba commune (Gitega) there seemed to be good relations and regular interaction on security matters between community members and their authorities. In Butezi commune (Ruyigi), the relationship with the police was considered good, and in case of insecurity the police was seen to respond adequately to demands for intervention from the population. In contrast, in other communities, people made remarks on their lack of trust in security forces or local authorities, or on limits on their freedom of expression posed by local authorities. Frequently, the police was seen as incapable to address problems of insecurity, due to its limited capacity or its own engagement in criminal behavior.

6.3. (In)security and ex-combatants

In many communities, insecurity was associated with the presence of ex-combatants. We heard accounts of people being afraid of ex-combatants, for instance because of their past involvement in human rights violations, pillage or theft in the very community where they were now reintegrated, or due to suspicion that they might have committed such acts. People have also experienced harassment by ex-combatants who regard themselves of a higher status than normal citizens, having fought for the interests of the country. Further, community members perceive a relationship between ex-combatants and criminality. Demobilized are often thought to be involved in armed robberies, theft and political violence. This did not appear to merely be a prejudice. Some interviewees could give very specific examples of the involvement of ex-combatants in criminal behaviour in their communities. Further, the presence of ex-combatants is considered to have contributed to the availability of weapons, or the occurrence of violence. In this connection, people referred to the example of people that want to take revenge and then hire an ex-combatant to do the job. Yet, many community members are well aware that the relationship between ex-combatants and violence or criminality is based on a stigma. Accounts from different communities evidence that such stigmas are difficult to overcome, though may gradually dampen. The extent to which prejudices against ex-combatants are overcome seems closely related to the attitudes of ex-combatants and receiving communities towards each other. The willingness of ex-combatants to reintegrate, and the willingness of communities to accept them can be influenced – but not determined – by sensitization preceding their return to the community. Such sensitization efforts aim at reducing tensions within communities for instance by programmes that foster mutual understanding and promote susceptibility to each other's grievances. The underlying assumption is that sensitization can create more awareness and willingness to overcome the past and be the start of an eventual reconciliation process.

¹⁰⁸ Community member, Gihanga, Bubanza, 2 June 2010

Assessments of the security situation, of the contribution of authorities and police to (in)security, and of the extent to which insecurity and criminality was associated with ex-combatants varied per region. In the communities we visited in centre of the country (Gitega, Muramvya), the security situation appeared good, though land disputes featured prominently. Relations with demobilized were relatively good. People often responded banditry was caused by people from elsewhere. Often, they did not know the criminals caught in their communities, and therefore were unaware if they were ex-combatants or not. In comparison to the other regions, there was more trust in local authorities and police. In the communities visited in Bururi, people also reported that security had improved and pointed out the region was relatively unaffected during the war. They also argued that due to the ethnically mixed families in this part of the country ethnically partisan behavior, also on part of the police, was often corrected. In the north-western provinces (Bubanza, Cibitoke), people reported that security was more tense, and pointed more often to the demobilized as the source of insecurity. They hinted that demobilized were still in close contact with political leaders and that their behavior was dependent on instructions by their political leader. There were also stories circulating about the distribution of arms to civilians.

Concluding chapter 6

Thus, both ex-combatants and other community members interviewed considered security to be a very broad concept, ranging from the absence of theft and violence to security within the family and the ability to work and eat. While security has improved in comparison to the violent past, insecurity remains common. It is mostly related to crime, such as theft and armed robberies, violence related to land conflicts, and violence related to politics. In many communities, rightly or wrongly, it is also believed to be associated with ex-combatants.

7. Community Security: Security Actors

“We always say security in Burundi takes three actors: the police, the administrateur, but also the community itself.”¹⁰⁹

“The police only helps us; we are responsible for our security.”¹¹⁰

This chapter deals with security actors in Burundi. We were particularly interested in how local communities understand and evaluate security provision, and how DDR has affected community security mechanisms. Ex-combatants are often regarded as a potential source of insecurity as after their return they may fall back into criminal behaviour for making a living. The extent of successful reintegration is thus an important determinant for community security. Further, part of the rationale behind our research was that previous research has shown that in fragile states communities may fall outside the scope of state security provision due to its limited reach. In addition, communities may be apprehensive of statutory security providers because of their perceived oppressive nature. To complement or even substitute for statutory security provision, non-state actors are often involved in the provision of law and order. They may be regarded as legitimate because they provide security and do so effectively and affordably. This chapter investigates what actors are involved in security provision and their respective roles therein; what impact each security actor has on the security experience of people at community level; and the relation between DDR and community security.

7.1. The Police and the State Judicial System

The police and the state judicial system should in theory provide security and order in society. This idea not only lives among the donors intervening in Burundi, but also Burundians in communities point out that, ideally, the police should provide security to the civilian population. However, we have found that in general there is a lack of trust in the police as security provider. And we were told in many instances that the police is often not visible due to their relatively low number and therefore arrives late at the site of the crime because they are stationed too far away. This has reduced the community's confidence in the police's ability to protect against insecurity. Nevertheless, there is a difference between urban and rural experience in this regard. It appears the police is more visible in areas that are densely populated such as the capital Bujumbura and Gitega. For instance, an ex-combatant from Bujumbura Mairie explained that there was closer contact between the people and the police because people have the phone numbers of local police officers.¹¹¹ The problem is thus that the police is not dispatched enough to local communities. Whereas in urban areas there seem to be plenty of police, in rural areas there are not enough officers and they also suffer from a lack of resources such as vehicles to patrol, as we were told by a representative of an international NGO.¹¹²

An additional factor that causes people to question the police's motivation is that their security provision usually comes at a cost. There are examples where the police asks for money prior to intervening. This can partially be explained by the very limited salary policemen receive. Police

¹⁰⁹ Ex-combatant, Gitega, Gitega, 4 May 2010

¹¹⁰ Ex-combatant, Kiganda Kanerwa, Muramvya, 27 April 2010

¹¹¹ Ex-combatant ex-FAB, Bujumbura Mairie, 14 June 2010

¹¹² Representative international NGO, Bujumbura, 18 May 2010

officers make around 30,000 fbu per month, which is less than US \$30. One factor that may explain the corrupt behavior is the fact that the police consists of former military forces and groups. They have often joined at a young age and resided in the bush for a long time, are often uneducated and illiterate, and lack training. They have no knowledge about responsible conduct. Typically, former soldiers and rebels were integrated into the police force after having received only very basic training. Because of this they have not learnt to enforce laws in an impartial fashion. Like many community members mentioned, and which was indicated by a representative from the World Bank as well, it will take up much time and resources to teach ex-combatants to administer justice impartially without trampling the security of the people.¹¹³ Too often, security provision by the state is contrary to the security interests of the people. An ex-combatant complained for instance that the police “should be protecting civilians. But for the police in Burundi it is the contrary: they protect political leaders. A while ago the police was ordered by the state governor to arrest an opposition leader. Now he is dead.”¹¹⁴ There are many more examples where state security forces bring insecurity, rather than security.

Corrupt behaviour by the police and justice system is seen to be the rule rather than the exception. Corruption amongst police is pervasive as criminals are often being released by bribing police officers. However, corruption is certainly not limited to low ranking policemen, and people indicated that it is also police officers with higher salaries and those involved in the judicial system that engage in corruption. “The police come when we call them and there are no problems. It’s more the justice system, the police commissioners who cause problems. And also the Officer of the Judicial Police.”¹¹⁵ Sometimes ethnic affinity is a factor in corrupt behaviour. A representative from a local NGO explained that Hutu police sometimes cover the wrongs of Hutu friends and the same applies to the Tutsi.¹¹⁶ Moreover, ex-combatants who return to their community sometimes know the policemen from the armed groups they were part of, and work together in criminal activities or are easily released when they are arrested. When asked what can be done to combat corruption, community members point to donors to control where their money ends up. Often aid is blocked from above and does not trickle down. If donors would offer more transparency as to what money is spent on what projects, communities would be better able to provide valuable feedback whether they actually enjoy the benefits of the donor money, and thereby help to address corruption.

Here, it should be taken into account that for many people in Burundi the notion of corruption does not always have so many negative associations as it has for outsiders. What is considered by outsiders to be negatively affecting governance and economic development might in some instances reflect traditional practices. This is aptly illustrated by the Kirundi word used for corruption, “*igiturere*”, which also refers to the gifts traditionally given to a customary chef. To Burundians such practices are regarded as positive. If payment for services the government should provide is understood from such a conception, it may be felt not as something illegal, but rather as in line with the idea that local leaders needs to be pleased in order to have something your way. A representative from a local NGO told us that the Kinyarwanda term “*iruswa*” covers the negative western connotation to the word corruption and should perhaps be used instead.¹¹⁷ Either way, although in local practice there are is normally a clear line between what is acceptable and what is not, it becomes clear that corruption is not necessarily regarded as something negative. This has implications for donor efforts to combat

¹¹³ Representative international NGO, Bujumbura, 21 April 2010

¹¹⁴ Ex-combatant, Bujumbura Mairie, 14 April 2010

¹¹⁵ Community member, Kibimba, Gitega, 9 June 2010

¹¹⁶ Representative international NGO, Bujumbura, 16 May 2010

¹¹⁷ Representative local NGO, Gitega, 10 June 2010

corruption. The question is how to convince Burundians of the negative impact of corruption on the quality of governance and economic development.

