COMMUNITARIAN REINTEGRATION IN DDR PROGRAMS:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE COMMUNUTARIAN COMPONENT
OF THE REINTEGRATION PROGRAM IN COLOMBIA, 2002 - 2008

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INTRODUCTION

In the past twenty years more than eighty (80) peace agreements have been signed and more than thirty (30) that are considered comprehensive. Increasingly, peace agreements have become important for the study of conflict resolution. As Wallensteen has pointed out, these agreements “refer to situations in which the armed conflicting parties in a (voluntary) agreement resolve to peacefully live with – and /or dissolve – their basic incompatibilities and henceforth cease to use arms against one another”\(^2\). In this context, conflict resolution and peace agreements aim in a particular way to achieve sustainable peace in a conflicting society and avoid the reproduction of cycles of violence.

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\(^1\) I want to specially thank professors John Paul Lederach (thesis director), John Darby (reader) and Catherine Bolten (reader) for their patience, time and valuable comments and suggestions to this thesis. In the same way, I want to thank to Professor Peter Wallensteen, who during the Fall 2009 was more than willing to discuss and share most part of the literature used for the theoretical framework and case studies of the document. The field work in Colombia could not have been possible without the collaboration of Joshua Mitroti and Juan Francisco Diaz from the communitarian area of the High Commissioner of Reintegration. Joshua and Juan Francisco were interested in the project since the very first moment they knew it and assume the idea as an input for their work at the public policy making level. Maria Mendoza, from the International Organization for Migrations in Bogotá, was also a valuable source of inspiration to develop the hypothesis of this work. To all of them, I am more than thankful for the time and ideas that they share with me. Thus, the final hypothesis and findings of this paper are the result of continue discussions and interchange of ideas and materials with this with this excellent group of scholars, practitioners and governmental members with whom I had the opportunity to learn and work during the last year in the particular issue of the reintegration process of ex-combatants at the communitarian level. Finally, I want to thank the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies for funding the field research process that was developed between July and August 2009 in Bogotá and Cartagena.

in the future. A significant component to achieve this goal lies in the success of disarmament and demobilization of the irregular troops, the reform of the security sector, and the effective reintegration and rehabilitation of the former combatants. For this reason, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs have become a central part of peacebuilding processes during the last decades due to the fact that they provide for the required conditions for both dismantling illegal armed structures and help ex-combatants to effectively reintegrate into civilian life.

According to the United Nations, DDR processes propose “to deal with the post-conflict security problem that arises when ex-combatants are left without livelihoods or support networks, other than their former comrades, during the vital transition period from conflict to peace and development. Through a process of removing weapons from the hands of combatants, taking the combatants out of military structures and helping them to integrate socially and economically into society, DDR seeks to support ex-combatants so that they can become active participants in the peace process.” In this sense, DDR implies multiple transitions that involve the ex-combatants, the governments and the host communities. This thesis will explore the challenges and problems facing the DDR processes implemented in the recent Colombian government’s effort to negotiate with and end the paramilitary forces.

In this way, the thesis will be divided in six chapters: the first one will present the challenges and main problems with DDR. The second part will be devoted to a

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3 Ibid, p. 11.


theoretical framework related with the concepts of DDR, reintegration and community reintegration. The third chapter contains a contextual frame of DDR cases around the world in which the communitarian component has been developed. The fourth chapter will describe the DDR process in Colombia. The fifth chapter will deal with the analysis of the communitarian component of the DDR program in Colombia according to the objectives of this research. Finally, the last chapter will be devoted to present some conclusions about the importance of community reintegration in a peacebuilding process, and to present some recommendations to improve this component in Colombia.
CHAPTER 1:

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF DDR: THE HYPOTHESIS BASED ON
THE COLOMBIAN CASE

1.1. General Overview of DDR

DDR comprises three key facets of activity, each of which poses significant challenges. Beyond the act of demobilizing and reintegrating ex-combatants the development and continued guarantee of the necessary political, economic and social conditions that permit former combatants to reintegrate and settle into civilian life rise to primary importance. These conditions become the mechanisms that assure combatants will not go back to war. Undoubtedly, this represents a big challenge in developing and conflicting societies since it implies a broader peacebuilding program that will address structural causes of violence which once brought people to join an armed group.

Traditional definitions of DDR, especially those developed by international organizations and aid agencies, which usually provide for the economic and technical support of these processes, have focused mainly in the military and security features of DDR\textsuperscript{6} which in many cases are exclusively related to the Disarmament and Demobilization components. Furthermore these processes concentrate on the

reintegration of the individuals rather than assuming it as a broader and more inclusive process. As Laplante and Theidon mention, “this focus failed to give sufficient consideration to the host communities and the need to incorporate local, cultural or gendered conceptions of what constitutes the rehabilitation and resocialization of ex-combatants”⁷. Academic studies devoted to peacebuilding and DDR issues have focused on evaluating and analyzing the “former fighters’ access to economic assistance, personal security, political influence and small arms, but “little is said about how this factors are translated into violence; in other words we do not get an idea of which mechanisms are at work”⁸.

In this context, one can argue that the components of Demobilization and Disarmament parts have been relatively clear in theory and practice. What it seems less clear is how to conceptualize and implement the reintegration process. As Jennings points out “the meaning and use of reintegration, both as a concept and a practice, is overloaded and unclear, thus contributing to problematic policy responses and impeding accountability”⁹. This conceptual complexity creates at least two main problems: first, programs that face an unclear definition of reintegration, probably will not have clear objectives to obtain results on the medium and long term in order to obtain a sustainable peace. In this respect Colletta et.al mention that “long term reintegration ultimately is the yardstick by which the success of DDR is measured. Successful long – term reintegration can make a major contribution to national conflict resolution and to the restoration of

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social capital. Conversely, failure to achieve reintegration can lead to considerably insecurity at the societal and individual levels, including rent-seeking behavior through the barrel of a gun"¹⁰. In this way, the ultimate sustainability of a DDR program is measured by the success on the reintegration process.

The second problem that emerges is the fact that an unclear concept of reintegration would lead to programs that do not address the roots of the conflict and do not include all the parties involved in war, particularly people coming from the communities that suffered from violence. Ginifer argues, by studying the case of Sierra Leone, that there is “a series of problems that will need to be overcome if reintegration is to fully succeed. A major challenge has been to repair relations between ex-combatants and their communities. Ex-combatants have frequently had to overcome the resentment of communities recalling crimes committed during war, and this has undermined efforts at social reconciliation. Furthermore (…), provisions of targeted assistance to ex-combatants has often been perceived as rewarding the perpetrators of the violence, and not as an investment in peace and security”¹¹. For this reason, the reintegration concept not only needs to be clear, but also inclusive enough that the roots of and parties to the conflict are addressed to achieve sustainable peace.

In this context, one can argue that reintegration programs have at least two dimensions: the ex-combatant and the recipient community. The ex-combatant oriented reintegration process provides for individual reintegration solutions to the ex-combatants

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who are perceived “as continuous threat to long-term security”\textsuperscript{12}. This is the traditional perspective that has been applied in different DDR programs around the world since 1980s. The second dimension is the community reintegration, which can be understood as the process by which the communities get the required tools and skills to accept and help the ex-combatants in their process of resettling and reincorporating into civilian life\textsuperscript{13}. By including the communities into the reintegration process, not only the programs are creating conducive conditions to reintegration, but also they are creating a space for reconciliation in which both former combatants and host communities (which includes vulnerable populations and victims of violence) would benefit in the same way. Thus, a more equal and fair environment would be created in the process of re-integrating ex-combatants into civilian life.

Most part of the DDR programs have been focused on the individual dimension of the reintegration process, leaving aside the community dimension. This situation can be explained by the fact that traditionally DDR programs look for short term outcomes aiming to have an impact on the military and security aspects of a peace process. In other words, these programs have been more concerned about “dismantling the machinery of war”\textsuperscript{14}.

By taking into account the importance of the community in DDR processes, in 2006 the United Nations DDR standards were modified in order to formally include of


\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.

the community dimension in the reintegration projects and programs\textsuperscript{15}. In fact, the UN DDR standards underlines that “DDR lays the groundwork for safeguarding and sustaining the communities in which these individuals can live as law-abiding citizens, while building national capacity for long-term peace, security and development”\textsuperscript{16}.

1.2. Community Reintegration in the Colombian Context

In this context, it is clear that the community appears as a key element in DDR processes in order to achieve a durable and sustainable peace in societies that have experienced armed conflicts. This research project aims to explore the issue of communitarian reintegration by, first, using the peacebuilding theoretical debate about the implementation of the reintegration process oriented towards the community. More specifically, the research will focus on the case study of paramilitary demobilizations in Colombia in which the DDR program had a communitarian component. This study will illustrate through a concrete case the way in which the community dimension operates within a DDR process.

The Colombian case is relevant to this project since the DDR process that has been implemented in this country combines both perspectives of reintegration: the reintegration of ex-combatants in the individual dimension, and the community oriented reintegration\textsuperscript{17}. The main goal of this component is to create conducive spaces of reconciliation between the population affected by violence and ex-combatants in order to

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\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
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facilitate the process of reintegration into civilian life “through strategies of coexistence, reconciliation and socioeconomic reactivation of the communities affected by violence”\(^\text{18}\). The national policy for reintegration underlines that the communitarian component of the process aims to create a sustainable coexistence between victims and perpetrators through development policies, peacebuilding strategies and the reparation of the victims\(^\text{19}\).

In this way, the community area of the DDR program not only is devoted to the ex-combatants, but also to their families, communitarian organizations, leaders of the host communities and other populations which include victims of violence, children, women and people coming from diverse ethnic groups. In order to accomplish with its main goal, the communitarian area has three strategies of intervention: education on democratic processes and civilian life, communitarian projects, and symbolic actions on forgiveness and reconciliation\(^\text{20}\). In addition, the community area aims to strengthen leadership within the communities, democracy, the media at the local and national level, to make the reconciliation policy to be sustainable, and to develop effective models of intervention at the community level that can be replicated in other contexts\(^\text{21}\).

Some scholars and foundations in Colombia have developed analysis to assess the effectiveness of the process and its components. Especially these evaluations have been focused on analyzing the effectiveness of the psychosocial (psychological workshops and


\(^{19}\) Ibid.

\(^{20}\) Ibid.

\(^{21}\) Ibid.
counseling) and economical (sustainable productive projects) components of the DDR program. That means that they have evaluated and tracked the individual dimension of the reintegration process.

Nevertheless, the communitarian component has not been evaluated and analyzed yet from an academic point of view. In this sense this thesis is relevant in the sense that it presents a theoretical and contextual framework that will be useful for peace policy makers in Colombia, and at the same time describes and analyzes the reintegration process in Colombia from the communitarian perspective.

1.3. Questions

Within this context and due to the characteristics of the communitarian component in the Colombian DDR process, how those designing and implementing the concept of “community” must be explored and clarified as well as the role they propose the community plays in a DDR process. This raises significant questions. From analyzing the outcomes of two reintegration processes in Africa, and the Colombian case, it is important to ask: what does community reintegration means? Why is it important to achieve a sustainable peacebuilding process? What are the most successful strategies to be applied in and with the recipient communities who will host ex-combatants after they lay down the weapons and enter to the reintegration process into civilian life?

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This research aims to answer to these questions by reviewing the theoretical debate about reintegration, looking at the cases of Sierra Leone and Liberia examples where reintegration processes were carried out at the beginning of the 2000’s, and by concretely analyzing the Colombian case. According to Lederach in order to achieve sustainable peace, societies require “long term commitment to establishing an infrastructure across the levels of a society, an infrastructure that empowers the resources for reconciliation from within that society and maximizes the contribution from outside”\textsuperscript{23}.

1.4. Hypothesis

\textit{In this context, this study proposes that sustainable peace requires long term DDR programs that have at least three key elements. First DDR programs must include and take into account all the sectors, what we could call a comprehensive inclusion, of the society affected by violence in order to create conducive spaces of reconciliation between victims and perpetrators. Those programs exclusively designed of the individual reintegration of ex-combatants are successful in the short term in the sense that they are designed to demilitarize a given society. However, it is necessary to deal with the “R” part of the DDR programs, which implies an alternative perspective that establishes a relationship between the reintegration of ex combatants and the development of the host communities affected by violence.}

\textit{Second, the community perspective of reintegration needs to be supported by a clear theory of change that clarifies and delineates the root causes of the conflict. This community perspective must be integrated in terms of what local communities need and

want in order to achieve a sustainable peace and avoid the repetition of cycles of violence. Community participation, it will be argued, creates the conducive spaces which increase the likelihood that ex-combatants will not find new ways of organizing themselves into illegal armed structures.

Finally, since the communitarian component implies the inclusion of a broader number of people and a more expansive scope of logistics and field work, and therefore more financial support governments and the international community must commit to longer terms timeframes in order to achieve more sustainable results. Community reintegration appears as a key element that joins the process of reintegration of ex-combatants to civilian life with the process of reconstructing the social fabric affected by violence.

1.5. Objectives

This thesis proposes a structure that provides the theoretical overview as discussed in the relevant literature, a comparative perspective and the more in-depth exploration of the Colombian case. The main objective of the research project is to define the concept of community reintegration, its features and characteristics, and to establish the most successful strategies to be applied to the communities that are going to host ex-combatants after they lay down the weapons and enter to the reintegration process into civilian life. These are the five specific objectives: first, to present the existing theoretical debate about the concept of community reintegration; second, to present a brief review of the DDR cases in Sierra Leone and Liberia to evaluate the importance of having a communitarian perspective in the whole process; third, to describe the communitarian component of the DDR program in Colombia by taking into
account the strategies of intervention, the different communitarian projects implemented around the country as well as the way in which they were designed and implemented; fourth, to analyze the theory of change that is behind the strategies and actions of the communitarian component as a peacebuilding initiative; finally to describe and analyze the weaknesses as well as the achievements of the communitarian component in Colombia in order to present some recommendations towards strategies that can be applied in similar DDR contexts.

