

Update on DDR Process, CAR: 29 Apr 2009

1. Summary

The Comité de Pilotage (Steering Committee) of the National DDR Process CAR functions effectively making excellent progress advancing critical elements of the National DDR Program for DDR CAR. Essential program documentation is nearing completion and the development of the concept of Disarmament and Demobilization is under consultation at the level of the steering committee. Potential constraints in the chronogramme, currently projecting Disarmament as not before July, include the onset of the rainy season and the lead time and capacity of MICOPAX scale up for DDR. Lists of potential beneficiaries have been submitted by three of the four relevant politico military groups and planning is underway for their validation. Staffing of the Program Management Unit is currently underway. While preliminary planning for the Reintegration process has begun, appropriate socioeconomic analysis is now necessary. Major issues requiring decisions or advocacy include the scaling up of MICOPAX support DDR; continued advocacy to the Government of the Central African Republic (GoCAR) regarding the contribution of CEMAC funding to DDR; the potential for poor weapons ratios and consideration of the need for synchronization with SSR. To date, the Peacebuilding Fund remains the only financial contributor to the DDR process in CAR, with a confirmed contribution of US\$ 4 million.

2. Institutional Structure

The steering committee of the DDR Program CAR was established by decree of the fourth meeting of the Comité de Suivi of the Comprehensive Peace Accord, 21 June 2008, held at Libreville on 28 January 2009. The decision by the Comité de Suivi CPA to move forward with the establishment of the Steering Committee was assisted in Libreville by the presence of the Senior DDR Advisor UNDP/ BCPR New York and her technical assistant together with the UNDP Senior DDR Advisor designate for CAR.

At this same meeting it was decreed that the Executive Organ of the DDR CAR program would be UNDP, while the Steering Committee would provide oversight supervision and direction. The first meeting of the Steering Committee DDR was held on 02 February chaired by the SRSB BONUSA, Ambassador Fall, 1st Vice Chair Mr. Demafouth of APRD and 2nd Vice Chair, Minister for Communications Gonda. The Committee was made-up of the representatives of the Government of CAR; the politico-military groups party to the CPA of 21 June 2008: the APRD, UFDR and the MLCJ. The UFR presented themselves for representation at a later stage; the EC; the AU; the WB; France; BONUSA and UNDP.

Exceptional progress was made in the early weeks of the Steering Committee, which was subsequently chaired by the Resident Representative a.i. for UNDP CAR, establishing the ToRs for the Committee, criteria for status of combatant to be included in the DDR process, a matrix of weapons to be considered in the context of DDR and a preliminary chronogramme for the proposed process, outlining events on the critical path to the delivery of the initial disarmament. The preliminary visits to the politico-military groups were made by a technical working group of the Steering Committee to launch the process of

gathering the lists of potential beneficiaries of the program. In March 2009 the initial concepts for the delivery of the disarmament and demobilization were presented to the Steering Committee.

3. The lists of Potential Beneficiaries

Preliminary lists of potential beneficiaries were delivered by APRD, UFDR and UFR on 01 April with an estimate by the MLCJ. In addition a further group, in excess of ex-combatants, who had been previously disarmed but who has yet to receive any form of reintegration support, have been introduced into the process by GoCAR. There is general agreement within the Steering Committee that the needs of this group should be addressed.

While the consultations occur in a very constructive environment there has often been contention in areas regarding the application of the principles of the IDDRS.

4. The Validation Process

With the lists now provided to the Steering Committee, the next event on the critical path involves the validation of those lists to confirm their legitimacy as representing beneficiaries who meet the appropriate criteria for admission to the DDR process. This validation process currently is being planned in the context of the Joint Operational Plan (JOP).

5. The Program Documents

The program is directed and funded through the operationalization of three Program Documents:

- a) The Program for the launch of the DDR Process with the support from the Peace Building Fund. This process has been completed and the funding confirmed.
- b) The Program Document UNDP, which is the overall program document, a consolidation of all aspects of the program.
- c) The Preparatory Assistance Program Document, which serves as a stop gap for the interim period between programme development and resource mobilization.