Even though corruption in the police and tribunals is common, the police is not regarded as necessarily worse than before the war started. Before the onset of the civil war in 1993 the police was dominated by the Tutsi minority so the Hutu majority feared this ethnicized security provider. To some therefore, the situation has improved now the police contains both Hutu and Tutsi members. "Before 2005, if you saw the police in front of your house and you are Hutu, you ran away. And if you heard shots being fired you were afraid the police would come. But now when the police comes by I even ask them for a ride. Who would have thought I would ever ask the police for a ride?"¹¹⁸ The inclusion of all ethnicities in the police seems to have led to better security levels because it reduces ethnic tensions. For instance, in Bururi, where the police consists of both Hutu and Tutsi, it was mentioned that if community members or policemen of one ethnicity cause trouble, they are corrected by their co-ethnics.¹¹⁹

There do seem to be regional differences in the relationship between local communities and state security actors. In Bururi people seem to rely more on the police to provide for security. When there are problems with insecurity people call the police who come and start an investigation. In other regions there is hardly any direct contact between the police and the population, and contact usually runs through the *chef de colline*, *chef de zone* or *administrateur*. This may be caused by a lack of trust in the police, but also the lack of police present in the communities. From a historical point of view the community has not regarded the police as the default security provider, as the police was introduced during colonialism as a system of the oppressor and after independence the institution was often used in similar fashions by the new national leaders. This points to the importance of the role of local leadership in security provision but also in mediating the relationship with statutory security providers. In other regions, such as Bubanza, the relationship between the population and the police appears to be much worse. In more instances people take care of their own security because they do not have faith in the justice system as criminals are easily released and impunity continues to reign. For regions where there is more success in security provision, this was often the result of favorable relationships between the different security providers at the local level; not only local administration and police, but also community members, and Bashingantahe.

People thus tend to have a low esteem of the contribution of the police to security at the local level. The police are often perceived as incapable or even unwilling to provide the security communities need, and this explains why the relationship between the police and community members is poor. Even more worrying is the fact that the police as statutory security provider is often seen to contribute to insecurity. There are plenty of examples of police officers that behave aggressively towards civilians. People complain that instead of protecting the people they aim their weapons at the population. There is evidence that policemen liaise with criminals by offering them their uniforms and weapons in return for some money (CENAP, 2008: 86). Government officials attempt to downplay this fact. For instance, according to the spokesmen of the president, the police is not causing problems but criminals who buy police uniforms. This does, however, suggest the involvement of police officers because, as was asked by a representative from a local NGO: "How can you obtain police uniforms in the first place?"¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Representative local NGO, Gitega, 10 June 2010

¹¹⁹ Ex-combatant, Matana, Bururi, 28 May 2010

¹²⁰ Representative local NGO, Gitega, 17 May 2010

Apart from systematic shortcomings such as the absence of a reliable law enforcers and limited awareness about applicable law and punishment, the unchecked behavior of local administrators in the security sector is not without problems either. Consider this story:

In the colline over there a women killed her baby and threw him in the toilet. The women was caught and she admitted she had done it. And when we destroyed the toilet we indeed found a dead baby. She was put in jail but released after 15 days. I would catch her again when I see her. I went to the procureur and told him that is not acceptable that someone is released after such a horrific crime. But they told us there is no alternative and told us people who complain should be in jail. Then we found out that there was a relation between this women and the procureur. They are like gods. It is difficult to change things!¹²¹

Without impartial application of the law, respect for it will not easily emerge. Another example is the following:

According to the law people are not allowed to stay more than 3 days in the communal prison. They only stay there to do inquiries and make up the dossier. Then they have to go to the central prison of the province. But if it is only a small crime they don't want to bother and just release them again. So if you want him to sit out his punishment in the communal prison longer than three days then you have to pay his meals.¹²²

Currently, people don't know which punishment is normally given for which crime. If they would be better aware of this, cooperation between community, police and the justice system might improve as well as the security situation. On the other hand, the application of the law is sometimes criticized by people. People in Gitega said they regarded the police as a nuisance because they would stop people who brew beer illegally.¹²³ People thus sometimes regard the police as a hindrance for developing their livelihood.

As a result, a picture emerges that the police is far from uniformly seen as determined to protect civilians. Rather, at times they seem to be serving their personal interests. Moreover, they appear to be under the tutelage of political elites. Part of the explanation is that the police consists for a large part of members from former rebel groups, whereas the army consists of former rebels as well as a large proportion of professional soldiers of the former FAB. According to an Embassy official, this makes reforming the police arguably a much more daunting task than reforming the army.¹²⁴ Moreover, while the army is separated from individual governors, governors have a lot of influence over the police which further induces corruption.

Military

The official task of the new military forces of Burundi is to deal with threats to national security. Therefore, the military is not – and not often mentioned as such – a daily security provider. Nevertheless the military is by some considered to be more disciplined and more reliable than the police. People report that the security in the community has improved now that the army has been stationed there to ensure safety during the electoral season. Others disagree and say there is no difference between army and police except for their uniform, while the police are simply more visible in communities and hence able to create more problems. However, it may be assumed that the army is

¹²¹ Ex-combatant, Rutegama, Muramvya, 28 April 2010

¹²² Community member, Ruhororo, Ngozi, 10 May 2010

¹²³ Community member, Ruhoba, Gitega, 4 May 2010

¹²⁴ Embassy official, Bujumbura, 13 April 2010

better organized than the police force, which consists of former military personnel who have not yet received the training necessary to impartially enforce the law in cases of conflict in the community. Interesting in this regard would be to find out whether and how the political leaders distinguished between those eligible for the police and those eligible for the army, the latter being more desired by most ex-combatants. If the better organized elements of the ex-FAB and the CNDD-FDD were indeed favored for positions in the army due to their relations with the political leadership, this could explain why the army is sometimes perceived to be better able to provide security compared to the police in which more loosely organized and less trained rebels were integrated. The political influences on the vetting process thus clearly have important consequences for Security Sector Reform (SSR)¹²⁵. The police would require more support if it is to become a capable security provider.

7.2. Local State Structures

State security provision at local, community level is formally organized by the leadership at various administrative levels. The *administrateur*, *chef de zone*, *chef de colline*, and the *Nyumba Kumi* are the respective security actors at the lowest administrative categories. Burundi is divided in 17 provinces, which are subdivided into communes, headed by an *administrateur*. Each commune is divided in *zones*, headed by *chef de zones* or *conseillers*. The *zones* are divided into *collines*, which consist of roughly three to five hilltops, headed by a *chef de colline*. Those again are divided in sub-collines or *cellules*, and *Nyumba Kumi* (literally 'ten houses'; in practice this may be up to twenty). The respective administrative structures are taking care of problems with insecurity in upward degrees of severity.

The *Nyumba Kumi* is elected by the people of the concerning households. Everybody over 18 can vote. Women can also become *Nyumba Kumi*, just as they can take up office as *chef de zone*, *colline* and take part in the local security committee.¹²⁶ The origins of the *Nyumba Kumi* security structure did not become entirely clear. Some community members indicated it had existed since the monarchy, i.e. since the fifteenth century. Another local state security structure is that of the local security committees that have been set up. They consist of five members, and may include ex-combatants. They are elected by members of the community and have contact with the police through the *chef de colline*. However, membership of the *comité de sécurité* is voluntary and it was explained that it therefore does not always function optimally.

In practice, people are unaware of the exact workings of the state security structure. They do not know which administrative level to contact when something is wrong. Because of people's unawareness of whom to contact, people therefore often just contact their *chef*, preferably at the highest reachable level. As a result issues are not often brought to lower levels of administration, such as *Nyumba Kumi*. Instead, as a member from Gitega commune told us, they are taken straight to the *chef de zone* or *administrateur*, who have become overburdened as a result¹²⁷. Also, instead of directly contacting the police, this is often done through the *chef de colline* or *chef de zone*. In addition, the *chefs* themselves sometimes insist that cases are taken to them. There is therefore little contact between police and the community, although this differs per region. Not only does this represent an obstacle to a positive working relationship between the police and communities, it also overburdens higher levels of the local administration.

¹²⁵ Practitioners working with the security sector in Burundi have adopted Security Sector Development (SSD) as a preferred term. Given the wide use of SSR in the literature this term is still used in this report.

¹²⁶ It should be noted, however, that we have not encountered this in practice.

¹²⁷ Community member, Gitega, 13 May 2010

More positive results for security were often reached in communities where the police, administration and community work closely together. Indeed, when we asked in communities with little security problems what the difference was between their situation and that in communities with more problems, they often indicated that there was a close cooperation between the community, the community administrators and the police. This cooperation falls under the notion of *Nyabutatu* and these local initiatives are usually initiated and managed by the *chef de colline*. For instance, in Itaba commune reunions are organized between representatives of these three actors. Security issues are addressed and this fosters a close relationship between these groups.¹²⁸ When local leaders organize reunions between the police, the community and local authorities there is also an exchange of information between them. This may make communities feel safer. It also makes the police better aware of the threats to security in the area which may improve their behavior. In contrast, when such reunions are not held, communities feel left alone and this also causes people to think they may get away without punishment if they commit a crime. By creating a closer relationship problems are being prevented. The quality of the relationship between the local leaders and the police is an important determinant in explaining the level of security. Where this relationship is good, people report to feel safe and secure. Behavior is more closely monitored and in some communities where relations are good prisoners are not released after paying a bribe. Because of these reasons, people sometimes express a desire for arranging security at the lowest level:

*We should organize our security from the bottom-up and not from the top-down. We need to start as locally as possible and only go to a higher level when it is needed. I think sensitization should be a priority when it comes to realizing this.*¹²⁹

7.3. Bashingantahe

The institution of the Bashingantahe is typical for Burundi. The Bashingantahe are a traditional authority structure that has functioned parallel to, and independent from, state authorities.¹³⁰ Their role was to intervene in case of problems between community members and to defend the interest of the people against government representatives. They operate on the basis of customary regulations and conventions. Their traditional roles included keeping the land record, overseeing land transactions, settling local disputes, reconciling individual persons and families, and representing the local population to the authorities (see Laely, 1997; Ntabona, 2002; Ntsimbiyabandi and Ntakarutimana, 2004). They generally serve as bridge builders and reconcile conflicting parties when the need arises. In the past, this institution consisted of the most respected community members on a colline ('hill'/'community'), and functioned independently of the local chiefs.