1.6. Structure of the Document

In order to reach to these objectives, this paper presents a theoretical review of the most relevant academic work related with DDR processes, especially that worked that has been focused alternative perspectives of reintegration in which the communities and victims which has been affected by violence are taken into account. For this purpose, the theoretical review was done by referring to the most recent work developed by Muggah (2009)\textsuperscript{24}, Humpreys and Weinstein (2005 and 2009)\textsuperscript{25}, Pugel (2009)\textsuperscript{26}, Theidon (2009)\textsuperscript{27},


Colleta et.al (1996)\textsuperscript{28}, Colleta, Samuelsson, Berts (2008)\textsuperscript{29}, Anders (2005 and 2008)\textsuperscript{30} and Jennings (2008)\textsuperscript{31} who, in addition to refer to previous theoretical framework, create their own concepts of DDR and reintegration in a comprehensive way. In the same way, the documents produced by the United Nations, World Bank, and the Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration were used for the porpoises of the theoretical framework. These documents are important since they have been produced by the international organizations, as well as that the initiatives, which have accompanied, supported and tracked the DDR processes around the world during the last twenty years.

In the second place, the case studies of Sierra Leone and Liberia were selected as a context case studies since DDR programs were implemented in these two countries at the beginning of the 2000s as a result of peace agreements among the warring parties to end violence. In the case of the case of Sierra Leone, the host communities were involved in the whole process of reintegration of the ex-combatants while it did not occur in the case of Liberia. The description and analysis of these two cases is based on some data coming from the academic research that has been already done about the DDR processes on these countries; and data coming from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, the Escola de Cultura de Pau, the Peace Accord Matrix, and the Conciliation Resources about the features of the conflict, the peace and DDR processes in the two countries of study.

\textsuperscript{28} Nat J. Colletta, Markus Kostner and Ingo Wiederhofer, 1996. \textit{The Transition from War to Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa. Washington: The World Bank.}


Moreover, the case study of Colombia is going to be described, reconstructed and analyzed from primary data. That means that the Colombian case is going to be based on official documents of the government of Colombia related with the DDR process that has been carried out since 2002 in that country, and the official documents and reports produced about the communitarian component of the DDR program in Colombia. In addition, some information comes from stakeholders of the process coming from the government, demobilized population and host communities in Colombia, who were visited in August 2008 during the field research work conducted in Bogotá and Cartagena for the purpose of this thesis. The meetings with these stakeholders were carried out to identify and gather official information about the communitarian component of the DDR process.

The research project will combine explorative, descriptive and analytic methodological procedures based on a case study. It will be an explorative study in the sense that it will reconstruct the concept of community reintegration from different perspectives in the peacebuilding theory. To do so, the research will have a review of the main academic developments in DDR, reintegration and community reintegration theories. In this first point, the methodology will be focused on documentary revision of relevant literature.

It will be also a descriptive study in the sense that it aims to describe who the communitarian component has been applied in DDR programs in the world and, specifically, in Colombia, as the main case study of the research. As in the previous point, the methodology will be based on documentary revision of literature that analyzes
the cases around the world which have implemented a DDR program with a communitarian perspective.

The case study of Colombia will be reconstructed and described through three different methods. The first one is the revision of primary information consisted on documents produced by the government of Colombia about the current DDR processes in Colombia. Secondly, Stakeholders coming from the government in Bogotá and Cartagena were sources of relevant information about the history of the designing and implementation of the communitarian component. In addition, they have their peacebuilding assumptions of what the communitarian perspective is supposed to change in the society to achieve sustainable peace.

On the other hand, the stakeholders coming from the demobilized population and host communities have their perspective and understanding about the communitarian component. People benefiting from these projects are good sources to identify strengths and weaknesses of the communitarian reintegration from their expectations about the process. In addition to the interviews, direct observation of some of the communitarian projects were done in Bogotá and Cartagena.

Finally, the analytical component of the research will be developed in the analysis of the theory of change behind the communitarian perspective of the DDR program in Colombia, as well as in the recommendations for the improvement and replication of some special features of the communitarian component in this country.
CHAPTER 2: 
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) is a concept that has evolved over time. It first emerged as a necessity of creating certain activities and programs for the veterans of war to accommodate into civilian life after the war was over. In fact, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, DDR emerged as a set of activities “executed exclusively by and for military establishments and shaped by the geo-political imperatives of Cold War cooperation (...) these interventions were ordinarily confined to bilateral partners and focused in the decommissioning and reform of formal military structures in lesser developed countries, including alternative employment schemes for retired officers and veteran pension schemes”32.

The idea of reintegrating into civilian life those veterans in the aftermath of war was translated to former legal and illegal combatants of the conflicts during the 1980s and 1990s. Indeed, Muggah points out that “International enthusiasm for these peace-support operations and the possibilities of securitizing development in the aftermath of the Cold War spurred in renewed commitment to UN-sponsored Peace – keeping and post-conflict reconstruction efforts, particularly in the Balkans and Africa. Although certain countries such as Ethiopia and Eritrea pursued large-scale demobilization and reintegration programs independently of direct external UN support during the early

1990s (as has Russia in the 1990s, the Philippines in the late 1990s and Colombia since 2003), UN – mandate DDR interventions – overseen by the Department for peace keeping operations (DPKO) at the bequest of the UN Security Council – were launched in Angola, El Salvador and elsewhere. Predictably, the DDR concept rapidly spread into development and security discourse and practice and was grafted into a growing array of UNSC resolutions“33.

The international community has played an important role of developing a clear concept, as well as clear guidelines, about what disarmament, demobilization and reintegration mean. Colletta, et.al point out the philosophy that underlines the main process of DDR. They define it as a necessity since “in war-torn societies, are demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants are integral parts of the political-military solution to conflict, and DDR lie at the heart of transition from war to peace. It is the key instrument for moving beyond humanitarian assistance to poverty reduction and sustainable reconstruction”34.

During the last decade, the concept has changed in a more inclusive way in the sense that more attention has been paid to the configuration and implementation of the process of reintegration of ex-combatants, as the key element to achieve sustainable peace in the medium and long term. In this way, this chapter aims to present, first a brief review of the evolution of the DDR concept in order to see the way in which the concept of reintegration has evolved from the 1980s to the most recent academic work in 2009. Through this literature review, I will make clear how reintegration of former combatants

33 Ibid, p.5.

is understood for the purposes of this paper and, at the same time, I will present the conceptual approach in which the analysis of the thesis is based on.

2.1. DDR: a New Concept in Peacebuilding

Conventionally DDR has been understood as a “cluster of post-conflict interventions focused in collecting arms, neutralizing potential spoilers, reintegrating legitimate ex-combatants into the armed forces or civilian life and preventing war”35. However, according to Mugaah, who follows Paul Collier’s proposals, during the 1980s and even 1990s disarmament and demobilization activities were “conceived and executed exclusively by and for military establishments and shaped by the geo-political imperatives of Cold War cooperation (...) these interventions were ordinarily confined to bilateral partners and focused in the decommissioning and reform of formal structures in lesser developed countries, including alternative employment schemes for retired officers and veteran pension schemes”36. In this way, DDR was understood as a series of activities that aimed to create a more secure and stable environment.

Some of the DDR supporters “insisted on disarmament as a primary step forward stabilization and highlighted the importance of generating visible and tangible evidence of success in the form of collect units of arms and munitions”37. The reintegration programs and benefits at this point were exclusively designed for war veterans. This perspective was widely accepted during the first part of the 1990s, and ruled in the


demobilization and reintegration process which were carried out in countries such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Russia, and the Philippines, among others.\textsuperscript{38}

The security oriented perspective, which was developed in the 1980s, had a shift in the early 1990s. In fact the international community, as well as peacebuilding scholars, pointed out that it was necessary to introduce in DDR processes some educational programs and self sustainable economic projects that would help former combatants to reintegrate into civilian life by improving their livelihoods.\textsuperscript{39} During the first part of the 1990s some countries such as Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda, suffered from extreme violence. By facing these cases, the UN deployed missions, as well as international aid agencies, realized that DDR interventions needed to include the dependents of soldiers and ex-combatants, as well as the victims of violence (including vulnerable population, such as women, children and internally displaced persons).\textsuperscript{40}

In this way, in the middle of the 1990s both practitioners and academics started to claim to develop a concrete and more inclusive and holistic perspective of DDR in which the dependents and the communities where the ex-combatants were supposed to return would be taken into account.\textsuperscript{41} One can argue that the starting point of the development of this new perspective of analysis of DDR programs was the work carried out by Nat

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{41} Ibid, p.9.
Colletta, et.al in 1996 for the World Bank\textsuperscript{42}. In their work, the authors called the attention for the reintegration phase in DDR processes. In this way, the reintegration of ex-combatants started to become a key element in the contexts of post-conflict reconstruction and in the peacebuilding processes.

Reintegration was defined by the World Bank analysts in 1996 as “a continuous, long term process that takes place on social, political, and economic levels. Social and political reintegration is broadly defined as the acceptance of an ex-combatant and his or her family by the host community and its leaders. Economic reintegration implies the financial independence of an ex/combatant’s household through productive and gainful employment”\textsuperscript{43}. This new definition went beyond the traditional security perspective by “disaggregating” the concept of reintegration into social, political and economic dimensions.

By taking into account this perspective, in 2004 the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs promoted the Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (SIDRR)\textsuperscript{44} with the main objective of creating concrete and predictable frameworks to evaluate the implementation of DDR programs\textsuperscript{45}. The SIDDR published

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\textsuperscript{43} Ibid, p. 12-18.

\textsuperscript{44} “The Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilization Reintegration (SIDRR) was launched to review current DDR practice, challenge assumptions, consider the topic afresh and make recommendations with a view of strengthening interventions that support peace processes. The first meeting of the initiative took place in Stockholm 10 – 12 November 2004, with representatives from 23 countries and 14 national and international organizations, institutes and UN agencies” The final document of the initiative was published on February 2006. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2006. \textit{Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration}. See: http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/4890, p.2. Accessed on December, 2009.


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its final report on 2006 in which it was made clear that although the primary objective of DDR “would be to guarantee that former combatants do not need to return to violence to make a living, all initiatives must be tied to a long-term plan for sustainable economic and social development”\(^{46}\). That means that DDR long-term objectives are related with the existence of sufficient conditions “so that sustainable development can take root”\(^{47}\).

Moreover, the SIDDR report emphasizes that reintegration is different from reinsertion, as they are defined by the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS). In basic terms, reinsertion is limited to humanitarian assistance to former combatants in the cantonment phased of the demobilization process. The process of reintegration would also include some primary intervention to prepare people to reintegrate to civilian life and some workshops and talks about what the DDR process means. Reintegration, on the other hand, is understood in the DDR standards as a long term process that involves socioeconomic and political preparation for ex-combatants to reintegrate into civilian life. This process involves both the individuals as well as the host communities\(^{48}\). Thus, the main difference between the two concepts is the importance given to the communitarian and political dimensions of the process to achieve a more sustainable peace in the long term\(^{49}\). The SIDDR stated that in order to achieve a

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\(^{46}\) Ibid, p. 15.

\(^{47}\) Ibid, p. 2.

\(^{48}\) The IDDRS are a comprehensive set of policies, guidelines and procedures covering 24 areas of DDR defined by the DDR office of the United Nations. See: [http://www.un DDR.org/iddrs/](http://www.un DDR.org/iddrs/)

\(^{49}\) The DDR concepts are defined by the IDDRS as: **Disarmament** is the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population. Disarmament also includes the development of responsible arms management programmes. **Demobilization** is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The first stage of demobilization may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centers to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks). The second stage
sustainable peace it must be necessary to support reintegration programs “that would make it more likely for ex-combatants to eventually reintegrate into civil society on economic, social and political levels. Finding employment, gaining acceptance and participating in democratic processes serve as common indicators of successful reintegration. Keeping firmly in mind that the fact that the successful reintegration of ex-combatants is a process that depends not only upon their situation but also on the possibility of satisfying the complex expectations of the receiving communities, the importance of drawing links between programmes that target ex-combatants an programmes that target receiving communities is reaffirmed”\textsuperscript{50}. This is undoubtedly the most inclusive and comprehensive definition of what a reintegration program is expected to be\textsuperscript{51}.

In sum, one can argue that the scholar studies on peace research on DDR, and specifically on reintegration, emerged in late 1990s claiming for a more inclusive approach. Muggah points out in this respect that the traditional perspective of DDR did

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\textsuperscript{51} In fact, in order to make feasible this idea of reintegration, one of the most important recommendations made by the SIDDR is that DDR programs should have two different kind of funding: “one for the financing programmes aimed at ex-combatants (men and women) and one for the affected communities”. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2006. Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. See: http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/4890, p.2. Accessed on December, 2009.
not take into account, for example, the heterogeneity of the context in which conflicts arise and the differences on the motivations that combatants and insurgency groups have. This author states that “combatant-centric approaches to reintegration miss the mark entirely and that investment should be delivered instead to more inclusive or area-based programmes focusing on employment, infrastructure, development and economic growth”\(^{52}\).

This argument became a constant on the field of peace research in the late 1990s and the first part of the 2000s and brought as a result a more detailed, measurable and clear concept of reintegration. By reviewing the literature related with DDR, one can come up to the main conclusions that the concepts of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration are nowadays more complex than it used to be during the 1980s and 1990s since they include several dimensions that were not taking into account in the past. One of them is the communitarian dimension of the process of reintegration, which is the central concept of this thesis

2.2. **What does transformative community oriented reintegration mean?**

One of the main challenges of implementing DDR programs is to overcome the existing tension between the communities, including victims of violence, and the former combatants. This tension has its roots in the fact that in most of the cases during war time ex-combatants committed atrocities against civilians, which in many cases belong to their own communities. As Ginifer pointed out in his study about the DDR process in Sierra Leone, “these acts of violence created a suspicion and fear about the prospect of ex-

combatants returning to their communities”. When DDR process have provided targeted economic, health and educational assistance to the former combatants, local communities perceived this assistance as a reward granted to the perpetrators of violence and “not as an investment in peace and security”.