6. The Joint Operation Plan

Zero Draft of this document was presented to the Steering Committee in order to stimulate feed-back in early February. This draft has now been discussed in Technical Working Group and is now progressed to Draft 1, with broad discussions regarding technical aspects of the implementation of the DDR program and the potential tasking of main partners.

7. The Reintegration Process and the JOP

Draft 1 JOP specifies the concept for the implementation of the Disarmament and Demobilization phases of the DDR Program and establishes the foundations for reinsertion through the implementation of Community Focused Stopgap mechanisms; critical small infrastructural projects in the receiving communities to engage both program direct beneficiaries with community members in constructive activities. The development of the specific individual Reintegration Options will be based on individual profiling matched with options developed through appropriate socio-economic analysis. While all Reintegration Options are likely to need basic literacy elements, it can be projected that the most likely areas for the development of Reintegration Options are in agricultural support, entrepreneurial support for going concerns; vocational training and formal education.

8. Staffing of the DDR Management Unit UNDP

While the Senior DDR advisor has been in place since the beginning of February, providing technical support to the Steering Committee, drafting the program documents and developing the appropriate concepts, initial specialized DDR Unit experts started to arrive on 23 April and the development of the core team to implement the initial phases of the DDR process is currently being brought together.

9. Current Issues facing the DDR Process

- a) The Chronogramme and the capacity of MICOPAX. Based on the current projected critical path associated with the JOP, the chronogramme projects a date for the start of Disarmament of 'not before July 2009'. However, July is in the middle of the rainy season and is also the month in which MICOPAX plans to rotate.
- b) The Issue of CEMAC Funding for DDR and the Consolidation of the Peace. Committed allocations of CEMAC funding, envisaged to be slated for the DDR programme, have not been committed by the GoCAR to date.
- c) The existence of potential spoilers or other armed groups outside the DDR process. New armed groups are sprouting spurred by the hopes of benefits or the opportunities to fill vacuums or for inclusion in the DDR process. Such issues, together with well publicized splits and internal conflict in some participating groups will contribute to major difficulties in achieving a reduction in violence and elements of Community Security in zones where participating politico-military groups may be disarmed and demobilized.
- d) Weapons Ratio. The number and quality of weapons to be surrendered to the DDR process remains uncertain. Actual potential ration of weapons to beneficiaries is likely to be a contentious issue, not only within the DDR Program but also in the humanitarian community and the donors.

- e) DDR to be implemented under the Overarching Framework of SSR. DDR in CAR is likely to have a higher sustainable impact if synchronized with SSR. Without practical commitments to SSR community security, RoL, DDR and related programs will have a more difficult time taking hold and facilitating recovery and development.
- f) Accountability, Transparency and Pragmatism. The best hope for the implementation of a technical effective process is to focus on the capping of the lists... i.e. clear and final numbers from each politico-military group; the non-acceptance of lists from any source other than the official representative of the relevant politico military group to the Steering Committee.
- g) Outputs and Outcomes. It should be possible to technically process the number of beneficiaries presented to the DDR program through all stages of the different process.

Conclusions

The potential for the delivery of the technical process of DDR to the potential beneficiaries as presented by the representatives of the politico-military groups exists. This can be done offering the desired spread of benefits of the program to the affected communities. There are many constraints and elements which will militate against the program achieving positive outcomes in contributing to sustainable Community Security. Such matters should be considered and necessary adjustments or changes of strategy made.

While dire predictions are often offered when considering the non-delivery of the DDR program in a projected reasonable time frame, greater consideration is needed regarding what adjustments / changes are necessary, including to the chronogramme and the linkages with SSR, to optimize the chances of the achievement of a positive contribution affecting Community Security. Readjustment and reconsideration at this stage may contribute to improved positive outcomes.