The institution's role has eroded over time. After decolonization they lost the authority to dispense justice, while in the 1960s and 1970s the appointment of Bashingantahe became tied up with political affiliation (Nindorera, 1998; Reyntjens and Vandeginste, 2001; Deslaurier, 2003: 88). Halfway the 1980s the Bashingantahe were officially re-established as an auxiliary judicial institution, implying that dispute cases could only be transferred to the local Tribunal if the Bashingantahe were incapable of solving them (Holland, 2001). Violence since 1993 further weakened the institution. Considered community leaders, several Bashingantahe were the direct targets of violence (Ntsimbiyabandi and Ntakarutimana, 2004: 54). At the same time, the international community and Burundians themselves still hold the Bashingantahe in high regard, and as a possible alternative for the slow, expensive and

¹²⁸ Community member, Itaba, Gitega, 6 May 2010

¹³⁰ This section on the Bashingantahe is partially based on van Leeuwen & Haartsen 2005, and van Leeuwen 2010.

corrupt state juridical system. Accordingly, it is argued that the institute should be revitalized (e.g. Ntahombaye et al., 1999; ICG, 2003; Huggins, 2004). Their importance was recognized in the Arusha Agreement which called for the need to solidify the Bashingantahe, and emphasized their role in local reconciliation.

Debates about the role that the Bashingantahe should or should not continue to play in the communities often concerned the following issues. In the first place, in public discussions, the Bashingantahe were criticized for having lost legitimacy and integrity. It was pointed out that certain Bashingantahe had justified army repression, or had failed to condemn exclusion during the war (Ntsimbiyabandi and Ntakarutimana, 2004: 57-58). Certain political parties have portrayed the Bashingantahe as an elitist and Tutsi institution, or as being related to particular political parties (Deslaurier, 2003), a perception that was also shared by some Burundian NGOs. A common critique was that they too had become corrupt, asking for payments, contrary to the tradition (Dexter and Ntahombaye, 2005).

Others were worried about the kind of justice the institution represented. The institution exists parallel to the official judicial system. In contrast to the local tribunals that base themselves on state legislation, the Bashingantahe rely in the first place on custom. In particular in cases about land and inheritance, customary law is unfavourable towards women. In addition, the juridical status of their verdicts remains disputed, not only at the local but also at the political level. In 2005 legislation on the division of responsibilities between different juridical institutions, the institution of the Bashingantahe appears to have lost almost all its responsibilities: it is only attributed a role in assisting the Tribunaux de Résidence to execute judgments about non-registered land properties.¹³¹ This unclarity about their juridical status creates a lot of confusion. Furthermore, some criticized the limited accessibility of the institution to women, youth, Batwa (a marginalized ethnic group), and the poorer segments of the population. Intervening organizations thus considered that revitalization was a matter of not only re-establishing structures but also reforming the institution of Bashingantahe.

An important issue in discussions about the role the institution should or might play is the decrease of authority of the institution in many communities. In the past, to be nominated as Mushingantahe¹³², a person needed to be over 25 years of age, and to prove his merit by his general behavior and attitude, his deeds and public statements. The installation as Mushingantahe was preceded by a period of preparation, training and initiation to the function. While candidates needed not be very wealthy, to prevent corruptibility, poor or indebted persons were excluded (Nindorera, 1998). With the rehabilitation of the institution, those procedures have been more or less formalized, but also transformed. According to a representative from a Burundian research institute, young people can become Bashingantahe now and that has caused people to have less confidence in them because they lack experience.¹³³ There is now quite some variation in how the Bashingantahe are being invested. A community member in a *colline* of Gitega *commune* complained that for them, “the system of investment is now the opposite of what it used to be. It is no longer something from the people.”¹³⁴ It was argued by some communities that only rich people stand a chance to become Bashingantahe and that the community members have less say in who gets invested. This dilutes the institute even more.

¹³¹ Loi No.1/08 du 17 Mars 2005 portant code de l'organisation et de la compétence judiciaires, Article 78.

¹³² Bashingantahe is plural and Mushingantahe is singular.

¹³³ Representative Burundian research institute, Bujumbura, 20 May 2010

¹³⁴ Community member, Ruhoba colline, Gitega, Gitega, 4 May 2010

The election of communal representatives and CCDC has further affected their position. In some regions, this has resulted in fierce competition between the Bashingantahe and the *elus locaux*. Some Bashingantahe are disappointed they no longer have the prestigious position they had in the past. That is why they are often conflict with the *elus locaux*, and is cooperation with the *chef de colline* not always positive. Officially they have to work together, but the unclarity about their respective jurisdiction and authority causes confusion and contestation. Cooperation to resolve this unclarity about who possesses authority on what issues has not come about, possibly due to mutual fear of losing authority to the other. Another factor contributing to the dispute about the legitimacy of the Bashingantahe may be that Bashingantahe are associated with the past Tutsi leadership, and therefore a nuisance to the new political elite. A local researcher pointed out to us that there is an ethnic factor now too, with many Bashingantahe of Tutsi origin and many chefs de colline and local community councils from Hutu origin.¹³⁵ In other communities, however, a modus operandi of working together has been established. The question therefore remains in how far they are able to take their place alongside state authorities until they have literate skills as well as an understanding of modern laws and governance.

In the past, the institute of the Bashingantahe thus played an important role in resolving local conflict as an alternative to the state judicial system. Their jurisdiction has eroded over time due to changes in the law and as a result, they have lost legitimacy in the eyes of the population. However, the current judicial system operates far from perfect and contributes to insecurity. At the same time, many people consider that the Bashingantahe, when functioning properly, may still form a valuable alternative to the failing judicial system. They remain to represent traditional values, so called “ubushingantahe”, which are widely respected in Burundi and to which people try to adhere even though circumstances remain dire. One local journalist told us that the values the Bashingantahe represent are still in the hearts of the people.¹³⁶ We even came across people explaining there are some communities who organized a group of Bashingantahe following the traditional rules to work parallel to (and in protest to) the Bashingantahe system that is institutionalized by the CNDD-FDD government. This was confirmed by a renowned local researcher.¹³⁷ Communities therefore do not only undergo security and insecurity, but they also take action themselves.

7.4. Local Security Arrangements

Generally, the response to a malfunctioning police varies from taking matters into one’s own hands or by asking the local leaders to talk to police commanders to solve problems. Another important factor is the fact that for historical reasons the institution of the police has been met with reservations. Due to its repressive nature in the colonial era and thereafter, people have developed a certain intrinsic reservation to go to the police. There is not always automatic reliance on the police as security provider. People do not always regard the police as security institute of first instance and may be more inclined to approach someone they trust more to help resolve problems with security, such as the village chief. Although the belief that the police *should* be responsible for security has indeed become more prevalent over the years, its current poor functioning reinforces the reliance on non-statutory security providers. Given the lacking capacity, problems with corruption in the justice system, and a resulting lack of trust in statutory security provision, local security initiatives have seen their role expand. In one community we were even told that the police willingly delegates security

¹³⁵ Representative Burundian research institute, Bujumbura, 20 April 2010; Embassy official, Bujumbura, 20 April 2010

¹³⁶ Burundian journalist, Bujumbura, 16 April 2010

¹³⁷ Representative Burundian research institute, Bujumbura, 20 May 2010

provision to the community. According to the police in this community, community members were responsible for the insecurity in the past by sending their men and youngsters to war, and therefore should now be responsible for providing security as well.¹³⁸

At local level, security experiences are influenced by the quality of relationships between local leaders, the police, and community members, including ex-combatants, themselves. Although the levels of these problems vary significantly, they are considered to be of national concern. Some communities have a closer relationship with the police, giving them leverage to press for friendly behavior. Others have a chief of police with good intentions who punishes wrongdoing police. Corruption, however, is almost everywhere a problem, especially at the level of investigating officers and other higher ranking officers.

When confronted with a security problem people may take action themselves as well. People organize themselves, generally ad hoc, to patrol an area where theft has become common and chase – and sometimes catch – the perpetrator in case of a new attempt. With smaller issues, such as theft, people often administer justice themselves, if the perpetrator admits the theft and repays the stolen goods. In larger cases the perpetrator is handed over to the police, generally through cooperation with the chef or administrateur. When there is little trust in the state security sector perpetrators are also punished by communities themselves. In Nyabihanga, local people organized night patrols because of the robberies at night. This helped and security has become better.¹³⁹ Similarly, in Gitega we learnt about a structure whereby they would organize night patrols in groups of ten people: when the first group of ten men is tired, the second group of ten men takes over. We were told in one community that, “with this system the whole community is unified and works together like we are one. Security is not something individual, but it means working together.”¹⁴⁰

Yet these local security systems suffer from shortcomings as well. Communities take matters into their own hands, often without investigation of who committed what crime. This can result in cases of mob justice where individuals are simply beaten or killed for a theft, especially when it concerns a suspect from outside the community. This is not necessarily so and punishment may also be in line with traditional norms and values regarding crime. Sometimes communities feel their actions are vindicated because they believe, sometimes rightly so, that the police will release the criminal shortly after he is taken into custody.