So, as it was mentioned on the introduction, the hypothesis of this paper is that in order to deal with this tension, DDR programs must include the communities in which the demobilized people are going to settle as well as to promote processes of reconciliation among communities and former combatants. In this context emerges the concept of communitarian reintegration or community oriented reintegration. This dimension of the DDR process has its basis on the fact that the action of “reintegrating” into civilian life a veteran or former combatant coming from an illegal group, implies two different levels of actions: first, the actions targeted to the individual who demobilized; and second, the actions towards the community in which the individual is going to reintegrate.

For the purposes of this thesis, the work developed in 1996 by the consultants of the World Bank is very relevant since it presents for the first time the social dimension of DDR as the one which determines the success of a reintegration process. In fact, by defining the social dimension of reintegration, Coletta et.al state that “It is the interplay of a community’s physical and social capital and the ex-combatant’s financial and human

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54 Ibid, 42.
capital that ultimately determines the ease and success of reintegration”\(^{55}\). For this reason, the authors suggest that in order to achieve an effective reintegration of former combatants, it is important to focus on strengthening social capital because it might “enable communities to take development into their own hands and facilitate reintegration of ex-combatants”\(^{56}\). Moreover, the social dimension implies intrinsically benefits for the host communities, which would contribute not only to the process of resettlement, but also to the process of reconciliation.

This position was strongly highlighted by the SIDDR which points out in its final document that “the SIDDR endorses the idea of establishing matching funds as a direct complement to DDR programmes that would provide communities with support for receiving ex-combatants. This would not only help to address the claim that DDR programmes reward those willing to bear arms, it would also help meet the needs of the communities (and individuals) affected by the conflict, and may induce confidence on everyone’s part regarding DDR programmes. Public trust would be maximized if the different programmes were designed in ways that guarantee maximum inclusiveness (for instance, avoiding different forms of gender discrimination). A specific focus on affected communities early on the peace processes would also facilitate the establishment of other post-conflict programmes, focusing on internally displaced persons, returnees, etc”\(^{57}\).


\(^{56}\) Ibid.

By taking into account these elements, communitarian reintegration is understood for the purposes of this thesis as "a multidimensional, post-conflict and peacebuilding intervention process that enables communities to reform anew after conflict and accepts their displaced and war-affected population as fully-fledged citizens". In order to achieve this goal, reintegration programs should address the necessities of both former combatants and the host communities. In the same way, it is necessary that that reconciliation processes are carried out necessary in order to help the community in the process of accepting the former combatants as part of the social fabric. This acceptance coming from the community is the required condition for the post-war society to start building social, economic and political structures that are conducive to sustainable peace.

The dimensions of the definition should be taking into account the fact that the societies that faced a civil war have low economic, political and institutional capacities. In this way, the perspective of communitarian reintegration appears a central issue to address in order to strengthen all the different levels of the society. This does not only mean to rebuild the infrastructure, but also to create reconciliation dynamics between victims and perpetrators, as well as democratic participation at local and national levels. It is necessary also that the communitarian component of reintegration would be linked with the economic reintegration activities in order to create employment or self business.

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opportunities not only for ex-combatants, but also for their families and the communities they belong to\textsuperscript{59}.

In addition, the communitarian perspective is also important if the reintegration programs include activities of conflict prevention and conflict transformation in which the whole community, ex-combatants, their families, the local authorities and the security forces have an active participation. Albert Caramés points out that “the community's participation in the DDR process and the ex-combatants' participation in community-based reintegration activities may play a key role in the transition after the conflict. This reintegration strategy has the following core characteristics: well defined geographical areas; participatory; needs and requirements of the beneficiaries; managed by local actors and decentralized systems; and requirement of a high level of inter-institutional cooperation”\textsuperscript{60}.

In this respect, the SIDDR establishes that “beyond making a contribution to security peace, DDR programmes have been considered to be capable of fundamentally transforming social relations, achieving reconciliation, solving structural economic imbalances or helping countries achieve significant developmental leaps”\textsuperscript{61}. Therefore, by reviewing the most contemporary approaches towards communitarian reintegration, one can easily find that development is the key issue that would guarantee, first, an effective reintegration of former combatants by benefiting in the same way ex-


\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.

combatants and communities, and, second, it would be the condition to create the required structural conditions to have a sustainable peace.

In this context the idea of what Jennings has called transformative or developmental reintegration is a key issue for the purposes of this thesis. Transformative reintegration means public policies that “attempt to remedy underlying grievances and be a catalyst for social change, a reconstructor of social capital, and a jump for a political economy of peace”\(^{62}\). In more concrete and feasible terms, this alternative concept of reintegration implies to focus “reintegration resources on open-access jobs programmes (prioritizing infrastructure rehabilitation) with discrete complementary bilateral or multilateral education or support programmes for particularly vulnerable groups, including disarmed youth, women, and children and non-combatants war affected and youth and the disabled. Employment programs could target ex-combatants, but not exclusively”\(^{63}\).

Although, Jennings proposal does not focus in communitarian reintegration as an end in a DDR process, her perspective is very useful to complement the community oriented process. Jennings’ proposal is based on the idea that DDR programs should take into account the socioeconomic conditions, the institutional capacity as well as conflict histories. What the author points out is the fact that in those conflicting areas it is difficult to find a clear line between civilians, combatants and victims, in addition to the fact that one person can meet more than one of these conditions. The proposal made by the author is to identify the needs of former combatants, civilians, victims and vulnerable


populations in order to prioritize the reintegration programs and resources according to the needs of all the community mentioned above, and not just in the ex-combatants\textsuperscript{64}. In this way, the resources that governments and the international community allocate for reintegration programs should have a very strict analysis about the socioeconomic and institutional capacities and conditions of the given context, then prioritize the needs of all the members of the community (by giving special attention to infrastructure reconstruction) in order to design and implement a reintegration program that would end up in benefiting the whole community\textsuperscript{65}.

In sum, this thesis will be based on this conceptual proposals and considerations that have been developed during the last three years both by peace researchers and international aid agencies in which special attention is given to an inclusive idea of reintegration, that goes beyond the security and military issues, in which the host communities are considered as fundamental parts not only for a successful reintegration into civilian life, but also for achieving a sustainable peace in the long term.


\textsuperscript{65} Ibid.
CHAPTER 3:
SIERRA LEONE AND LIBERIA CASE STUDIES

The case studies of Sierra Leone and Liberia were chosen as cases studies to illustrate, as a matter of context, the way DDR programs were implemented in these two countries at the beginning of the 2000s as a result of peace agreements among the warring parties to end violence. In the case of Sierra Leone, the DDR program was framed in the Lomé Agreement, signed in 1999. The program in this country resulted in the demobilization of 72,490 combatants. Liberia, on the other hand, experienced a DDR process which was framed within the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed on August 2003 in which “all the warring factions (including government troops) demonstrated a commitment to formal post-conflict recovery and reconstruction”. It is considered that around 103,000 people demobilized in Liberia, although there were a significant number of people that did not self-report as ex-combatants, so there is not a complete register of the number of the demobilized people in Liberia.

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68 Ibid.
These two cases differ in the outcomes of the DDR process. According to Catherine Bolten, specialist in the case of Sierra Leone, there was no violence from 2001 forward. The “disarming over 70,000 ex-combatants contributed significantly to improving the security situation in the country and created an environment conducive to peaceful elections”\textsuperscript{69}. The case of Liberia presented different outcomes in terms of the reintegration process. First of all, the CPA did not present a clear and concrete definition, description and outcomes of what was expected from the DDR process. In fact, the reintegration activities were designed and implemented almost two years after that the demobilization took place and they did not included victims of violence and host communities. Moreover, the case of Liberia were characterized for lacking of enough funding for the DDR measures which had serious consequences in the whole process.

3.1. Sierra Leone: The Transition from War to Peace

Sierra Leone has a long history of cycles of violence since 1961 when the country became independent from the British rule. The roots of the conflict in the post-colonial time have to do basically “corruption, patronage, ethnic tensions and small cliques of economic and political elites”\textsuperscript{70}. In addition, exploitation of natural resources (basically timber and diamonds), was not transformed by the government into public welfare. This situation is considered the main cause of the contemporary conflict in Sierra Leone. The armed insurgency emerged in Sierra Leone with the creation of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which in March 1991 invaded the country coming from Liberia, backed by


Charles Taylor\textsuperscript{71}. The original idea of the former combatants was to take arms against the oppressive and corrupt one-party government\textsuperscript{72} called All People’s Congress (APC). However, the insurgency war escalates and led Sierra Leone to experienced violence of big proportions in which “tens of thousands were killed, and hundreds of thousands were displaced from their homes”\textsuperscript{73}. Kandeh notes the escalation of the conflict in Sierra Leone and the criminalization of the RUF insurgency was due to several factors: “most notably elite greed and opportunism, the elimination of former university students from the organization, the sobelization (the transformation of armed regulars into brigands) of the national army, and the involvement of external patrons and rouge investment”\textsuperscript{74}. Diamonds became a way to fund the war.

In 1992 the APC government fell to a coup from a group of officers of the national army. The APC was replaced by the National Provisional Ruling Council (NRPC), which aimed to achieve a victory over the RUF. The NPCR was in power between 1993 and 1994. Between 1993 and 1994 unofficially Ahmed Tejan Kabbah Kabahh created and coordinated actions to promote local civil defense militias against RUF, consolidating an offensive the armed forces called the “Civil Defense Forces”


According to Bolten, these groups were village-based forces based on the youth’s own initiation and hunting societies. They went by many different names, depending on the ethnicity, tribe, and language of the CDF members, and used various magical tactics based on their own belief systems.

In 1996 there was a second coup d’état which led the country to return to civilian rule by a popular election of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah\textsuperscript{76}. At this time the CDF forces became formal legal armed groups. In 1997, there was a new military coup that drove Kabahh into exile. The coup was carried out by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), which created an alliance with the RUF by inviting the insurgency group to a “power – sharing arrangement”\textsuperscript{77}. In 1998 the Nigerian government led an intervention to restore civil and democratic government by removing the AFRC/RUF alliance and restoring Kabahh democratic elected government. The AFRC/RUF came back to the bushed and worked on rebuilding its military strengthen “with resources garnered from international business man and arms suppliers”\textsuperscript{78}. On January 6, 1999 the AFRC/RUF alliance launched a military offensive by attacking Freetown. Due to bloodshed caused by this attack, President Kabahh was forced to come into a peace agreement (The Lomé Agreement) in which incorporated RUF again into a power sharing arrangement. This political solution did not last and, in 2000 the United Nations force

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.
(UNAMSIL) deployed a mission into the country, which was poorly organized. As a consequence the agreement was broken and the RUF “took hundreds of peacekeepers hostage”\(^{80}\). With the return of violence, the British decided to intervene, and along with some Guinean troops, led RUF to surrender. In this way, in 2002 President Kabahh declared the end of the war.

### 3.1.1. The Reintegration Process

The first attempt to frame the DDR process was in 1996 in the Abidjan Peace Agreement (APA) signed between the government of Sierra Leone and the RUF\(^{81}\), in which it was established the Commission for Consolidation of Peace, which was in charge, along the government of Sierra Leone and the international community, of creating the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDRR) of the RUF combatants. The agreement just mentions the process of disarmament and demobilization, but it does not contain any provision for the process of reintegration. The DDR process in Sierra Leone was characterized for having been a long process since “it was not clear that the parties signing the accord were not fully committed to the peace. Demobilization took place but on a very limited basis”\(^{82}\).

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79 Ibid.
80 Ibid.
81 Abidjan Peace Agreement, 1996. See: [http://www.pcr.uu.se/gpdb/Motherpeace/SiL%2019961130.pdf](http://www.pcr.uu.se/gpdb/Motherpeace/SiL%2019961130.pdf)
By the end of that year, a total of 3,183 former combatants demobilized under the APA\textsuperscript{83}. According to Peters, “the few demobilized combatants, including many of the ex-child combatants, rapidly re-enlisted. After the fall of the military junta in 1998 about 5000 AFRC soldiers surrounded to the Kabbah government. Nearly 3,000 then took part in a DDR programme and were based in so called reorientation camps”\textsuperscript{84}.

Then, on July the 7\textsuperscript{th} 1999, the Lomé Peace Agreement (LPA) was signed by the government of Sierra Leone and the RUF. The DDR dispositions in the agreement sought to disarm the RUF forces, the CDF and the Sierra Leone Army (SLA). The Article XVI of the LPA\textsuperscript{85} establishes three points related to the DDR process: 1) The creation of a peace keeping force composed by the United Nations Assistance Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the Community of West African States in order to monitor and conduct the disarmament and demobilization program within six weeks after the agreement was signed; 2) the creation or an armoury to place all the weapons and ammunitions turned back by the combatants; and 3) Payment for the weapons turned in\textsuperscript{86}. It was estimated that the Disarmament and Demobilization program should be designed for 45,000 combatants; however a total of 73,537 combatants had been demobilized by 2003.


\textsuperscript{84} Krijn Peters, 2006. Footpaths to Reintegration Armed Conflict, Youth and the Rural Crisis in Sierra Leone. Wageningen University Thesis.

\textsuperscript{85} Lomé Peace Agreement, 1999. See: http://www.pcr.uu.se/gpdbdatabase/peace/SiL%2019990707.pdf

Even though, it is evident that neither the APA nor the LPA established guidelines for the reintegration into civilian life of former combatants, the actual DDR process that was carried out, which was composed by five phases, contemplated some aspects of reintegration into civilian life in which it was taken into account not only the individual dimension of the process, but also the host communities. In fact, after “the assembly of combatants, collection of personal information, the verification and collection of weapons, the certification of eligibility for benefits, and transportation to a demobilization center (...)” combatants were prepared to return to civilian life in demobilization site where they received basic necessities, reinsertion allowances, counseling and, eventually transportation to a local community where they elected to live permanently. In the community, combatants benefited from training programs (largely vocational skills including auto repair, furniture making, etc.) designed to ease their re-entry into the local economy”\(^\text{87}\).