Less violent are the efforts to resolve conflicts in the communities by local NGOs and church affiliated local committees. We found that with smaller matters communities often ask local NGOs for advice regarding security matters as well. As a result, local NGOs have become involved in peaceful conflict resolution, promotion of interethnic cohabitation and teaching vocational skills. Apparently there is demand for these services but they are not provided for by statutory actors. So NGOs actually play a role in dealing with security problems as well.¹⁴¹ Yet, such efforts to mediate conflicts remain non-statutory and therefore lack a sound legal basis.

Concluding chapter 7

There are many problems with regard to security provision at the local level. The police taking care of security is inexperienced, ill-trained, underequipped and does not have the capacity to provide the

¹³⁸ Community member, Kabezi, Bujumbura Rurale, 15 June 2010

¹³⁹ Community member, Nyabihanga, Mwaro, 12 May 2010

¹⁴⁰ Community member, Gitega Ruhoba, Gitega, 4 May 2010

¹⁴¹ Community member, Ruyigi, Ruyigi, 7 May 2010

security the local population desires. Corruption exacerbates this problem, and the trust of the civilian population in the police is in general limited. In regions where there is more security and trust in the police, this can be attributed to the relationship the communities, the local administration and the police have. Also the institution of the *Bashingantaha*, even though its role has been disputed and their standing has diminished over the years, remains to be an important actor for security provision at the local level. The lack of state security provision further stimulates the role of non-state actors in security provision, both ad-hoc organized neighborhood patrols and locally organized committees that regularly meet to deal with security issues in the community.

8. Community Security: Civilian Disarmament

“But in the end disarmament has to come from within. If this is not the case people will just buy new weapons.”¹⁴²

“There is disarmament but at the same time there is armament of others. Disarmament to arm others.”¹⁴³

On the basis of what we heard in the communities it seems that there are still a lot of civilians who possess a firearm or other small arms. This is the case despite weapon collection programs among civilians. In fact, there is a lot of discussion about how effective such programmes have been. Government officials have made statements that about 80% of small weapons have been collected, based on a report of the Small Arms Survey that estimated that there were about 100,000 SALW in civilian hands in Burundi.¹⁴⁴ Yet, various civil society organizations refute these claims. They point out, for instance, that it is very unclear how the government has arrived at its figure of 80,000 collected weapons. Some claim the number included discovered caches, unregistered weapons of the police, collected worn out arms of the police and army, and military uniforms and equipment. One source stated that most weapons were collected in the capital itself rather than in the interior.¹⁴⁵ Others point out that the number of 100,000 SALW was unrealistic in the first place, and that a more realistic estimate is 200-300,000 arms in civilian hands.¹⁴⁶

Community members in all provinces confirm the continued presence of arms in their communities. Examples abound of gunshots and grenade explosions been heard, and armed robberies that have taken place. Stories are told about hidden arm stocks that are discovered. Yet, people find it very difficult to assess current possession of arms in their communities. As one woman explained: “even my husband would not tell me if he had a weapon”.¹⁴⁷ Ex-combatants are particularly suspected of still possessing weapons. On the other hand, in case people are aware of weapon possession, it is said they are afraid of denouncing, out of fear for repercussions.

The belief that civilian disarmament is necessary is widely shared. All people interviewed thought disarmament of the civilian population necessary. Examples abound of how insecurity is caused by the continued presence of arms among the population: criminals use small arms to rob others, people resort to the use of arms to settle scores, grenades are thrown at houses to underline threats or in revenge. Instances are also given of lethal accidents with firearms. In some communities, interviewees claimed that security had greatly improved after the first civilian disarmament programme, emphasizing the need for further programmes for civilian disarmament.

¹⁴² Representative international NGO, Bujumbura, 17 May 2010

¹⁴³ Representative local NGO, Bujumbura, 16 April 2010

¹⁴⁴ It should be noted, however, that the report suggests “that nearly 100,000 households have at least one weapon” (Pézard and Florquin, 2007: 16). No statement of a *total number* of 100,000 SALW in the hands of civilians is made in the report.

¹⁴⁵ Representative Burundian research institute, Bujumbura, 20 April 2010

¹⁴⁶ Embassy official, Bujumbura, 13 April 2010

¹⁴⁷ Community member, Itaba, Gitega, 9 June 2010

Yet, community members, observers from (inter)national NGOs, and funding agencies alike underscore that disarmament is highly problematic in case there is still insecurity in the communities. As long as security providers from the government are incapable to assure security at the local level, it is unlikely that people are willing to hand in weapons. In fact, a vicious circle has come about: insecurity causes people to keep their arms while arms cause insecurity in the first place. It is clear that more security is needed before civilian disarmament can take place.

Civil disarmament programmes so far have had some positive impact, but this is generally considered insufficient. The government's CDCPA has organized a civilian disarmament campaign in cooperation with the UNDP in a two-month period in which amnesty was given to civilians possessing SALW. Trainings were given through which people were taught how to undertake sensitization, and the programme provided incentives for weapons to be handed in, such as pieces of cloth and bags of cement. There are many complaints about such programs, mainly related to the non-delivery of promised goods in exchange for the weapons. Sources have indicated that this is likely to be caused by bad communication, as a result of which many people were not present at the moment goods were distributed. Currently, possessing a weapon is illegal, which poses a hurdle for those willing to hand in their weapons. Reporting a weapon for handing it in might well lead to imprisonment. The national collection programme lasted for too short a period. The period announced for civil disarmament was fixed at two months only. According to a representative of an international NGO involved in disarmament activities the UNDP was only informed one month after the decree was signed.¹⁴⁸ Before government and donors had a proper collection system in place and communicated how it worked, the two months were almost over. This has discredited those responsible for sensitization preceding disarmament and hinders future disarmament attempts as people will have less faith in the promises made in exchange for disarmament.

All parties agree that more security is needed before civilian disarmament can become effective. People say they keep their arms for security provision: to protect their belongings against armed criminals or out of uncertainty about the political situation. They have limited confidence in the state security systems. According to the stories we heard, police officers fail to take action when weapon possession is denounced. In fact, we have heard in Rugombo, Cibitoke, that when the community complained about a criminal he was released soon after the complaint was filed and took revenge.¹⁴⁹ In some communities, security actors are accused of even committing crimes themselves. The question rises whether it is realistic to have high hopes of civilian disarmament at this moment. In particular the electoral period posed a lot of insecurity and fear. Rumors abounded that weapons were distributed by both the government and political parties of the opposition. This contributed to perceptions of insecurity and frustrates efforts to disarm the civilian populations, by raising tensions and underscoring the perceived need for people to remain armed. From interviews in the communities we may deduct that people still count on the possibility that the situation may get out of hands again. In the words of a former World Bank staff member: "Arms are perceived as a means to survive and to protect oneself. In such a context civilian disarmament makes little chance".¹⁵⁰ In connection to this, various observers speculated that an important obstacle for civil disarmament is the lack of political will. For instance, "to the party in power, forceful disarmament is not a good idea if they want to win the elections."¹⁵¹ Some observers suspect that the former armed groups that are

¹⁴⁸ Representative international NGO, Bujumbura, 18 May 2010

¹⁴⁹ Community member, Rugombo, Cibitoke, 3 June 2010

¹⁵⁰ Donor meeting, Bujumbura, 18 June 2010

¹⁵¹ Representative local NGO, Bujumbura, 18 May 2010

now political parties prefer that their supporters among the population keep their weapons, just in case politics turn violent again.¹⁵²

Many people consider compensation necessary for further disarmament. To some extent this may be the result of the precedent set by earlier programmes. In the communities, most people we spoke to considered compensation necessary. The compensations given so far are considered a trifle in comparison to the original costs of buying a weapon. In communities in Muramvya and Gitega we heard that compensation was promised but not given, thereby reducing chances for similar efforts in the future. Also those involved in civilian disarmament complained that they were not compensated for their sensitization efforts and necessary transport.

Some interviewees in the communities suggested that some people see a weapon as a way to sustain themselves, for instance through robbing and roadblocks. Handing in a weapon then becomes a rational, economic decision. As one ex-combatant crudely observed: "If you go out to steal, you make much more in a single night than the things they give you [in return for your weapon]".¹⁵³ Hence, in addition to a reduction of violence, community members underscore that human security also needs to be improved. "It's the poverty that is the real issue and because of it people are easily recruited to fight, because they think they can be better off".¹⁵⁴

Overall, interviewees expected that complete civilian disarmament is unlikely to be achieved. Nevertheless, people displayed a strong desire to have less arms among the population, and so increase local security. They considered it necessary to break the vicious cycle linking the possession of arms with insecurity. Finally, they assessed that past civilian disarmament efforts have positively contributed to security. Efforts to limit the number of SALW should therefore continue. In this, it seems necessary to link efforts at various levels:

- fostering political will at national level;
- sensitization at local level by means of local actors and voluntarily handing in of weapons;
- linking with local security providers / security sector reform. If people have more confidence in the security sector this may make them less reluctant to disarm.

At the same time, to make such efforts successful requires to establish why in specific situations people keep their arms.

¹⁵² Representative local NGO, Bujumbura, 20 May 2010

¹⁵³ Ex-combatant Kaze-FDD, Itaba, Gitega, 9 June 2010

¹⁵⁴ Representative international NGO, Bujumbura, 7 May 2010

9. The Impact of DDR on Community Security

From the moment they have started receiving money they participate to get security. They do not steal and murder any longer. But they behave like savages when they don't get their money.¹⁵⁵

"The reintegration support has been a disguise to collect weapons. During the negotiations people were promised a lot, but as soon as the weapons were collected the benefits were gone."¹⁵⁶

The goal of DDR is to improve security in the post-conflict context and to lay a basis for stability and development. This raises the question to what extent and in what way DDR in Burundi has impacted on security. With regard to disarmament, it is clear that many weapons still remain in circulation. Many ex-combatants are believed to have handed in one weapon while keeping another one hidden. Whether this is true or not, it is a public secret that the armed groups still have hidden stockpiles, that political parties (formerly armed groups) have distributed weapons to certain members and youth groups, and that many weapons remain in the hands of the civilian population.

Demobilization has also not been entirely successful, and according to a representative of an international development organization involved in DDR, "command structures were kept in place, or at least not completely broken down, and ex-combatants still take orders from their former commanders."¹⁵⁷ Ex-combatants themselves also said to be under the influence of politicians, who use their social and economic vulnerability to their benefit. "When the politicians are misbehaving the demobilized are misbehaving as well."¹⁵⁸ The research was undertaken at the start of the electoral period, a time where this problem may have come to the surface as more significant. Nevertheless, it remains an important issue that hampers the security situation.

As described in chapter 5, in many cases reintegration has been problematic. For many ex-combatants economic reintegration proves to be difficult in a post-conflict context with the few skills they were taught. And under the surface also social reintegration seems to be less successful than first impressions make believe. The fact that ex-combatants remain susceptible to manipulation by politicians has for a large part to do with their problematic reintegration. But their failing reintegration also poses other problems, as some ex-combatants remain violent in their home situations and are involved in rape and crime. Communities often link crime to the presence of ex-combatants: "before the demobilized came there were no cases of violence in which arms were involved."¹⁵⁹ This is perhaps a stigma for ex-combatants in general, but a fact with regard to some. And a survey undertaken by Oxfam Novib showed that 80% of the people interviewed perceived ex-combatants to be a threat to security.¹⁶⁰ However, although ex-combatants were often seen as the ones responsible

¹⁵⁵ Community member, Bubanza, Bubanza, 1 June 2010

¹⁵⁶ Representative local NGO, Bujumbura, 20 May 2010

¹⁵⁷ Representative international development organization, Bujumbura, 21 April 2010

¹⁵⁸ Community member, Rugombo, Cibitoke, 3 June 2010

¹⁵⁹ Community member, Itaba, Gitega, 9 June 2010

¹⁶⁰ International NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 17 June 2010; It should be noted that during the same meeting it was mentioned that in a survey of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) under returning refugees and IDPs the majority did not see ex-combatants as a security threat to them. This difference could be explained by the fact that the survey of the NRC focused on IDPs and refugees, and the survey of Oxfam Novib included community members who stayed during the war, and arguably witnessed the violence of ex-combatants more directly,

for crimes in the community, community members also acknowledged that these crimes were perhaps not exclusively committed by ex-combatants. That ex-combatants are perceived as a security threat is partially based on very real problems some of them pose, but it is also very much related to their stigmatization, as discussed in chapter 5.

Although the above mentioned problems show that DDR can – and should – still be improved, DDR also has a positive impact on security. It was acknowledged that the support did indeed contribute to some extent to the reintegration of ex-combatants, by which it improved the security situation. “We are happy with the programme because otherwise the ex-combatants would have caused problems.”¹⁶¹ And although the support given was perhaps not always enough – or at least not always effective – “DDR was necessary.”¹⁶² One ex-combatant explained that while the money he received was insufficient to start up a business,

*The most important impact is that with the money people could make contact with society and go into a bar to have a drink with other community members and get acceptance. The bad sentiments from the bush could go away because of that. For the rest the money didn't help, but it did help with us being accepted into the civilian society.*¹⁶³

The general consensus is that, “when DDR started it helped improve security, but now, with reintegration falling short, it is causing security problems.”¹⁶⁴ As ex-combatants first received benefits and training in social cohabitation, the problems caused by ex-combatants gradually were reduced to some extent. But now that many ex-combatants have problems with economic reintegration, which further stigmatizes them and hinders their social reintegration, the problems resurface again.

On the other hand, however, there are examples in which ex-combatants actively participate in the security improvement of the community. Ex-combatants have been active in the civilian disarmament campaign and there are ex-combatants who take part in the *comité de sécurité* in the colline. “They know the secret of security. Even when they have disarmed, they still know the secret of security.”¹⁶⁵ This works in two ways, however, as not only does this effort of ex-combatants improve the relationship with the community, a relationship of trust is also needed for communities to be willing to involve ex-combatants in security issues. When the latter is the case, some communities have started to see the assets ex-combatants bring into the community, and call on them to participate in nightly patrols through the neighborhood. And indeed, we sometimes came across innovative ways to increase security involving ex-combatants.

However, although security is perhaps an interesting way in which ex-combatants have found a way to contribute to the community and build trust, there are a number of repercussions that should be taken into account as well. We found that the ex-combatant must be sufficiently reintegrated to be trusted a role in security provision. Some even advocate a clear protocol that outlines what is legal and what not.¹⁶⁶ This is necessary to ensure night patrols do not end up in violent mob justice. By

whereas refugees were in camps out of reach of the violence. In our interviews, we did find that many community members accuse ex-combatants of the crimes currently being committed in their community, and thus see them as a security threat.

¹⁶¹ Community member, Bururu, Bururi, 27 May 2010

¹⁶² Representative local NGO, Bujumbura, 18 May 2010

¹⁶³ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Matana, Bururi, 28 May 2010

¹⁶⁴ Burundian politician, Bujumbura, 21 May 2010

¹⁶⁵ Community member, Itaba, Gitega, 9 July 2010

¹⁶⁶ International NGO meeting, Bujumbura, 17 June 2010

giving ex-combatants a position in the provision of security one risks reinforcing their combatant mindset. Involving ex-combatants that still have a military mindset and/or maintained ties with their former commanders clearly forms a risk for community security. These ex-combatants might use their new security role again for personal interests or the interests of their commanders and their political leaders.

As discussed in chapter 7, it can be questioned whether these civilian patrols in general are a viable solution for security problems, as they can end up in mob justice. The point here, however, is that some communities have indeed started seeing ex-combatants as assets, rather than as a burden. Moreover, it can also be a starting point for community policing; in one interview the example was given of Kinama in Bujumbura Mairie, where people organized night patrols and called the police to come along.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁷ Ex-combatant CNDD-FDD, Bujumbura Mairie, 14 June 2010

Conclusions and recommendations

“There is a need to separate security at local level from security at national level. At the local level, we need effective collaboration, and a system of monitoring.”¹⁶⁸

“The good things people in Burundi don’t remember, but unfortunately the bad things are never forgotten.”¹⁶⁹

This report is based on ten weeks of field research in Burundi. The research focuses on DDR programmes from a community security perspective. Instead of looking at the security of the state the research aimed to investigate how DDR impacts on security at the community level. We investigated the experiences with DDR not only of ex-combatants, but also of the communities in which they reintegrate. In this way DDR is not assessed based on the standards set by those actors implementing the programme, but by those actors impacted by it. Therefore, where certain issues raised may traditionally not be part of DDR programming or not be considered part of its goals, we raise them nonetheless, as they are regarded as pressing issues by the ex-combatants and community members affected by the programme. This does not imply that we argue to simply adopt these issues and integrate them into DDR as we know it. However, as a voice of our interviewees we cannot neglect the importance of the issues they have raised.

A first major issue is that of economic reintegration. One of the ideas behind DDR is to provide combatants an economic alternative for fighting. And even while in Burundi the economic benefits of DDR were relatively less important than national political reforms to convince ex-combatants to demobilize, DDR proved to be unable to address the economic problems ex-combatants faced during reintegration. Indeed, DDR is no panacea for economic problems and unemployment in a post-conflict context, but more attention to economic reintegration is required. Whether this economic support should be part of the DDR programme itself or arranged through programmes linked to DDR is another debate, but the economic reintegration of ex-combatants in Burundi has been highly inadequate. Ex-combatants complained that the support that was given to them was insufficient. It was sometimes not received, or only partially; and even when received in full it proved to be difficult for many ex-combatants to start up their lives; houses were destroyed and family members killed. Many ex-combatants were also frustrated with the delays in the payment of the instalments. These delays caused a lot of ex-combatants to borrow money and run into debts with high interest rates. Also the reintegration kit created frustrations and ex-combatants often preferred to have received money rather than goods. While vocational training was an option ex-combatants could choose, this option was highly unattractive due to the costs participants had to make.

However, in this regard it is also important to note that expectations from the ex-combatants were very high. They claimed that the intended DDR support was initially much higher or made comparisons to rumors about higher benefits for ex-combatants in other countries. Some ex-combatants also pointed out, that they had expected a reward from society for their efforts, while others experienced that their fellow community members or relatives expected them to return with something in their pockets for them. Expectations about reintegration support were therefore often

¹⁶⁸ Representative international NGO, Bujumbura, 17 June 2010

¹⁶⁹ Representative Local NGO, Gitega, 10 June 2010

very high, and much higher than the actual support given. Raised expectations can be explained by unfulfilled promises by the DDR programme, but for a large part also by miscommunications and an abundance of rumors. Better expectation management is therefore needed to limit frustrations. Yet, a certain level of discrepancy between the expectations of ex-combatants and communities on the one hand, and the intentions and possibilities of a programme on the other hand is unavoidable.