3.1.2. General aspects and outcomes of the reintegration process in Sierra Leone

One can identify at least five general aspects of the DDR process in Sierra Leone that had some impact on the outcomes of the reintegration of former combatants into civilian life. First of all, there is not any evidence that the reintegration activities developed between 1998 and 2002 in Sierra Leone aimed to break the existing linkages and the structure of power within the illegal groups\(^\text{88}\). In fact, none of the NCDDR


\(^{88}\) According to the survey that Humphreys and Weinstein applied to a sample of 1,043 ex-combatants in Sierra Leone in 2003 (one year after the war was over), 86% of the former combatants reported that they broke ties with their factions. The remaining 14% “still consider faction members to be among their closest friends, most likely business partners, or as a primary source or support in the event
activities were addressed to establish an action plan to linkages between ex-combatants and to dismantle the preexisting hierarchal structures.

Secondly, it was alleged by some leaders from the communities affected by “violence that ex-combatants have held property looted during the conflict, despite the presence of the rightful owners in the community”\textsuperscript{89}. This situation occurred basically with former members of the RUF due to the fact that some of them retained their attachment to the RUF leader who, although he was in jail, he was a figure that still inspired fear among the community\textsuperscript{90}.

In addition, in the study developed by Ginifer, it is mentioned that “some ex-combatants who acquired authority during the RUF occupation of chiefdoms are reluctant to relinquish their authority”\textsuperscript{91}. This feature among the former RUF members was not targeted by the DDR program either in spite that it created resentment among the communities.

A fourth element in the process was the fact that although one of the main roots of the conflict in Sierra Leone was the prevalent dominance of political elites since 1961, the DDR program did not include either any political measure to promote democracy and/or conflict resolution through democratic means. In fact, Humphreys and Weinstein

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90 Ibid.

91 Ibid, p. 47.
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conclude, through the analysis of the data coming from the survey they conducted in 2003, that 38% of the former combatants did not express confidence in democratic processes, elections, and state and local institutions. On the contrary, they considered that to appeal to their old factions and outside illegal actors is the most effective way to deal with the problems at the community and to have a change into society.\(^{92}\)

Finally, the reintegration program in Sierra Leone has been defined by the scholars as an economic oriented process since most of the measures adopted by the NCDDR were exclusively targeted to reintegrate former combatants into the economic system. In fact, the first measure of the reintegration program was to provide demobilized people with a “reinsertion benefit” in cash to cover the average household needs of a family during the first three months of the process.

In addition to that, the reintegration program aimed to train former combatants in productive skills and employment options. Moreover, the NCDDR provided counseling assistance on job-seeking strategies, training and employment opportunities to those who demonstrated to have some employment skills\(^{93}\). Another measure adopted by the NCDDR was the support on formal education by sponsoring “school fees, textbooks, uniforms and a subsistence allowance for one year”\(^{94}\).

However, the monthly subsidy gave to the demobilized people during the first three months of the reintegration program was one of the major challenges for the NCDDR since, they first estimated (after the demobilization took place) that they would


\(^{94}\) Ibid.
have around 45,000 ex-combatants which resulted on more than 70,000 people. This situation, plus the lack of funding put at some point into risk the sustainability of the program and could have done former combatants to come back to the bush. Ginifer points out that the problem had in part a “historical” record since in the 1999 agreement the government made some promises that did not met. The author mentions that this situation largely contributed to “shortfalls in the funding of reintegration” which was filled sometimes by some international organizations as well as NGOs\textsuperscript{95}.

In terms of employment, Humphreys and Weinstein found that 12% of the former combatants of their sample reported to having no work at all, and they point out that “a broader definition of unemployment which recognized the underemployment of the individuals cultivating land for subsistence purposes, would record a much higher number”\textsuperscript{96}. However, this is a problem that faces the whole population in Sierra Leone since they have suffered from lacking of job opportunities, especially in the aftermath of the war, so there have been limited job opportunities for trained ex-combatants as well\textsuperscript{97}.

It is clear that the NCDRR made an effort to provide former combatants with tools in order to create their own income as a means of reintegrating into civilian life\textsuperscript{98}.

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid, p.47.


\textsuperscript{98} According to the NCDDR the most successful part or the economic dimension was related with training in productive skills and supporting formal education of former combatants. The Committee reported that by 2002 this institution had provided training to 14,220 ex-combatants in some skills “such as carpentry, car mechanics, building, plumbing, and metal work. Tool kits for trades such as carpentry, plumbing and bicycle repair were provided after the apprenticeship or training scheme is completed”\textsuperscript{98}. Moreover, the NCDDR placed 6,452 former combatants into formal education, which seems like a good achievement of the program since around 36% of the ex-combatants had never attended school before. Ibid.
Nevertheless, this effort presented some problems and challenges. First, the percentage of the people that benefited from these training and educational programs were not so high. In the case of the skills training the 14,220 ex-combatants that attended those trainings correspond just to 19% of the total of the demobilized people. That means that 81% of the former combatants did not train in any skill to find a job or generate his/her own income. In the case of access to formal education, just 8.7% of the ex-combatants benefited from schooling. This situation might be explained by the fact that many ex-combatants were not able to take advantage of the opportunities in the post-conflict reconstruction due to the fact that most of them have limited or non educational background, and no marketable skills.\footnote{Ibid.}

Finally, one of the main challenged that NCDRR faced was to train people in relevant skills to support sustainable livelihoods, needs and interests of the ex-combatants. However, although an important percentage of the former combatants came from agricultural backgrounds, they were not interested in this agriculture at all. This problem / challenge that the NCDDR faced was directly related with the fact that there was, and still is, a lack of data on the needs of the labor market in Sierra Leone, which undoubtedly constituted an obstacle for the planning of the reintegration program.

\subsection*{3.1.3. The Communitarian Dimension of the Reintegration Process}

The reintegration at the communitarian level is claimed as the most successful dimension of DDR in Sierra Leone. Undoubtedly, the case of Sierra Leone meets, at least in this dimension, one of the main objectives proposed by the SIDDR in terms of including communities and victims into the reintegration programs. In fact, according to
the survey conducted by Humphreys and Weinstein, the measure of acceptance of ex-combatants within the communities and families they belong to, recorded the highest levels of successful reintegration in which 93% of the demobilized people that participated in the survey did not report any problems in resettling and gaining acceptance in the host families and communities. However, the authors point out that the “difficulties faced by 7% of the respondents should not be under-emphasized. If the sample were entirely of the ex-combatants population, this figure of the 7% would correspond to approximately 5,000 former combatants facing challenges in being accepted into civilian life. In fact since the sample does not include those combatants who failed to reintegrate and elected instead to continue fighting in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, this number plausibly underestimates the number of non-reintegrated fighters”.

According to Ginifer, one of the facts that help the reintegration program to be successful at the communitarian level is that the NCDDR focused on the economic reintegration, as it was described above, while international agencies, such as GTZ focused their work on the support of social initiatives to achieve social acceptance, social reconciliation, and sensitization processes. In fact GTZ’s reintegration activities were extended “to all sectors of communities in Sierra Leone, including residents and internally displaced persons (IDPs), women, children, and individuals who have contracted HIV/AIDS. It also has a strong engagement in rural areas and

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101 Ibid.
In this way, the involvement of communities affected by violence, victims and former combatants in the reintegration program made a difference in Sierra Leone.

This positive point in the whole process was possible thanks to the work done by the NCDRR and GTZ, after the demobilization process took place, in which they identified a set of problems that they should overcome in order to succeed on the reintegration process. These organizations identified that “a major challenge has been to repair relations between ex-combatants and their communities”\textsuperscript{103}. That means that a previous planning in this specific issue had positive effects on the outcomes in the reintegration process.

There were five specific measures that made possible former combatants to be accepted by their families and their host communities. The first one was the fact that the NCDDR set up reconciliation programs in the most critical areas in which tensions between ex-combatants and communities were identified. These areas were first intervened by “information dissemination exercises to try and foster trust between communities and ex-combatants”\textsuperscript{104}. In addition, and as a second measure, ex-combatants during the pre-discharge phase received counseling with special community orientation in order to make them conscious that the hardest part of the process would be to gain the acceptance of the communities that suffered from violence. Third, former combatants, who were accused of having committed war crimes, were brought to “ad hoc community


\textsuperscript{103} Ibid, p. 42.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid, p. 45.
reconciliation meetings in various parts of the country”, in which, in many cases, the NCDDR acted as a mediator or facilitator along the traditional leaders of those communities to facilitate the return of ex-combatants.\(^{105}\)

Moreover, as a fourth measure, the NCDDR and GTZ organized some activities to encourage ex-combatants to design and implement tasks that may be beneficial to communities, such as “civil works, street cleaning, and helping to rehabilitate shelter (…), support adult education programs, civic and peace education, music, sport groups, and other projects that help to rebuild social capital”\(^{106}\). This activities were developed along with a fifth measure in which the NCDDR spread the message that the benefits that there were receiving the former combatants will benefit the communities directly and indirectly since “the fact ex-combatants are engaged in rehabilitating damaged societies, and that they will become independent and less likely to commit acts inimical to society”\(^{107}\). In this way, the social or communitarian dimension seems to be the most successful level in the reintegration program, and this achievement is related with the fact that there was a previous plan and evaluation of the major challenges that the reintegration process would face in this dimension and it was reflected in the effectiveness of the community oriented measures.

Thus, the reintegration process in Sierra Leone the served as a model to be replicated in other cases, such as Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.\(^{108}\) In general terms the

\(^{105}\) Ibid.

\(^{106}\) Ibid, p. 46.

\(^{107}\) Ibid, 47.

process of reintegration in Sierra Leone produce positive effects in the sense that the war is over and a negative peace has been sustained during the last seven years in this country even the serious obstacles that the process faced, such as lack of enough funding to make it sustainable in the medium term (for instance in the training skills program, which just lasted for six months), lack of planning, which was reflected in the economic dimension of reintegration, as well as the lack of tracking and monitoring process in order to evaluate the performance of the former combatants in their reintegration process.

By going through the general aspects of the reintegration process in Sierra Leone, the economic and political aspects of the program did not produce any significant results. On the contrary, there was no evidence of concrete actions in the political arena, and the outcomes of the economic measures have been evaluated as negative results. In this sense, the communitarian component seemed to be the conductive point towards achieving sustainable peace.

It is important to remark that the reintegration community oriented in this country was not drafted in the initial DDR plan. The initiatives that involved the communities emerged basically as part of the work that the international agency GTZ carried out in Sierra Leone. In addition, it is important to take into account that the activities that were implemented in the communities were not addressed to promote development within the communities. They were activities to create spaces in which between communities, including victims, and perpetrators, can coexist, but they did not aim to transform the conflict by addressing its main causes.
3.2. Liberia: The Reintegration Process after Fourteen Years of War

Liberia was dominated by the Americo-Liberian elite since 1847, when it was founded as an independent republic. Although the Liberian state was modeled following the Constitution of the United States, it became a one-party regime dominated by the True Whig Party (TWP). The TWP was mainly composed by American-Liberian elite (a tiny proportion of the population), who were direct descendants of the first settlers. This shape of the state created a “system based on patronage, with leaders dispensing favors and positions to relatives and friend. Leaders amassed great fortunes by extracting the wealth of Liberia’s national resources, made up primarily by rubber, timber, ore and diamonds, whilst the general population lived in deep squalor”\(^{109}\). These general features of the socio-political and economic system can be considered as the main roots of the conflict in Liberia.

The regime was toppled in April 1980, when the first military coup took place in the country. The coup was commanded by the junior officer Samuel Doe and sixteen accomplices, who entered the Liberia’s presidential residence and killed President Tolbert. In this way, this group led by Doe took the power by justifying the coup as the only way to “liberate the masses from poverty and corruption and dubbed his junta the 'People's Redemption Council’”\(^{110}\). By doing so, the “democratic” regime disappeared and it was established a military rule.


\(^{110}\) Ibid.
The contemporary civil war is explained by scholars into three chronological phases. The first one refers to a period of time from 1989 – 1997, which started when Charles Taylor, whose insurgency group was the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) crossed into the country from neighboring Côte d'Ivoire commanding an insurgency group. During this period, Monrovia was siege, the first international intervention took place, President Samuel Doe was murdered and Charles Taylor was elected as President through a “democratic” process in 1997\textsuperscript{111}. The second phase took place between 1997 and 1999 when Taylor “continued the legacy of elitist authoritarian rule in Liberia and decimated his opponents. This interlude exacerbated the disenfranchisement of many Liberians”\textsuperscript{112} and exacerbated hostilities in the local civil war as well as the conflicts in the neighbor countries.

The last phase took place between 1999 and 2003 when two insurgent groups took relevance in the Liberian context: the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), which was backed by the government of Guinea since 1999. This group began fighting in Liberia’s northern Lofa country and then, in 2001, they intensified their fighting against Taylor’s regimen and reached the capital in 2003. At the same time, a second rebel group, coming from the eastern part of the country, appeared into scene aiming Taylor’s removal. This group was the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), which was backed by Côte d'Ivoire’s government. In August 2003, Taylor was in Monrovia, which was surrounded by these two rebel groups, having no more options than accepting an invitation for asylum from the Nigerian government.


\textsuperscript{112} Ibid, p. 72.
Finally, the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in August 2003 by all the warring parties, including the government troops.\footnote{Ibid. See also: Uppsala Conflict Data Program, Liberia. http://www.pcr.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=94&regionSelect=2-Southern_Africa#. Accessed on December, 2009.}

3.2.1. The Reintegration Process

The CPA included on article VI the provisions for the Cantonment, Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (CCDDRR) of former combatants coming from the LURD, MODEL and the government and paramilitary troops.\footnote{See: Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement, August 2003. In September 2003, the UN Security Council produced the mandate 1509 to establish the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to support the implementation of the cease fire. In addition the CPA dictated a power-sharing agreement, and the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL). In 2005 there were held the first democratic elections.} Article VI contains eleven points related with the logistic of the disarmament and demobilization process, as well as the institutions involved and the timeline (sixty days after the installation of the transitional government). However, there is any mention of what do the rehabilitation and reintegration processes mean.\footnote{Ibid.} As Puggel mentions, “while the rehabilitation component was introduced by peace negotiators, its specific purpose and expected outcomes were never clarified. This lack of clarity persisted throughout the implementation of the DDRR process. The only tangible indication of rehabilitation appears to be the provision of a short session with a psychological counselor during demobilization”.\footnote{James Pugel, 2009. “Measuring Reintegration in Liberia: Assessing the Gap Between Outputs and Outcomes”. In: Robert Muggah. Security and Post-Conflict Reconstruction. Dealing with Fighters in the Aftermath of War. Routledge Global Security Studies, New York, p. 73.} In addition, the process of framing the DDR program in Liberia was in charge of centralized committees, as well as an interim secretariat to create a DDR...
strategic framework. These committees were composed by foreign experts, who lacked of relevant baseline data to design the program\textsuperscript{117}.