Apart from unrealistic, however, complaints were to a certain extent justifiable. While DDR does not aim to rebuild houses and create jobs, these are indeed real needs of ex-combatants returning after many years in the bush. Moreover, local administrations sometimes excluded ex-combatants from wider development programmes as they were thought to have sufficient support through DDR. Given the economic problems of ex-combatants, more attention to economic reintegration is thus required. In this regard, vocational training and follow-up support are vital for the proper use of the reintegration kit. Support can also be given to associations in which ex-combatants and community members work together, e.g. in agricultural activities. As DDR is not expected to solve all economic problems, more linkages should be made to broader development initiatives, and ways in which communities themselves can support the economic reintegration of ex-combatants should be investigated. Here, it is also important to realize that certain groups of ex-combatants are clearly worse off than others. Reintegration is much more difficult when an ex-combatant has no family or land to return to. Especially the concerns of women, handicapped and self-demobilized should be better taken into account. The difficulty is how to do this without being seen as advantaging some above others.

Further, community members often pointed to manipulation of the programme for political motives, claiming that certain groups have been prioritized. While in many instances such assessments have to be related to the ongoing politicization of DDR in Burundi and the perceptions and rumors that are present in abundance, in other instances, they are perhaps true to a certain extent.

With regard to social reintegration, it was found that this has at first sight gone relatively well. The cohabitation training given during demobilization was positively evaluated, both by ex-combatants and communities. Also, past motives for participating in an armed group had lost relevance due to political reforms. Political objectives had been realized and to many ex-combatants demobilization was a logical step. Also, as many people in the communities to which ex-combatants returned had in the past supported the political agendas that ex-combatants fought for, reintegration was a rather smooth process. Even if communities had experienced problems with ex-combatants, they often claimed that such problems had decreased over time.

Yet, looking deeper into the issue some problems became apparent. While people are often indeed living together in relative peace, stigmatization and psycho-social problems remain prevalent. As a consequence of poor economic reintegration, many ex-combatants continue to be stigmatized and perceived as criminals. Whereas economic motivations often were not the main reason for demobilizing, the lacking economic support did affect the reintegration process. Reintegration efforts have also largely focused on ex-combatants, leaving the receiving end of the community aside. The trainings given during demobilization primarily focused on the resolution of small-scale conflict and the prevention of stigmatization and hardly any attention has been given to psycho-social rehabilitation and reconciliation. Many ex-combatants have problems readjusting themselves to civilian life, for instance being responsible for themselves rather than depending on what was provided by their fighting unit. Past violence is not forgotten and people are reluctant to talk openly about the real problems in fear of reigniting old conflicts. Addressing past crimes does seldom take place. Indeed, it can be questioned to what extent reconciliation is an attainable goal in the short-term and therefore whether this should be part of DDR itself. However, reconciliation appeared during the

research as an important component of the process of social reintegration. When looking at DDR from a community security perspective and focussing on sustainability in the long-term, reconciliation issues have to be taken into account. Thus, with regard to DDR, more attention should be given to the sensitization of ex-combatants *and* receiving communities, *before and after* ex-combatants resettle. Moreover, existing forums should be used – and new ones created when unavailable – to provide opportunities for the communication of issues and resolution of problems at the community level. Local NGO's would be suitable for this job due to their familiarity with the context of the local community. However, in any case it should be realized that reconciliation is often a subject that is difficult – if not impossible – to tackle immediately after the fighting has stopped. With this in mind, one should be careful what is expected of DDR, especially with regard to the level of reintegration it wants to support.

The requirement of connecting DDR to community security in a context-specific manner – the stated focus of the working group and elaborated on in its earlier report (Willems *et al*, 2009) – means assessing and adapting to the local security situation. Apart from the experiences with DDR the research therefore also focused on security as it was experienced at the community level. Security is viewed as a very broad concept, including the absence of direct physical violence but also freedom of expression and health. Mentioned as the most pressing issues were theft and robberies, as well as land conflicts and the violence related to it. At the time the research was conducted, worries about the use of violence during the run up and aftermath the 2010 elections were considered a major cause for concern.

The police and judicial system responsible for security provision to the population are regarded very negatively. The police exists of former combatants and many are uneducated, illiterate and poorly trained to carry out responsible civilian policing. The police is also underequipped and understaffed, as a result of which they are often too late and incapable of responding to crime. They are also underpaid, which leads to criminal behavior on the side of the police: they rent out their uniforms and weapons, commit armed robberies themselves, extort money from people, and are corrupt. The police is therefore not only incapable of dealing with the security issues at hand, but often also poses a security threat in itself. Corruption is also rampant in the judicial system and because criminals are often released quickly after their arrest there is little trust in it.

However, part of the problems is also caused by the fact people are not always familiar with the state structure of security provision and who to turn to with certain types of security problems. Misunderstandings about the motivations and decisions of state security actors further increase perceptions of corruption and unwillingness to provide security. Another issue hampering the relationship between the police and communities is its history as an oppressive force, first of the colonial powers and later of the ruling Burundian elites. Although this has dramatically improved in many parts of the country, due to the police's incapacities to provide security the first reaction of many communities is still to manage security issues themselves. When the police is called to intervene, in many cases the police is not contacted directly but indirectly through local chiefs. When communities take matters into their own hands this is in general a reaction to a rise in thefts and robberies. In many cases it includes nightly patrols by communities in order to scare off potential thieves. In some cases this also leads to the capturing of suspected criminals and mob justice. However, there are also more peaceful initiatives of local NGOs and church affiliated organizations, which aim to resolve local security problems through dialogue. In the eyes of some communities, such initiatives have become an important security actor. However, it remains problematic that they lack legal grounds. Without such coercive force the sustainability of their solution depends on the sustained support of all actors involved. In addition, it should be further explored which role could be

played by the institution of the *Bashingantaha*. What has become clear is that the relationship between the actors – i.e. the police, local administration and the community (including ex-combatants) – is pivotal for security. Whereas SSR efforts aimed at supporting the capacities of the police (i.e. training and material support) are important, more attention should be given to the relationship communities have with state security providers. In addition, the role of non-state security actors should be taken into consideration by SSR practitioners. At times, non-state security actors complement or substitute for state security actors to meet security needs of the community.

An important problem causing insecurity is the proliferation of firearms among civilians. Civilian disarmament has taken place and while its impact was regarded to be positive, it is also believed to be insufficient. The belief that civilian disarmament is necessary is widely shared, although many feel that there is insufficient security for disarmament to be successful. People often claim it is necessary to have a firearm to protect one's property and there are rumors that weapons are being distributed by both the government and political parties of the opposition. To break this vicious cycle efforts to disarm should continue, even if complete civilian disarmament is unlikely in the near future.

Although certainly leading to relative improvements, overall, the impact of disarmament efforts in Burundi has been mixed. With regard to demobilization, current political tensions during elections have hampered the dissolution of former military ties. Moreover, demobilization paid too little attention to management of combatants' expectations about civilian life. Furthermore, while reintegration is at first sight successful – i.e. people seem to live together in relative peace – failing economic reintegration fuels stigmatization and the violence and crimes committed by ex-combatants in the past remain an unresolved issue. However, the DDR programme did also contribute to security in Burundi. The cohabitation trainings have been well-received and although in many cases still problematic, reintegration support has helped the return of many ex-combatants. The level of success is also highly dependent on the context, the length of time the fighting has ended compared to other regions, to what extent property has been destroyed, and how traumatic the war experience was. Important is also the role of local authorities: are they involved in overcoming reintegration problems and do they facilitate dialogue? And as not everything can be solved by the DDR programme itself, there are local organizations active in certain parts of the country to bring people together through sensitization.

The implications of the research in context

What are the implications of the Burundi case study for the literature on DDR? Firstly, the case confirms the reality that approaching DDR from a community security perspective opens up new possibilities to what is called 'community-based DDR' (Willems et al, 2009) or termed 'Second Generation DDR' by others (Muggah, 2009; UNDPKO, 2010). The issues DDR aims to resolve are large scale problems and therefore perhaps difficult to make community-based. An argument could be that the large goals and sheer size of the programme are contradicting a community-based approach. Nevertheless there are numerous openings for community-based approaches to DDR. For instance, our research pointed out that sensitization should be undertaken at a community level. Many local organizations with knowledge about the context of the particular communities can fulfil an important role in improving the return to, and the reception of ex-combatants to the community and reception by the community members. Local forums for problem solving and dialogue should be promoted. Also, communities can be much more involved in the economic reintegration of ex-combatants by consulting them on what kind of employment possibilities for ex-combatants are available or can be created that also will benefit the communities. Currently, reintegration assistance is often not based on the needs and skills of the community, thereby limiting its success in terms of livelihood improvement

of the people the reintegration assistance aims to help. Moreover, communities can even support reintegration by providing learning internships. This would require that support in DDR is not only given to the individual ex-combatant but also the communities supporting their reintegration. In the end, it is the communities in which ex-combatants reintegrate who facilitate reintegration and thereby determine the success of the programme.