3.2.2. General aspects and outcomes of the reintegration process in Liberia

The most outstanding feature of the process in Liberia is that the draft of the DDR strategic framework was focused on the disarmament and demobilization objectives of the process, and there were no precise definitions and outcomes for rehabilitation and reintegration\textsuperscript{118}. For instance, indicators for economic reintegration were “expressed as activities and opportunities” rather than concrete outcomes that could have been measured or quantified. The political dimension, on the other hand, was summarized as “a reduction in socio-political instability risk”\textsuperscript{119}.

By looking at the data related with the DDR program in Liberia, one can argue that it was not only security oriented, but also it didn’t have a clear definition of reintegration since the interim secretariat described them as “high risk groups whose adjustment to civilian life must be assured with targeted interventions and be monitored carefully”\textsuperscript{120}. In addition, the interim secretariat mentioned that “reintegration of these high risk groups was to be achieved through community-based support with community resources expected to support ex-combatant reintegration to the greatest extent possible”\textsuperscript{121}. In this respect, the SIDDR produced a document in 2004 (one year after the demobilization took place), pointing out that the security perspective, as well as the lack

\begin{enumerate}
\item[Ibid.]
\item[Ibid.]
\item[Ibid.]
\item[Ibid.]
\item[Ibid.]
\item[Ibid.]
\end{enumerate}
of a clear concept of the components of DDR, put into serious risk the stability of the
country and the sustainability of the CPA\textsuperscript{122}. Moreover, the socioeconomic and political
conditions of the country after Taylor’s regime were precarious and basically the country
was devastated physically and institutionally. Jennings points out that in addition to this
bad perspective, the DDR as it was drafted on the CPA, lacked of acceptance by some of
the main warring parties\textsuperscript{123}.

However, the economic dimension of reintegration in Liberia is the most
developed one in terms of the activities and measures designed to economically
reintegrate ex-combatants. These activities and measures were related with vocational
training and access to formal education. Pugel mentions that in 2006, nearly 44\% of the
former combatants were enrolled in a training program. By 2007 this percentage raised to
60\%; however the NCDDRR faced at that point a serious lack of funding, so it was
estimated that around 23,000 disarmed had not access at all to training programs\textsuperscript{124}.

As it happened in Sierra Leone, the main problem with the attempt to train ex-
combatants, as a measure to reintegrate them into the economic system, is the fact that
the country and the whole population face a serious lack job opportunities. In fact, in the
case of Liberia the national percentage of unemployment in 2007 was 85\%. Therefore, as
Jennings mentions “the essential problem was to prepare ex-combatants or jobs that
didn’t exist” in addition to the fact that “the efficiency of job training programs for

\textsuperscript{122} SIDRR, 2004. “Statement on Liberia”. Sweden. See:
http://www.sweden.gov.se/content/1/c6/06/53/96/34e491ae.pdf

\textsuperscript{123} Kathleen M. Jennings, 2008. “Unclear Ends, Unclear Means: Reintegration in Post-War

\textsuperscript{124} Ibid, p. 74.
employment diminishes as more people receive the same training”\textsuperscript{125}. This situation reveals a lack of planning and even lack of reality from the people in charge of designing and implementing the reintegration program.

Jennings and Pugel agree in the fact that there is a big disconnection between the program activities and the expected outcomes. One example of this mismatch took place in the job training process where, “although Liberian DDR strategy documents carefully do not linked participation in training to job provision, most (former combatants) operated with the understanding that if they completed the training, they would receive employment. This understanding was partly due to their misinterpretation, but also to misinformation they received from implementing actors”\textsuperscript{126}. In this way, although the economic dimension is the level that reports more achievements in the Liberian case, this dimension still reveals lack of planning and monitoring of the situation of the people who is in the process of reintegrating into civilian life.

\textit{3.2.3. The Communitarian Dimension of the Reintegration Process}

There was not a communitarian perspective on the CPA and DDR guidelines for Liberia. However, Puggel found in his research “that ex-combatants who registered with the NCDDRR were more likely to feel accepted within their chosen resettlement communities than those who choose not to formally disarm”\textsuperscript{127}. In spite of the fact that this dimension was not promoted by the NCDDRR, it is important to mention that the


\textsuperscript{126} Ibid, p. 335.

UNDP developed the UNDP’s Community-Based Recovery (CBR) program in Liberia in order to support the government in the process of resettlement of former combatants into the community level. This intervention includes: “1) Support to local governance structures and ensuring community participation by establishing and strengthening District Development Committees (DCCs) in Liberia; 2) Capacity-building for target communities in the planning and management of recovery activities; 3) Support for the creation of sustainable livelihoods through training, farming and micro-enterprise development; 4) Assistance with the provision of basic services through rehabilitation of infrastructure at the community level, including water and sanitation services, education, and health facilities”.

In spite of the importance of the initiative, there is not available data related with the outcomes of this program and the impact that it has had into the communities, as well as in the former combatants. One question that we can place in the Liberian case is precisely how can a communitarian reintegration project can be developed in a society with huge numbers of former combatants, displaced persons and victims of violence who, in the aftermath of war, come back at the same time to their place and try to resettle to their communities without any reconciliation process and even counseling support? This is a question that can be posed for further research.

In sum, the reintegration process in Liberia was a very difficult one, which can be explained basically by the conditions under it was designed and implemented. Pugel poses interesting questions in this respect: “What does reintegration mean in Liberia, where “everybody fought”? How does it account for the reality of a country with

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129 Ibid.
unemployment estimated at over 85%, large-scale death and displacement, little functioning infrastructure and institutions, and significant recent urbanization?” How can violence be avoided when the resettlement of former combatants, displaced persons and victims of violence happened at the same time? From many points of view the process in Liberia just did not work and this is reflected on the fact that the country is still very vulnerable to crime and violence. According to Jennings “Poverty and unemployment are pervasive; the formal and private sectors are inchoate; and most infrastructure has been ransacked or destroyed (…) the nation remains polarized, and in some areas ethnicity is politicized (…) a feeling of insecurity and unpredictability persists, exacerbated by high numbers of ex-combatants and rumored weapons caches”.

Moreover, some of the main obstacles that the process in Liberia faced was the lack of funding, the lack of monitoring, and, more important, the lack of clear, concrete and realistic guidelines to design and implement the DDR program in a country devastated by civil war, as it was the case of Liberia. Jennings and Pugel agree in the fact that one of the main problems in the Liberian case was the concept of reintegration was not clear at all. This point supports the thesis of this paper in relation with the need of having a clear and systematic concepts is required to identify and designed the measures and activities needed to achieve the expected outcomes of the DDR program.


CHAPTER 4:

BACKGROUND OF THE REINTERATION PROCESS IN COLOMBIA

According to the categories of armed conflicts of Uppsala Conflict Data Program, the Colombian armed conflict is the oldest of the currently ongoing civil wars in the world. Since 1948 Colombia has experienced a war that has involved three main actors: the communist guerrillas, the paramilitary groups and the armed forces of the state. At the same time, there have been several attempts to carry out peace processes with the different illegal armed groups. Some of these attempts, as we will see in this chapter, ended up in the demobilization of the illegal troops and in a consequent process of reintegration of former combatants into civilian life.

In this way, this chapter will be devoted to present a brief description of the roots of the contemporary armed conflict in Colombia by making emphasis in the processes of reintegrating former soldiers into civilian life during the last five decades. Then, I will present the context in which the current DDR process with the paramilitary groups is taking place.

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132 Uppsala Conflict Data Program. See: http://www.pcr.uu.se/gpdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=35&regionSelect=5-Southern Americas#. 
4.1. The Roots of the Conflict

The roots of the contemporary conflict can be placed between 1948 and 1958 in the period of time known as “La Violencia”. That decade was characterized by a patrician civil war between the two main political forces in power: the liberal and conservative parties\(^{133}\). From the political point of view, the assassination of the liberal political leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in April 1948, is pointed as the main cause of the emergence of violence. Gaitán was the main political leader from the Liberal Party, who led the struggle to promote the agrarian reform, as well as the rights of the middle class workers\(^{134}\). His assassination provoked revolts, assaults, killings and mass destruction of the governmental buildings, especially in Bogotá, cause by the anger of the followers of the Liberal party and the consequent reaction of the people from the Conservative party\(^{135}\). This violence was translated into permanent confrontations between liberals and conservatives, in both rural and urban areas of the country, leading one of the bloodiest periods of violence in the country.

In 1953 the General of the Armed Forces of Colombia, Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, took power in a military coup. The dictatorship was presented by the political leaders as the most effective solution to stop violence in the country. During his government, General Pinilla issued an amnesty, which the majority of the guerrilla groups granted. These groups accepted to stop confronting militarily the armed forces of the state, but

\(^{133}\) Ibid.


\(^{135}\) It is important to note that the socioeconomic grievances have been also understood as root causes of the conflict, basically for the distribution of the land, the inequality and the lack of access to health and education for all the sectors of the Colombian society. In this way, these socioeconomic grievances have been along the political exclusion that found it highest point during the Violence Period.
they did not accept to turn in the guns\textsuperscript{136}. However, the cease fire just lasted one year, and the military confrontations started again in 1954 because the guerillas claimed that “they were frustrated with the lack of compliance and the offensive against areas of communist influence”\textsuperscript{137}.

Due to the fact that violence reappeared, the liberal and conservative parties decided to create a coalition to remove Pinilla from power in 1957. Since the main incompatibility between the Liberal and Conservative was related with power sharing, in 1958 the liberal and conservative parties signed a consociational agreement to start a period, called “Frente Nacional” (National Front) in which the main parties would alternate the power.

Although the National Front was proposed as the main solution to end with the bloody war between the two main political parties, it contributed to deepen the political grievances. In fact, the National Front made that other political parties, perspectives and even ideologies were excluded from the political competition. Moreover, the first government of the National Front “attacked the 'communist enclaves,' perceiving them to be a threat to overthrow the government, especially after the successful Cuban revolution in 1959”\textsuperscript{138}. In this way, the political exclusion coming from the National Front and the repression to the communist movements led to the emergence, during the early 1960s, of several guerrilla groups which based their revolutionary project to overthrow the

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid, p. 56.
\textsuperscript{138} Uppsala Conflict Data Program See: \url{http://www.pcr.uu.se/gpdbdatabase/gpcountry.php?id=35&regionSelect=5-Southern_Americas#}
oligarchy government by following the successful experience occurred in Cuba in 1959\textsuperscript{139}.

In the 1970s, the ideological feature of the conflict changed since new factors and actors appeared in the scene. In the context of drug trafficking, it emerged the right-wing paramilitary squads, which had an ideological speech based on the anti-subversive struggle. In the late 1980s, these squads were independent bands of armed people, but in the 1990s an important number of these groups merged into one group that was called Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-defenses of Colombia). In this way, the conflict changed into a bloody war over resources, in which “the military, the paramilitaries, guerrillas, domestic elites, and multinational actors vie for control of this resource rich country”\textsuperscript{140}. In this violent dynamic, several violations of human rights have been committed.

In fact, between 1996 and 2008 the conflict caused the death of 41,747 people\textsuperscript{141}, of which approximately 60\% were non-combatants\textsuperscript{142}. 36\% of these crimes were committed by agents of the state, 38\% by paramilitary groups, and 26\% by the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{139} Welna, Christopher. “Colombia’s triple challenge: peace democracy and human rights”. In: Welna, Christopher and Gallón, Gustavo (eds), \textit{Peace, Democracy, and Human Rights in Colombia}. Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007.
\item \textsuperscript{141} This data correspond to the deaths in which the perpetrators of the crimes have been identified. The crimes included in the data are extrajudicial killings, sociopolitical killings, people killed in combat and forced disappearances. See: Comisión Colombiana de Juristas. Statistics about human rights situation and sociopolitical violence in Colombia 1996-2008. Available at: \texttt{http://www.coljuristas.org/Portals/0/vida_96_08_incluye_mcom.pdf}. Accessed on November, 2009.
\item \textsuperscript{142} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
In addition, according to the Office of the United Nations for Refugees (UNHCR) the armed conflict caused the internal displacement of around 3,000,000 people in the same period. As a consequence, civil population has been affected by different kind of physical and psychological violence since the armed actors use different war strategies in order to attack the “enemy” by dehumanizing the victim, attacking his/her family and the community in order to control the territory and economic sources to fund the war.

At the same time, and within this context, some peace processes have been carried out in order to find a negotiated solution to the conflict. Some of these processes have been successful on terms of cease-fire, demobilization of the illegal troops and even in changing the party and electoral system in order to create an open political competition. However, all the peace processes have been carried out in the midst of the conflict, and, most important, there has not have been a comprehensive peace agreement in which all the warring parties are included.

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143 Ibid.

144 See: [http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e492ad6](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e492ad6)


146 A comprehensive peace agreement has been defined by the Peace Accord Matrix (PAM) project as a “written document produced through a process of negotiation. It is comprehensive in two dimensions: first, the major parties to the conflict are involved in the negotiations process; second, substantive issues underlying the dispute are included in the negotiation process. A CPA is defined by the process and product of negotiations, not the implementation or impact of the written document; an agreement can still be comprehensive even if it does not induce a comprehensive peace”. PAM, *Comprehensive Peace Agreement: How is it Defined and Why Does It Matter?* (First draft), forthcoming, Peace Accords Matrix, 2010.
As Laplante and Theidon mention in their study about the Justice and Peace Law in Colombia, during the last forty years of the armed conflict “each successive president has attempted some sort of military victory or, in face of that impossibility, peace negotiations”\textsuperscript{147}. Although the time the concept of DDR did not exist as such, in 1953 it took place the first effort to reintegrate ex-combatants in Colombia when General Pinilla tried to give general amnesty and promote demobilization of the guerrilla groups by offering them some benefits to lay down the arms. The main outcome of this attempt was a cease fire that lasted for several months. This process did not end up in a successful reintegration for two reasons. First, combatants refused to lay down their arms. Second, “the government failed to provide adequate security (...) and many of the demobilized men were subsequently killed in an escalating cycle of revenge”\textsuperscript{148}.

The killing of demobilized people is a constant in the peace process in Colombia. In fact, the next attempt of peace process that ended up in the demobilization of the illegal troops took place in 1984 under the government of Belisario Betancourt, from the conservative party. Betancourt proposed a “political solution” to the armed conflict, which lacked of a concrete agenda to address the root causes of war. It also lacked of political support both from the Liberal and the Conservative parties, as well from the military\textsuperscript{149}. Basically the peace initiative was based on a national dialogue in which the political status of the guerrillas was recognized and amnesty was granted. As a result in


\textsuperscript{148} Ibid, p.59

1984 a peace agreement was signed between the government and the guerrilla groups: FARC, M-19, EPL, and some sectors of the ELN. Nearly 700 combatants coming from those groups demobilized as a result of the agreement\textsuperscript{150}. However, as Garcia-Duran mentions, all the agreements were broken within less than one year. The only exception was the case of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). This group maintained the agreement for several months while they organized a political party called Union Patriotica (UP) in order to incorporate into the political arena\textsuperscript{151}.

As Laplante and Theidon point out “following their demobilization and reconstruction as a legitimate political party, some 3,000 members of the Union patriótica were assassinated”\textsuperscript{152}. The failure in the 1984 negotiations was caused by the lack of political and institutional support to the process, and by the lack of state’s capacity to bring security to the demobilized sectors. In fact, the case of the systematic killing of the UP members is one of the main rationales that the guerilla groups, specially the FARC, use to argue that they do not have the required conditions to go into a peace process with the government of Colombia.

Moreover, in September 1988 president Virgilio Barco (1986-1990) drafted a cease fire with the guerrilla groups. This attempt was called “Iniciativa por la Paz” (Initiative for Peace), and it did not include the paramilitary groups, which by that time


were already perpetrating gross violations of human rights\textsuperscript{153}. Due to the fact that, according to the Political Constitution, the liberal and conservative parties were the only parties allowed to run for elections, during the peace talks, the M-19 asked the government to modify the Constitution in order to open the system and to make it more inclusive.

The government of Virgilio Barco denied M-19’s petition, and as a consequence a non-violent social movement, composed primarily by law students, emerged. The main aim of the movement, which was called “Movimiento por la séptima papeleta”, was to include in the Senate elections to be celebrated on March 1990, the question of whether or not citizens wanted to modify the Constitution to have a more inclusive political system. The question was included and the “Asamblea Nacional Constituyente” (The National Constitutional Assembly) was approved in the elections. In this way, the peace process with the guerrilla groups ended up in two of the most important political outcomes in Colombia during the last two decades. The first one was the definitive demobilization of the M-19 guerrilla group, which became the political party called “Alianza Democratica M-19” (AD – M19) (Democratic Alliance M-19)\textsuperscript{154}. And the second, the current Political Constitution, which was issued in 1991.

However, the electoral campaign for the presidency in 1990 was the bloodiest in the Colombian history since three candidates were killed while campaigning\textsuperscript{155}. One of them was Carlos Pizarro, the main political leader from the AD M19, and one of the


\textsuperscript{154} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{155} Luis Carlos Galan, from Liberal Party, Jaime Pardo Leal, from the UP, and Carlos Pizarro from the As-M-19.
peace negotiators who signed the peace agreement with the government. Pizarro was assassinated in April 1990, just one month after the demobilization of the guerrilla group, and one month after the presidential election. This political failure of the peace process, plus the lack of money, the lack of tracking of the performance of the demobilized people and the lack of a consultation and attention to the communities that were supposed to host former combatants, made the reintegration process at the beginning of the 1990s to be a hard process for ex-combatants and leaders from the M-19 guerilla group\textsuperscript{156}.

In this way, during the 1990s the conflict escalated to high levels due to the confrontation between the armed forces of the state, the guerrilla groups and paramilitary groups, which by that time had growth in number. In 1997 the government of Ernesto Samper, from the Liberal Party, established a commission to explore the possibilities of negotiation with the FARC and the paramilitary groups. This first attempt for a comprehensive peace agreement did not last long since in 1998 a new presidential campaign was carried out and the political proposals were directed towards a negotiation with the FARC.

In fact, the candidate from the conservative party, Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002) was elected by the vast majority thanks to his main proposal of peace talks with the FARC. The peace talks took place in a demilitarized zone in the southern part of the country between 1998 and 2002. Since the FARC broke the cease-fire in February 1998

the peace talks were broken and the guerrilla group, which already had a strong presence in the southern part of Colombia, came back to the bushes\textsuperscript{157}.

The end of the peace negotiations took place just three months before the presidential election and, Alvaro Uribe, the most popular candidate at the time, based his campaign on the idea that the only possible way to defeat the FARC was by military means. Uribe, was first elected on May 2002, and as soon as he inaugurated in office, he drafted the security policy to strengthen the security forces to defeat the FARC. At the same time President Uribe started to negotiate with the paramilitary groups.

4.3. The Peace Agreement with the AUC and the Current DDR Process

In 2002 the government of Colombia carried out a peace agreement with the paramilitary groups that were part of the AUC. This agreement was called El Pacto de Ralito (The Ralito Agreement) and it provided for cessation of hostilities and for demobilization of the members of the AUC into the civilian life.\textsuperscript{158} There are at least three main reasons that led the government of Uribe Vélez to negotiate with the paramilitary groups. First of all, the main objective was to demilitarize the country since during the 1990s a large number of self-defenses groups emerged in the country and the government had lost control over them. In addition, some high rank level members of the armed forces had been related with the AUC and it military operation, so the government wanted to cut that linkages. Finally, in 2002 while the Rome Statue and the International


\textsuperscript{158} It is important to note that the paramilitary groups that were not part of the AUC did not demobilize, thus they are operating nowadays.
Criminal Court were being signed, there was a high national and international pressure to condemn and punish the human rights violations committed by the AUC\textsuperscript{159}.

On the other hand, the main reasons that led the paramilitaries to negotiate were: first, most of the high level commanders came from middle and upper classes of the society, and after more than a decade of leaving on bad conditions in the bush, they were tired of fighting. Moreover, the paramilitary leaders were expecting to have the same reintegration benefits received by the guerrillas groups in the 1980s and 1990s. Finally, the paramilitary leaders were convinced that Uribe’s government would be able to defeat the guerrilla, so they believed that there was not any reason to continue the anti – subversive struggle\textsuperscript{160}.

In this context the negotiations with the paramilitaries were carried out between August 2002 and July 2003 in the midst of the conflict and they did not include any guerrilla group. As a result of the agreement 31,482 paramilitaries coming from the AUC demobilized between 2003 and 2006\textsuperscript{161}.

One of the main features of the reintegration process in Colombia is the existence of the communitarian component. The main goal of this component is to create conducive spaces of reconciliation between the population affected by violence and ex-combatants in order to facilitate the process of reintegration into civilian life “through strategies of coexistence, reconciliation and socioeconomic reactivation of the communities affected


\textsuperscript{160} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{161} See: High Commissioner for the social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants of the illegal armed groups. \url{http://www.reintegracion.gov.co/app/} Accessed December, 2009.
by violence.” The national policy for reintegration underlines that the communitarian component of the process aims to create a sustainable coexistence between victims and perpetrators through development policies, peacebuilding strategies and the reparation of the victims.

In this way, the community area of the DDR program not only is devoted to the ex-combatants, but also to their families, communitarian organizations, leaders of the host communities and other populations which include victims of violence, children, women and people coming from diverse ethnic groups. In order to accomplish with its main goal, the communitarian area has three strategies of intervention: education on democratic processes and civilian life, communitarian projects, and symbolic actions on forgiveness and reconciliation. In addition, the community area aims to strengthen leadership within the communities, democracy, the media at the local and national level, to make the reconciliation policy to be sustainable, and to develop effective models of intervention at the community level that can be replicated in other contexts. The analysis of the communitarian reintegration perspective in the case of Colombia is going to be developed in chapter 5 of this paper.


163 Ibid.

164 Ibid.

165 Ibid.
CHAPTER 5:

ANLYSIS CASE STUDY: THE COMMUNITARIAN
COMPONENT IN THE REINTEGRATION PROCESS IN COLOMBIA


In 2002 the government of Colombia carried out a peace agreement with the paramilitary groups that were part of the AUC. As a result of the agreement 31,482 paramilitaries coming from the AUC demobilized between 2003 and 2006. Moreover, since 2002 the government of Colombia during Alvaro Uribe’s administration has developed a demobilization program to encourage people from the guerrilla groups to abandon the illegal armed forces and to enter to the civilian life. From 2002 to September 2009, 8,567 people coming from the guerrilla groups FARC and ELN have individually demobilized.

The central and northern parts of the country concentrate most of the demobilized population. The departments that present a greater number of former ex-combatants coming from the paramilitary groups that collectively demobilized are: Antioquia, Cesar, Bolivar, Norte de Santander, Cordoba y Meta. The people who demobilized individually,

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167 Ibid.
most of them coming from the guerrilla groups, have settled in the central and southern part of the country in: Bogota, Meta, Caqueta, Valle del Cauca and Putumayo\textsuperscript{168}.

The demobilization process has two main strategies: first, the collective demobilization which was carried out between 2003 and 2006; and, second, the individual demobilization, that consist of a program in which people coming from the guerilla groups decide by themselves to abandon the armed group and join the reintegration process individually. In the case of these individual demobilizations, the Defense and Security Ministry is in charge of the process through the Program of Humanitarian Attention to the Demobilized People (PAHD for its initials in Spanish)\textsuperscript{169}.

In order to carry out the reintegration process of the people who collectively demobilized within the Ralito agreement, and those who individually expressed their will of coming back to the civilian life, the government created in 2002 an especial office for “Reintegration to Civilian Life”. In 2006 this program evolved and became the “High Commissioner for Reintegration” (ACR, for its initials in Spanish). The High Commissioner has the immense challenge of reintegrate people coming from the different illegal groups in the midst of an ongoing conflict.

In December 2008 the National Department of Planning\textsuperscript{170} (DNP for its initials in Spanish) issued the “National Policy of Reintegration for Illegal People and Armed Groups” which main objective is to present the public policy to “promote the effective reintegration of demobilized people and their families in the networks of the society and


\textsuperscript{169} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{170} See: Departamento Nacional de Planeación. www.dnp.gov.co
the state, as well as in the host communities"\textsuperscript{171}. This policy covers particularly “the demobilized people who committed political crimes and who are under the Law 418 of 1994. In the same way, it covers those demobilized who have received the legal benefits of the “Justice and Peace Law” (Law 975 of 2005)\textsuperscript{172}.

Based on the UN DDR guidelines, the government of Colombia drafted the main components of the DDR to be applied by the High Commissioner of Reintegration: disarmament consists on the process of collecting, controlling and destroying the armament that illegal armed groups possessed; disarmament is understood as identification and control of the active members of the illegal armed groups; reinsertion means the humanitarian aid that is given to the former combatants during the demobilization stage and before the reintegration process. Finally, reintegration is understood by the government of Colombia as “the process through which demobilized people acquire a civil status and a sustainable economic activity”\textsuperscript{173}.

In addition, the official documents establish that the reintegration process in Colombia has two perspectives: the first one, creates a framework to design and implement some strategies in the long and medium term for each person in process of reintegrating into civilian life. These activities include the promotion and development of educational, vocational and democratic attitudes to former combatants to reintegrate into civilian life. The main objectives of the reintegration from the individual perspective are:


\textsuperscript{172} Ibid, p. 36.

\textsuperscript{173} Ibid, p.7
a) To identify and to promote the judicial resolution\textsuperscript{174} of the legal situation of the demobilized people in order to allow them to reintegrate into the social and economic spheres; b) to promote the education of responsible and autonomous individuals through psychological intervention and a healthy and responsible management of time; c) To promote health through the access to social security services; d) To promote the access and permanence in the educational system; and e) To train people to reintegrate into the economic system and to generate their own income\textsuperscript{175}.

The second perspective is the communitarian component, which seeks to create conducive spaces for communication between host communities and former combatants.

\textsuperscript{174} This objective promotes activities such as identification of the demobilized, and truth and justice hearings carried out by the General Attorney office. Ibid, p. 40. The whole judicial process is established in the Peace and Justice Law, which establishes the conditions that the illegal groups, as well as the ex-combatants, must fulfill in order to obtain the benefits of the demobilization and reintegration process. These conditions are: those who participated in crimes that were committed exclusively during the time they belonged to the armed group; the people that belong to an illegal group that is carrying out a peace process with the national government; the demobilized people must give the government all the properties that were obtained through illegal actions; the armed group must demobilize child soldiers; the armed group must stop carrying out illegal activities; and that the armed group undertakes to release kidnapped people. Moreover, the Law establishes the judicial process by which the demobilized people should be prosecuted. Articles 12 to 29 establish the procedural principles to the judiciary process for the demobilized people, and articles 32 to 36 establishes the institutions responsible for the enforcement of the Law. In the Law there is an important concept that has been object of many criticisms from human rights defenders. This is the concept of reduced punishment (or alternative punishment), which refers to the idea of stopping the enforcement of a sentence, and change it for an alternative punishment. This change in the sentence is made under certain conditions in which the perpetrators of the crimes help to know the truth about those crimes. Depending on the crime committed, the perpetrator can obtain a sentence for period between five (5) or eight (8) years. In fact, the reduced punishment was one of the main points of disagreement during the discussion of the draft of the law. The argument of the opposition to this feature of the law was based precisely in the fact that the alternative punishment does not contribute to the human rights law enforcement since there is not a punishment that compensates the crimes committed by the illegal armed groups. In this way, the Law gives benefits to the ex-combatants, but does not guarantee the conditions to an effective compensation of the victims. On the other hand, the second goal of the Law is related with the rights of the victims in the judiciary process of the demobilization of ex-combatants. The rights established by the Law are according to the rights that are presented by the international human rights law: the right to access to justice, human treatment, security, the right to be heard, the right to access to the competent authorities, and the right of knowing the results of the judicial process. In the topic of reparation, the Law says that the members of the illegal groups must repair the victims of the crimes they committed. The reparation must be done by restitution of the property, compensation and rehabilitation. See: Justice and Peace Law 975 of 2005.

who are going to settle in those places after the demobilization. The idea of working with
the host communities is “to make the reintegration process of former combatants to be
easier through strategies of coexistence, citizenship building, reconciliation and
socioeconomic reactivation of the communities affected by violence”\textsuperscript{176}. In this way, the
public policy of the Colombian government has three main beneficiaries of the process:
a) former combatants who demobilized collectively or individually since 2002\textsuperscript{177}; b)
family and relatives of the demobilized people\textsuperscript{178}; and c) host communities.