Another aspect that came to the surface in Burundi is that economic development is crucial for social reintegration. Indeed currently economic reintegration receives much more attention in DDR than social reintegration. The latter is often seen as a task of communities and to be a consequence of economic support of DDR. More attention to social reintegration is therefore also highly necessary. Failing economic reintegration, however, reinforces social stigma and leads to more ex-combatants falling back into criminal behavior. While economic support is often given to a certain extent, DDR programmes nevertheless often fail to take into account the history many ex-combatants have. Many have been recruited at a very young age, have not finished school or have not attended school at all, and often resided in the bush for a number of years or even more than a decade. Therefore, short projects without proper follow-up support in many cases fail to give the support required for ex-combatants to successfully sustain themselves in their livelihoods.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this report we have the following recommendations:

For DDR practitioners:

- With regard to reintegration, take into account the fact that ex-combatants have to start from scratch after years of fighting. They not only have to adapt to civilian life, but also to the fact that they themselves – rather than their superiors in their unit – are responsible for their own life. More attention to the type of vocational training and follow-up support is required. The aim should be to base reintegration on the needs demanded by communities themselves and to build on the skills of ex-combatants and community members alike.
- There is a large discrepancy between ex-combatants' expectations and experiences. Expectation management and improved communication is required. Such communication efforts can be supported by local organizations, both state and non-state, at the local level and should be undertaken in cooperation with the Burundian government. It should be kept in mind, however, that a certain tension between what is expected and what a programme can deliver is unavoidable due to uncontrollable rumors of a *radio trottoir*.
- Support a system of focal points much longer to keep a way through which ex-combatants can express their frustrations and provide feedback about the reintegration process.
- To promote social reintegration, more attention should be given to the sensitization of ex-combatants *and* receiving communities, before *and after* ex-combatants resettle. Local NGOs have the capacity to do so, but need material support.
- Take into account that reconciliation is an important element for successful social reintegration in the long term, even if it is not undertaken through DDR itself. Those responsible for planning DDR programmes should be very careful to assume that DDR indeed contributes to reconciliation. DDR should lower its expectations in contributing to social reintegration and link up with reconciliation projects that can fill this gap.
- Communities should be more involved in DDR, and the PCDC community development plan provides possibilities for this. The projects for the *Adultes Associés* are a positive step in this

direction. It should be noted, however, that these plans are drawn in consultation with communities and not directly by them, which is a point for improvement. Moreover, these projects conflict with this report's ideas on projects through which ex-combatants acquire knowledge and skills to further their economic independence.

- Stimulate involvement, and, more importantly, the initiatives of local organizations in support of DDR. Local NGOs and church-based organizations have proven to be successful – e.g. by providing forums for dialogue between ex-combatants and community members – and their involvement should be stimulated. Success stories should be emphasized and can be used as examples in other regions of the country.

For SSR practitioners:

- There is a clear connection between DDR and SSR and the design of these programmes should take into account the timelines, key moments and goals of the other.
- With regard to SSR it is important to keep in mind the relationship communities currently have with the police. While the improvement of police capacities with training and resources is important, more attention should be given to the improvement of the relationship between the police and local communities. The relationship between the different actors at the local level is key for effective security provision. It is therefore necessary to support and promote regular dialogue at a grass roots level between the police, local authorities and communities.
- The police should take a proactive role in the promotion of forums in which communities, local administration and police come together to discuss security issues and the *police de proximité* stipulated in the Arusha Agreements should be a model for SSR.
- Look for other ways through which state security provision can better connect with the needs at the local level, and through which the interaction between state security actors and local communities can be improved. For instance, by including police in neighborhood patrols, which also could prevent mob justice, and by looking for connections with the PCDC community development plans.
- Take into account the valuable role played by non-state security actors that are regarded as legitimate and effective security providers. Investigate their role and utility and adjust SSR programming on the basis of such findings.

For the international community:

- Economic reintegration is vital for social reintegration and should be given more serious attention through vocational training efforts and follow-up support.
- While DDR is not a tool to promote economic development, reintegration efforts should be better connected to broader economic development programmes. Economic reintegration is a long-term process requiring long-term support to increase the possibilities for economic reintegration.
- Reconciliation proved to be an important element for successful social reintegration and should be given more attention. One must be careful to derive inferences from the fact that people live together in relative peace. If reconciliation is not undertaken or cannot be undertaken in the immediate post-conflict context, it should be realized that the success of social reintegration will remain limited. Awareness about the need for reconciliation should

be promoted and actual reconciliation efforts should be designed and done in consultation with local communities.

- To improve reintegration of ex-combatants, as well as to improve reintegration of other groups (e.g. IDPs, refugees, etc.) and the cohabitation of communities in general, local forums for dialogue should be supported in which problems can be discussed and solved.
- Continue efforts to promote civilian disarmament, but also continue to investigate the reasons why people choose to remain armed, thereby hampering disarmament. Benefits for civilian disarmament could for instance also be for communities as a whole, and based on the PCDC community development plans.
- Be aware of the valuable role played by non-state security providers and consider complementing state-focused DDR and SSR processes with utilizing efficient and legitimate non-state security providers.
- Be more reactive to local differences and be open for local initiatives. Realize that such local initiatives could do a lot with relatively little money, if given the opportunity.

For the Burundian government:

- Improve awareness and functioning of the state security structure by actively fighting corruption and promoting regular dialogue at the grass roots level between the police, the local government and the community. The police should take a proactive role in the promotion of forums in which communities, local administration and police come together to discuss security issues.
- There is a large discrepancy between ex-combatants' expectations and experiences. Expectation management and improved communication is required. This should be done in cooperation with the DDR practitioners from the international community in order to prevent conflicting messages. Realistic projections of assistance to ex-combatants and communities alike should be the norm and supported by feasible time-frames.
- Support a system of focal points in the long term to keep a way through which ex-combatants can express their frustrations and provide feedback about the reintegration process.
- To promote social reintegration, more attention should be given to the sensitization of ex-combatants *and* receiving communities, before *and after* ex-combatants resettle.
- To promote social reintegration, promote forums for problem solving and dialogue at the grass roots level.

For local initiatives and organizations:

- In order to promote economic reintegration, try to look for ways in which communities and ex-combatants can work together to foster economic development, for instance by promoting the cooperation of ex-combatants and communities in associations.
- With regard to vocational training for ex-combatants, try to find ways in which community members can pass on their knowledge to ex-combatants, for instance by promoting training internships.
- In order to promote social reintegration, create and/or continue to offer forums for problem solving and dialogue at the grass roots level.
- Undertake sensitization efforts of ex-combatants *and* receiving communities, before *and after* ex-combatants resettle.

- Ex-combatants should be viewed as assets to the community, rather than as a potential problem. Try to find locally appropriate ways in which ex-combatants can contribute to the community to counter stigmatization of ex-combatants as criminals.
- Support and promote regular dialogue at a grass roots level between the police, local authorities and the community.
- Look into the potential role of the non-state security providers and clarify their legal position vis-à-vis the other prevailing security providers.

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Annex 1: Ex-combatants and communities interviewed

Bujumbura Mairie		<i>Individual interviews:</i>	1 FNL, female, combatant 2 FNL, male, combatant 2 CNDD-FDD, male, combatant 1 CNDD-FDD, female combatant 3 Ex-FAB, male combatant
Bujumbura Rural	Kabezi	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	5 men, 9 women 4 CNDD-FDD, 10 FNL
	Kanyosha-rural	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	2 men, 9 women 1 CNDD-FDD, 8 FNL, 1 Ex-FAB, 1 first CNDD later FNL
		<i>Focus group community</i>	7 men, 4 women
	Isale	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	6 men, 4 women 9 FNL, 1 CNDD and later FNL
		<i>Focus group community</i>	5 men, 3 women
	Mutimbuzi	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	12 men, 3 women 5 CNDD-FDD, 9 FNL, 1 first CNDD later FNL
		<i>Focus group community</i>	5 men
Bubanza	Bubanza Ville	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	11 men 4 CNDD-FDD, 4 FNL, 2 Ex-FAB, 1 CNDD-Nyangoma
		<i>Focus group community</i>	5 men, 5 women
	Gihanga	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	9 men, 2 women 4 CNDD-FDD, 4 FNL, 3 Ex-FAB
		<i>Focus group community</i>	5 men, 5 women
Cibitoke	Rubongo	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	12 men 3 CNDD-FDD, 4 FNL, 3 ex-FAB, 2 Frolina
		<i>Focus group community</i>	5 men, 6 women
Muramvya	Mbuye	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	12 men, 2 women 3 CNDD-FDD, 1 FNL, 5 Ex-FAB, 5 Gardien de la Paix
		<i>Focus group community</i>	3 men, 3 women
		<i>Individual interviews:</i>	Ex-FAB, male, combatant Ex-FAB, male combatant Gardien de la Paix, male
	Kiganda, Kanerwa coline	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	13 men 1 CNDD-FDD, 3 FNL, 9 Ex-FAB
		<i>Focus group community</i>	3 men, 2 women
	Rutegama	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	4 men 1 CNDD-FDD, 2 Ex-FAB, 1 Gardien de la Paix
		<i>Focus group community</i>	8 men, 5 women