To accomplish with this challenge, both at the individual and communitarian level,
the office of the High Commissioner for Peace and Reintegration aims to the
reintegration of ex-combatants through six areas: 1) A benefit that consists of a monthly
payment to the demobilized people according to their level of participation on
educational and psychological activities offered by the program; 2) Health insurance; 3)
Access to education and occupational training; 4) psychological counseling; 5)
sustainable productive projects; and 6) work within the host communities of the
demobilized people\textsuperscript{179}.

Nowadays, the DDR process is one of the main social and political programs of
the government of Alvaro Uribe. It is important to note though that the main feature of

\textsuperscript{176} Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2008. Documento Conpes, 3554: Política Nacional de
Reintegración para Personas y Grupos Armados Ilegales. (National Policy of Reintegration for illegal
people and armed groups). Bogotá, December 2008, p.8

\textsuperscript{177} This population (combatants older than 26), young people (people between 18 and 25);
children and teenagers (under 18 years); commanders and people with some kind of mental or physical
limitation. Ibid, p.8

\textsuperscript{178} The relatives that are included are: permanent partner of the former combatant; sons and
daughters under age, and the siblings of the demobilized who presented some kind of mental or physical
limitation. Ibid, p. 9

\textsuperscript{179} See: High Commissioner for the social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants of the
the DDR process in Colombia is the fact is that it has been carried out in the midst of the conflict and it is the political will in the process is reflected in the increasing budget that is allocated each year not only by the national government, but also by the international community\textsuperscript{180}. In addition to the increasing political will, the DDR process in Colombia has been one of the longest processes in the world. In this chapter we will analyze the Communitarian component of the public policy of reintegration of the Government of Colombia in order to describe the actions that the program is addressing to the host communities and the theory of change in peace building that is behind this component of the DDR process in this country.

5.2. The Unit of Community Intervention of the Reintegration Program

Host communities are defined in the public policy as “The communities where the demobilized settle after the disarmament and demobilization stage. These communities might include the social networks and economic activities that operate within the community or in the neighboring ones”\textsuperscript{181}. The main objective of the communitarian area of the process is to build spaces of reconciliation and coexistence at the local and national level in order to facilitate the reintegration of former combatants into civilian life. In addition, at the community level the government seeks: “a) To promote coexistence and reconciliation through the institutional coordination, sensibilization and education between the host communities and former combatants; b) to strengthen the democratic

\textsuperscript{180} In the fiscal year 2007 - 2008, the national budget allocated for the DDR process was $US 37 million. In addition, the government of the United States allocated $US 53 million for technical assistance for the DDR process between 2006–2009. The European Union is also one of the main donors for the reintegration process. See: High Commissioner for the social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants of the illegal armed groups. \url{http://www.reintegracion.gov.co/app/} Accessed September, 2009; and USAID Colombia: \url{http://www.usaid.gov/locations/latin_america_caribbean/country/colombia/} Accessed September, 2009.

\textsuperscript{181} My translation from Spanish. Ibid, p. 9.
and deliberative spaces that each community has in order to (re) build the confidence between the community members, the community itself and the state; c) to promote the construction of consensus and citizenship within a culture of non-violence and respect for law, as well as respect for human rights and peaceful conflict resolution; d) to strengthen the policy to prevent recruitment."\(^{182}\). For this reason the targeted population of the reintegration process does not only include the demobilized, but also the communities with a high level of former combatants.

According with the public policy, the strategies to accomplish with these objectives are related with actions and activities of coexistence and reconciliation, initiatives coming from the community and symbolic actions of reconciliation and forgiveness. In addition, the public policy mentions that one of the strategies is to reactivate socially and economically the communities in order to “reactivate the social and economic development of the host communities, as well as to strengthen the institutional capacity.”\(^{183}\)

However, this developmental objective / strategy is not clearly defined in the sense that it is not established what social and economic developmental activities the program are going to promote and through which concrete activities they are going to be implemented. In the fact, this situation is evident when the document recognizes that there are not the required conditions at the local level and there are not public agendas that help and promote the reintegration of former combatants based on the communities. The document points out that “the goal in the process is to make the local governments to build and implement agendas or reintegration oriented towards the host communities, and

\(^{182}\) Ibid, p. 30.

\(^{183}\) Ibid, p. 54.
that most of the part of the peacebuilding actions, including the reconciliation processes, developed and implemented by the state and by Non Governmental Organizations, take into account the communitarian perspective. Nonetheless, the “methodologies” are not defined in the document and it seems that the space was opened for the communitarian area to start working on that process.

In this context the Unit for community reintegration (UTC for its initials in Spanish) was created in 2007 in order to carry out the four objectives mentioned above. For that purpose, the UTC designed and implemented six strategies of intervention in the host communities: 1) Work in the collective imagination: This strategy is oriented to change the perceptions that people have about political participation in public affairs in those zones affected by violence. The idea is to promote democracy and public debate as means of conflict resolution; 2) Strengthen political education and communitarian leadership: In this case the UTC aims to “modify the political behavior of people and to promote the empowerment of leaders through ethics”; 3) Participative democracy. This strategy aims to raise the levels of participation at the local level in order to promote projects and initiatives from the citizens in order to include new actors, such as the former combatants coming from illegal groups on the public sphere, as well as promoting existing democratic forces; 4) To support the media at the local and regional level to increase understanding and awareness of the demobilization process. To decentralize and sustain the reintegration process. In this strategy the UTC is aiming for local governments to include reintegration activities and initiatives in their regional institutions and public

\[184\] Ibid, p. 55.
policies; 6) To create a model of intervention that establishes a work scheme with the host communities\textsuperscript{185}.

In order to design, implement and carry out these strategies, the UTC has a team composed by thirteen professionals based on Bogotá who are in charge of coordinating and tracking the projects that have been implemented in the different regions of the country where the High Commissioner for Reintegration works. Different national or local organizations or institutions, devoted to work with vulnerable populations, are in charge of the design and implementation of the projects. They are called operators and each one has the autonomy of designing the projects according to the characteristics and needs of the community in which they are going to carry out the project.

There is a timeline (see graphic 1) of one year in which these projects must be implemented. The first part takes place during the months 1 and 2 of the project. This phase is called “Diagnosis” in which the operator is supposed to observe, describe and analyze the socioeconomic features of the host community. In order to select the communities for implementing the program, the government takes into account the following variables: a) number of internally displace persons (IDP) in each town; b) children recruitment and homicide rate; c) warnings related with the emergence of new paramilitary groups and recruitment of former combatants; and e) the towns that have been prioritized by the presidential program for IDPs and vulnerable populations (Programa para la Accion Social y la Cooperacion Internacional)\textsuperscript{186}.

\textsuperscript{185} Internal document produced by the UTC, 2009. “Esquema de Intervención con Comunidades, ACR” (Communitarian Intervention Scheme).

The second phase is devoted to the workshops with the community, as well as with the demobilized people, in issues related with human rights, democratic participation, conflict resolution, democracy procedures and designing, implementing and fund raising for communitarian projects. This phase takes place within the months 3 and 7 of the project. After the workshops were over, within the months 8 and 12, the community must agree on a project that the members of the community are supposed to design and implement. Finally, at the end of the project it is expected that the beneficiaries of the project develop symbolic actions. These actions are intended to present to the community the results of the project making emphasis in the outcomes of the reconciliation process.\textsuperscript{187}

**Graphic 1: Timeline of the designing and implementation of the project**

A total of 6,061 people benefited of the communitarian projects in their educational stage in which people attended different workshops. The distribution of the people benefited from the projects in their different stages is: 3,670 communitarian leaders from the host communities, 2,100 former combatants and 291 members of the local governments.\textsuperscript{188} The goals traced by the UTC for 2009 were related with the design and implementation of projects to prevent recruitment of former combatants in the main

\textsuperscript{187} Internal document produced by the UTC, 2009. “Esquema de Intervención con Comunidades, ACR” (Communitarian Intervention Scheme).

\textsuperscript{188} Ibid.
cities of Colombia. These projects included workshops with the local government members, demobilized people, communitarian leaders and people coming from the host communities to train them in the national policy of recruitment prevention\footnote{189}. Some conclusions can come up from the analysis of these strategies. At a first level the strategies remain general and unclear as to how they contribute to peacebuilding in the local communities. For instance, how does the promotion of leadership skills contribute to the effective reintegration of former combatants and to the reconciliation process. In addition, the strategies make reference to the idea that the political behavior has to change but which specific aspects of the political behavior must be changed and through which kinds of concrete actions.

One of the strongest points of the strategies is the idea of strengthen the democratic procedures and to create spaces for dialogue as the main spaces to debate and discuss the conflicts in the community. However, this point that remains open for the different operators of the projects to develop. That means that there are no guidelines for the projects to design and implement this strategy of promotion of democracy.

Moreover, one of the points that is important to highlight is that although the main goal of the public policy is to promote the reconciliation and the coexistence between the victims and the former combatants, there is not a clear linkage between the two of them. By following the strategies it seems that the communitarian component would be devoted exclusively to achieve a political reintegration of the former combatants, but there is not a sign of how the community would benefit from these projects and how the projects would contribute to the development of the community.

\footnote{189} Ibid.
5.3. The Implementation of the Program: the Cases of Cartagena and Bogotá

This section contains the cases of Cartagena and Bogotá in which the communitarian program has been implemented. The main objective of the section is to describe the different strategies and activities implemented in these cities by analyzing its components and outcomes in order to identify, first the strengthens and weaknesses of the projects, and second to highlight the good practices that have succeeded in the contexts of intervention at the communitarian level as part of the reintegration process of ex-combatants in Colombia.

5.3.1. The project “Communitarian Intervention of the Reintegrated Population in Bogotá (Ciudad Bolivar and Suba)”.

The Foundation for Reconciliation, led by the Catholic Priest Leonel Narvaez, created in 2008 two reconciliation centers in two of the most populated zones in Bogotá: Ciudad Bolivar and Suba, which also have high levels of demobilized population, most of them coming from the guerrilla groups, as well as other vulnerable populations, such as IDP’s, coming from different areas of the country. The reconciliation centers are spaces in which a team of people who promote reconciliation processes at the communitarian level.

In 2004 the foundation designed and implemented the first projects devoted to the reintegration process for former combatants coming from the illegal groups in Colombia. The United Nations University for Peace accompanied and supported the process of designing the projects, which at the beginning were focused on

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190 By August 2009, there was a project to expand the reconciliation centers to other two areas in Bogotá: Usme and Engativá. See: http://www.fundacionparalareconciliacion.org
the training process of leaders at the communitarian level. Then, 2007 the foundation made the first contact with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which is in charge of the technical assistance to the ACR in the DDR process. This first contact between the Priest Leonel and the IOM resulted in the proposal of creating the reconciliation centers.

The reconciliation centers are the “Escuelas de Formación en Perdón y Reconciliación” (Formation Schools for Forgiveness and Reconciliation) in which the demobilized population has been involved in order to reconstruct the social fabric and coexistence within those who have been part of war, either as former perpetrators or victims of violence. The particular feature of the reconciliation centers is the fact that the team not only work with the demobilized population, but also with the different vulnerable populations in the areas where the centers are located191.

5.3.1.1. Objectives of the project

The original project established that the main objective of the Foundation was to create two reconciliation centers based on the idea that the promotion of forgiveness and reconciliation, as well as the strengthening of the communitarian networks, are fundamental parts in the process of peacebuilding. The project defined the reconciliation centers as the physical and social groups people trained on forgiveness and reconciliation processes and mechanisms. These people are in charge of teach these concepts and to train people from the community in conflict resolution.

By creating the reconciliation centers, the foundation aimed to “consolidate and strengthen the civil society, and its dynamics of organization, by promoting a culture of

191 Ibid.
reconciliation through practical mechanisms in which the community would have higher levels of agency, spaces for reconciliation and coexistence between victims and perpetrators of violence. The idea of the Foundation was to apply these mechanisms in those places where there is a long history of violence which has left hatred, vengeance and violent means to solve or transform conflict within the community”\textsuperscript{192}.

The centers of reconciliation aim to train and provide the society with the peace tools that the community needs for the coexistence and reconciliation. Those tools are based on the concepts of transitional justice, retribution and historical memory, which would contribute to truth and justice through different narratives\textsuperscript{193}. In addition, the project aims to create activities to exploit creativity through arts, prevention of domestic violence and a space in which people can get support and assistance in conflict resolution\textsuperscript{194}.

Moreover, the reconciliation centers seek to create spaces in which each person has the opportunity to reflect in the individual process that he or she has been through during war times, and at the same time to acquire communicative skills to discuss debate and make decision about the issues that concern to the whole community. Finally, the project aims to promote the tracking, evaluation and research of the information related with peace initiatives and process that take place at the grassroots level of the communities\textsuperscript{195}.