		<i>Individual interviews:</i>	Ex-FAB, female, supportive CNDD-FDD, male, combatant CNDD-FDD, female, combatant
	Muramvya Ville	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	10 men, 1 women 4 CNDD-FDD, 1 FNL, 6 Ex-FAB
		<i>Focus group community</i>	5 men, 1 women
		<i>Individual interviews:</i>	CNDD-FDD, male, combatant Ex-FAB, male, combatant
Gitega	Gitega Ville	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	5 men, 1 women 2 CNDD-FDD, 4 Ex-FAB
		<i>Focus group community</i>	4 men, 5 women
	Gitega, Ruhoba colline	<i>Focus group community</i>	5 men, 3 women
	Itaba	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	9 men 3 CNDD-FDD, 1 FNL, 5 Ex-FAB
		<i>Focus group community</i>	4 men, 1 women
	Mutaho	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	10 men 5 CNDD-FDD, 3 FNL, 1 Ex-FAB, 1 Frolina
		<i>Focus group community</i>	3 men, 2 women
	Kibimba	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	6 men, 1 women 4 CNDD-FDD, 3 Ex-FAB
<i>Focus group community</i>		4 men, 3 women	
Ruyigi	Ruyigi Ville	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	10 men 3 CNDD-FDD, 3 Ex-FAB, 2 Gardien le la Paix, 2 Frolina
		<i>Focus group community</i>	2 men, 3 women
	Butezi	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	9 men 8 CNDD-FDD, 1 Frolina
		<i>Focus group community</i>	2 men, 3 women
Ngozi	Ruhororo	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	9 men 2 CNDD-FDD, 7 Ex-FAB
		<i>Focus group community</i>	5 men
Myuinga	Myuinga Ville	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	11 men 4 CNDD-FDD, 1 CNDD-Nyangoma, 3 FNL, 3 Ex-FAB
		<i>Focus group community</i>	3 men, 1 women
Mwaro	Nyabihanga	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	6 men 3 CNDD-FDD, 1 FNL, 2 Ex-FAB
		<i>Focus group community</i>	7 men, 1 women
Karuzi	Shombo	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	6 men 5 CNDD-FDD, 1 Ex-FAB
		<i>Focus group community</i>	6 men, 2 women
Bururi	Bururi Ville	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	11 men 3 Ex-FAB, 3 CNDD-FDD, 2 CNDD-Nyangoma, 3 FNL

		<i>Focus group community</i>	5 men, 7 women
		<i>Individual interviews:</i>	Community member, male Community member, male
	Rumonge	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	10 men 2 CNDD-FDD, 8 FNL
		<i>Focus group community</i>	9 men, 3 women
	Matana	<i>Focus group ex-combatants</i>	11 men 5 Ex-FAB, 2 CNDD-FDD, 1 CNDD-Nyangoma, 3 FNL
		<i>Focus group community</i>	8 men, 2 women
		<i>Individual interviews:</i>	Community member, male Community member, male

Annex 2: Key informants interviewed

Julie Abbass, consultant, Small Arms Survey
Bellarmin Bacinoni, Journalist
Leanne Bayer, World Bank, former PADCO
Joseph Bigurumwami, IOM, former PADCO
Maurice Bindinde, UNDP
Afke Bootsman, UNDP
Arthur Jeremy Boutellis, SSR/SA programme officer, BINUB
Tracy Dexter, International Alert
Florence Ferrari, Spécialiste Développement de Programmes, ICCO
Gérard Gravel, Conseiller Technique Principal P3P, UNDP
Lieutenant Colonel Jaques van Haalen, Defence Attaché, Netherlands Embassy
Adolphe Hasabindero, Expert en Suivi-evaluation PDRT, CNDDR
Eugène van Kemenade, NIMD
Gerard Chagniot, deputy SSR/SA, BINUB
Julie Claveau, Programme Director, MAG
Pierre-Claver Mbonimpa, Founder president and legal representative, APRODH
Terence Nahimana, Presidential candidate (independent), former parliamentarian, and former president Cercle d'Initiative pour une Vision Commune (CIVIC)
M. Goretti Ndacayisaba, Chargée de Programme Plaidoyer et Rapprochement Communautaire, Association Dushirehamwe
Charles Ndayiziga, Director, CENAP
Joseph Ndayizeye, President, Ligue Iteka
Rev. Levy Ndikumana, Chief Executive Officer, MiParec
Jean Chrysostome Ndizeye, Caritas
Oscar Nduwarugira, MiParec
Yves Nindorera, Ambassade de Belgique
Eric Niragira, Président Fondateur et Représentant Légal, CEDAC
Bosco Nkurunziza, Ligue Iteka (Ligue Burundaise des Droits de l'Homme)
Thierry R. Nsengiyumva, President, Jamaa
Dionise Ntaconayigize, CEDAC
Jéroboam Nzikobanyanka, Coordonnateur de l'ECT, PDRT, CNDDR
Pia Peeters, Task Manager, Sr. Development Specialist Africa Region, World Bank
Jeanette Seppen, Chargé d'Affaires, Netherlands Embassy
Christophe Sebudandi, Executive Director, GRADIS
Herman Tuyaga, Conseiller Principal au Bureau chargé des Questions Economiques de la Présidence de la République, Conseiller Spécial Délégué du Président de la République et Président de la CNDRR chargé de la Supervision du PDRT

Annex 3: Verification sessions

Community re-visited:

Bujumbura Rural	Mutimbuzi	Focus group ex-combatants (12 p.)
		Focus group community (7 p.)
	Kabezi	Focus group ex-combatants (5 p.)
		Focus group community (11 p.)
Gitega	Kibimba	Focus group ex-combatants & community (12 p.)
	Itaba	Focus group ex-combatants (5 p.)
		Focus group community (7 p.)

Meeting local NGOs, Gitega

Aloise, MIPAREC
 Emmanuel, ressources humaines, MIPAREC
 Dieudonné, MIPAREC
 Oscar, MIPAREC
 Chantalle, Programme de réintégration, MIPAREC
 ?, MIPAREC
 Cyriac, Self Help Group, MIPAREC
 Victor, MIPAREC
 Joseph, ODAG, organisation de développement de Diocèse de Gitega
 Leopold, MI-RDP
 Donante, démobilisé
 Prospere, démobilisé, point focale Gitega
 ?, Mechanisme pour l' Initiative de la Recherche de Paix et de Développement
 Francois, ex-combattant CNDD-FDD
 Pierre Claver, ex-combattant, représentante des élus locaux

Meeting local NGOs, Bujumbura

Christian Ngendahimana, Legal representative, Fountain Isoko
 Pascal Kadazi, development committee of the Methodist church
 Taten Nkeshimana, CENAP
 Dionise Ntagonayigize, CEDAC
 Didier Ndamukunda, Collectif pour la Promotion des Associations des Jeunes (CPAJ)
 General Joseph Nkurunziza, Directeur-General des anciens combattants, Ministère de la Défense et anciens combattants
 Eric Niragira, CEDAC
 Margerite Mushuracey, Association pour la Défense des Droits de les Femmes (ADDF)
 Janvier, representante des femmes ex-combatants, CEDAC

Meeting International NGOs, Bujumbura

Jean Bosco Ndayishimiye, Oxfam Novib
 Cathrin Daniel, American Friends Service Committee
 Adrien Ndadaye, Search for Common Ground
 Isidore Ntirampeba, expert M&E, cooperation Italienne
 Grace Havyarimana, Avocats Sans Frontieres
 Florence Ferrari. ICCO
 Jacob Enoh-eben, AFSC
 Linda Elviro Konezo, conseil norvegien des refugiees

Ramillo Rudaragi, AFSC
Sixte Nisasagare, la Benevolencia

Meeting Donors, Bujumbura

Daphne Lodder, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Embassy Bujumbura, SSD expert

Julie Abbass, Small Arms Survey, consultant

Gerard Muringa, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Conseiller Cooperation (formerly at World Bank)

Joseph Bigurumwami, International Organization for Migration (formerly at PADCO)

Leanne Bayer, World Bank, DDR specialist (formerly at PADCO)

Participating partners:

Centre for Conflict Studies (CCS), Utrecht University

The Centre for Conflict Studies (CCS) at Utrecht University comprises an interdisciplinary focal point that has a unique expertise in the emerging international field of conflict studies. The Centre is working on a programme of cutting edge research themes that are closely linked to its educational programme comprising undergraduate and graduate courses. Its work reflects contemporary and innovative trends in academic thought. Its studies aim at contributing to intellectual debates with regard to current conflict and to prevailing policy practice in the fields of conflict prevention and management, and peacebuilding



Universiteit Utrecht

Centre for International Conflict Analysis and Management (CICAM), Radboud University Nijmegen

The Centre for International Conflict Analysis and Management conducts research and offers academic courses on the dynamics and transformation of contemporary, large-scale conflict, focusing in particular on practices of peacebuilding intervention and the role of international organizations, the state, and international and local civil society.

Radboud University Nijmegen



Conflict Research Unit of the Clingendael Institute (CRU)

The Conflict Research Unit of the Clingendael Institute conducts research on the nexus between security and development with a special focus on integrated and comprehensive approaches on conflict prevention, stabilization and reconstruction in fragile and post-conflict states.



European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP)

The European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP) is a non-governmental organization that promotes effective conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategies and actively supports and connects people who work for peace worldwide



IKV PAX
CHRISTI

IKV Pax Christi

IKV Pax Christi works as a movement of concerned citizens and partners in conflict areas on the protection of human security, the end of armed violence and the construction of just peace.



Defensie

Netherlands Ministry of Defense

The Ministry of Defense coordinates the military of the Netherlands. The Dutch armed forces have a threefold mission: to protect the integrity of the territory of the Netherlands and that of allied countries; to help maintain stability and the international legal order; and to help civil authorities enforce the law, control crises, respond to disasters and provide humanitarian assistance either in the Netherlands or abroad.



Buitenlandse
Zaken

Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs promotes the interests of the Kingdom of the Netherlands abroad. The Ministry coordinates and carries out Dutch foreign policy at its headquarters in The Hague and through its missions abroad. It is likewise the channel through which the Dutch Government communicates with foreign governments and international organizations.

PSO (Capacity Building in Developing Countries)

PSO is an association that consists of fifty Dutch development organizations. The association focuses on capacity development at civil society organizations in developing countries.



PSO capaciteitsopbouw in
ontwikkelingslanden

Dutch Council for Refugees

Dutch Council for Refugees defends the rights of refugees and helps them to build a new life in the Netherlands.



Dutch Council
for Refugees