\textsuperscript{192} Foundation for Reconciliation, 2007. Proposal for Communitarian Intervention of the Reintegrated Population in Bogotá (Ciudad Bolívar and Suba). Internal document provided by the UTC of the ACR.

\textsuperscript{193} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{194} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{195} Ibid.
5.3.1.2. Activities and strategies implemented

The reconciliation centers are the central part of the project. In this sense, the activities and strategies implemented are those that have taken place within the context of the centers. The strategies of intervention are the following three. The first one is the method of teaching called “ESPERE” (for its initials in Spanish – El método de las Escuelas de Perdón y Reconciliación). This method is based in pedagogic strategies as drama, playful, case studies, simulation and reflection as ways of learning, conciliation, mediation and negotiation. This strategy/method is implemented by the team of professionals in each reconciliation center through different activities as workshops, smalls groups in which people socialize and create narratives about rage, hater and revenge. The idea is that these groups operate as a sort of counseling discussion groups in which people get support and advice from the other members of the group.

From this context, it emerges the second strategy and activities which are related with the process of formation (or training) in drama, manual arts and sculpture. The third strategy is prevention of violence. Thus, the activities have been focused on workshops and groups discussion to work on issues, such as sexual violence, violence within youth, the reintegration process into civilian life for those who come from illegal groups, physical and mental health, public policy and leadership.\textsuperscript{196}

Finally, one of the main activities promoted by the reconciliation centers is counseling for victims and for former combatants. One of the most important departments of psychology in Colombia, that is at the University of Konrad Lorenz, has

\textsuperscript{196} Foundation for Reconciliation, 2009. Technical report of the project “Communitarian Intervention of the Reintegrated Population in Bogotá (Ciudad Bolivar and Suba)”. Internal document provided by the UTC of the ACR.
an agreement with the Foundation for Reconciliation in which senior students make their internships at the reconciliation centers. This activity is designed for all the members of the community in which the demobilized people have settled.

5.3.1.3. Outcomes: Strengthens and weaknesses

The project in Bogotá is a long term project that not only functions with resources coming from the ACR, but also with funding from international agencies, which is an advantage because it has remained in the long term. By April 2009, the project had had functioned for nineteen months (seven more than the established by the ACR). In addition, the project is a Catholic base activity which is an advantage in the sense that the Catholic Church has a privilege position in Colombia in terms of conflict transformation and conflict resolution.

By taking Lederach’s proposal about thinking “leadership in the population affected by a conflict in terms of a pyramid”\(^\text{197}\). In the top of the pyramid there is the “Top Leadership” which includes the political, military, international organizations and religious leaders who are focused on high level negotiations. In the middle level one can find leaders “who are highly respected as individuals and/or occupy formal positions of leadership in sectors such as education, business, agriculture or health”\(^\text{198}\). In this level we can also place ethnic, religious, academics and humanitarian leaders. At the middle level, the work is focused on problem solving workshops and trainings in conflict resolution. The importance of these leaders depends not on the power or influence, but in the relationships and the capability of connect their activities with the top and the bottom


\(^{198}\) Ibid, p. 41.
level. Finally, at the bottom level, we find grassroots leadership. In this place of the pyramid we usually find local leaders, leaders of indigenous NGOs, community developers, and pastors. At the bottom level, the peacebuilding leaders develop activities such as grassroots workshops, psychological work and local peace commissions\textsuperscript{199}.

In Colombia, the Catholic Church has the capacity of moving from the top to the bottom, as well as in a horizontal way. This fact has helped the Foundation of Reconciliation to have deep linkages at all levels of the pyramid, and to have very strong acceptance within the communities in which it has worked. This is reflected in the outcomes. By April 2009, 525 people coming from the host communities in Suba and Ciudad Bolivar had attended the training workshops in forgiveness and reconciliation. In the same way, 364 people have attended the training workshops in manual arts and drama. The violence prevention strategy had covered 410 people from the communities, and the counseling service at the reconciliation centers is one of the most consolidated processes.

In addition, the Foundation has a strong expertise in tracking and evaluating the projects that they implement. This strength is evident in the way in which the Foundation reports to the ACR the activities developed every three months. However, it is important to note that the fact that the Foundation is located in Bogotá is a plus that the projects have since in Bogotá there are more resources and it is easier to have access to them if it is compare with the situation in rural areas of the country.

\textsuperscript{199} Ibid.
5.3.2. The project “Building a Pathway to Peace in Cartagena”

The Project “Building a Pathway to Peace in Cartagena” was the first project that the High Commissioner for Reintegration implemented in the host communities of people in process of reintegration in 2008. According to Santiago Torres, member of the UTC team in Bogotá, the project in Cartagena is an important process that the UTC wanted to replicate in the different host communities in which the ACR has intervened. The project in Cartagena is important is a benchmark in the communitarian reintegration process because it combined projects and activities, most of them related with infrastructure, which benefited the whole community in four neighborhoods in Cartagena. At the same time, the project included productive activities for demobilized population, victims of violence and members of the community.

The Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar was responsible for designing and implementing the project, which was carried out within the one year timeline. The project covered four of the poorest neighborhoods in Cartagena, in which there is a high concentration of former combatants as well as other vulnerable populations, such as internally displaced people. The project was specifically focused on the process of political education, based on the idea of creating spaces for discussing public affairs.

After the twelve months funded by the ACR and the United States Agency for International Development, the project got an extension for two additional months to for the next two years. The extension finished on February 2009, and by August 2009 the

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200 Santiago Torres is part of the team from the ACR based in Bogotá and he was the person in charge of tracking and devaluating the project in Cartagena. Santiago had two meetings with me in which he explained the structure of the project in Cartagena, helped me to identify and contact the stakeholders of the process in this city and gave me central data to review before the field work in Cartagena. The meetings took place in Bogotá in July 23 and 24, 2009.

201 The neighborhoods are: El Pozón, Nelsón Mandela, Policarpa-Arroz barato and Paraiso II.
project was still looking for additional money to continue its activities. This section presents the main objectives of the project, a summary of the activities and strategies implemented in order to promote an effective reintegration of former combatants into the host communities; and as a way of conclusion, this part will present the strengths and weaknesses of the project, as well as the actions that can be replicated in similar contexts.

5.3.2.1. Objectives of the project

The main objective of the project is that the host communities become effective in public affairs. According to the final report, in this way “the communities acquire the social agency needed to restore the institutions and to achieve reconciliation within the community. For this reason, the project focuses on developing skills to communicate through democratic means and procedures”\textsuperscript{202}. Deliberation, dialogue, and democracy are central elements of the project. The work in Cartagena had a deliberation perspective in which politics is a process built by the communities through their social agency. The aim of deliberation is to make collective decisions, not as a way of negotiation within different forces with different levels of power, but as a result of discussion and agreement within the society. In sum, the main objective is to promote collective action through social agency.

In order to achieve an effective social agency in terms of transforming the society, the host communities need to acquire communicative skills and learn about democratic processes based on dialogue. In the project, dialogue is the process by which it is possible to achieve change and transformation in the society: “Dialogue, as a mean of

communication, is a process of interaction within human beings who respect and listen to other people’s ideas in order to obtain a change in the society that will benefit the entire community\textsuperscript{203}. The final report of the project establishes that dialogue is a key element for peacebuilding in the sense that through dialogue it is possible to think, discuss and heal the wounds that the war left both in victims and in former combatants.

In the concrete case of Cartagena, the project aimed to debate about the process during and after war that individuals, as well as their families, went through; the reintegration process into civilian life and the ideas that both members of the community, as well as the demobilized people, have about their lives in the near future in order to coexist and to reconstruct the confidence lost during war time\textsuperscript{204}.

Finally, the project points out that one of the specific objectives of the process is to work on a reconciliation process with all the different populations that compose the communities. The project recognizes that it is challenging the fact that in most of the host communities in this city there is a variety of conflicting populations, such as demobilized people coming from the paramilitary groups, guerrilla and former guerrilla members, as well as victims of violence of both illegal groups (guerrillas and paramilitaries), specially internally displaced people, who converge in the neighborhoods where the project has been implemented.

5.3.2.2. Activities and strategies implemented

The communitarian project in Cartagena focused on education in democracy, through the construction of deliberation and debate spaces, and in productive projects for

\textsuperscript{203} Ibid, p.8

\textsuperscript{204} Ibid, p. 9
the members of the intervened communities. These two strategies “aimed to develop a comprehensive process for the members of the communities (both former perpetrators and victims of violence), to train them in political skills and productivity at the same time”\textsuperscript{205}.

Germán Ruíz, from the Universidad Tecnológica de Bolívar, and Coordinator of the Project in Cartagena, points out that both strategies were interrelated: “first, people were trained in democratic procedures and in communicative skills that during several workshops that we organized in the different neighborhoods involved in the project. In these workshops people learnt how to prioritize the needs of the community, the importance of democracy and democratic procedures as well as the institutional paths to design and implement a communitarian project. In addition, some of the workshops focused on leadership skills, which in many cases were exclusively addressed to demobilized population. After the two first months of educational work with the communities, we started to work on identifying the needs of the community and deciding, through deliberative processes, which activities they, as a community, wanted to develop. In the four neighborhoods people agreed on working on infrastructure projects”\textsuperscript{206}.

In this way, the main outcomes of the project benefited the whole community in three out of the four places were the project took place. In the case of the project in “Nelson Mandela”, people agreed on paving one of the busiest streets of the neighborhood. This the only street paved in the area and it allowed the community to work together during three months. For Ruiz, “this is the best example of coexistence and reconciliation, because in this case it did not matter if you were victim of the conflict or

\textsuperscript{205} Ibid, p. 13

\textsuperscript{206} Germán Ruíz, interview July 25, 2009, Cartagena de Indias – Colombia.
demobilized from the guerrillas or the paramilitaries. The important issues in this process were related to the process of working together and did it well because it will benefit the entire community”\(^{207}\).

In addition, in Nelson Mandela, the coordinator of the project found that there was a not exploited musical talent within some of the young people from the community. For this reason, Ruiz proposed them to organize a project in order to obtain some money to build a studio in which they were able to produce their music and videos. “The original project did not include this outcome, but it emerged and people did very well, to the point that they got the money to carry it out”\(^{208}\). In “Policarpa” neighborhood people agreed to remodel the community center and to build a space on it for cultural events.

On the other hand, in “El Paraiso” the main problem, that people identified, was a space that people had been using during the last ten years for trash; therefore it was plenty of plagues and it was generating several diseases, especially within the infants\(^{209}\). So the community decided to create a project to take all the trash off and build a soccer field in that place. It is important to mention that although the whole project involved the community, nobody took responsibility for the maintenance of the place, and three months after people finished its construction, it started to be used by the inhabitants as a trash again. Finally, in the neighborhood “El Pozón”, the project bought audiovisual equipment to create a sort of cinema there. This project in “El Pozón” has not had an evaluation and tracking since the team in charge of the coordination of the project had limitations in terms of time and money to cover the four neighborhoods at the same time.

\(^{207}\) Ibid.

\(^{208}\) Ibid.

\(^{209}\) Ibid.
5.3.2.3. Outcomes: strengths and weaknesses

The project in Cartagena undoubtedly is one of the most outstanding projects of the UTC due to the fact that it produced more results than what of the initial project contemplated. It has to do with many variables. The first one is the experience that the coordinator of the project in Cartagena has in designing and implementing projects in the community. In this sense, The UTC made a very good selection of the “operator” for the project. Second, the communities where the project functioned are plenty of people coming from vulnerable populations who are in need of job opportunities and training, as well as they have several initiatives and projects that could not have been carried out due to the lack of financial support and even orientation of how an initiative can be developed.

In the case of Cartagena there is something special about the people coming from marginalized societies and it’s the fact that there is a lot of musical and dancing talent coming from the traditional culture of the Caribbean Coast. In this sense there is a very strong potential to develop a variety of projects in these places at the community level. In addition, there is These strengthens make the project in Cartagena to have concrete results in the places where they intervened.

However, the project, as it is proposed in the official documents, does not make clear how the team in charge of the project understands the concept of peacebuilding used as a basis for designing the strategies and activities. Moreover, the project goes through general statements about reconciliation and peace which need to be expanded to make clear what the linkages between the promotion of debate and dialogue and peacebuilding processes are. Ruiz, in this respect is very coherent with the public policy of

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reintegration and says that “we understand peacebuilding as coexistence as reconciliation within the community and in order to achieve that it is necessary first to promote dialogue and teach and train people who to solve conflicts through peaceful and legal means”. Nevertheless, the strategies and goals are planned to present some results in the short term, which makes difficult for the operators to propose projects that promote long term peacebuilding strategies that will help to transform the root causes of the conflict.

Although in the case of Cartagena there were concrete outcomes in the communities, there is no evidence that these outcomes transformed in some way the dynamics within the people in the community. In the case of the soccer field in the neighborhood “El Paraiso” is evident that there was not a long term plan for the maintenance of the place. In addition, since the project did not include an individual economic incentive for the demobilized people to participate in the different activities of the project, there was a low involvement of this population in the communitarian projects. In this respect, one of the leaders of the community mentioned that “they (the demobilized people) have to comply with many other activities in order to obtain the monthly payment that the ACR gives to them. So, most of the time they have to choose to attend either the activities that the ACR establishes as mandatory for the monthly payment or the communitarian activities in which they do not receive any material benefit in the short term”.

Finally, one of the main challenges that both the team in charge of coordinating the project, as well as the leaders at the community, is the fact that there is a lack of coordination between the governmental institutions at the local level and those that are at the national level and are in charge of intervening the vulnerable populations involved in
the process (IDP’s, Children, victims of the conflict). This lack of coordination not only has consequences in the development of the projects, but also in the communities in Cartagena because in many cases there are neighborhoods, which due to their poverty condition, are over intervened by different organizations and governmental institutions, and there are some others that have never received any benefit from them.

5.4. Assumptions about Peacebuilding

The public policy designed to frame the DDR process in Colombia identify as a critical point for demobilized people the fact that they have to return and settle to communities that have been deeply affected by violence. For the government, coexistence and reconciliation are two key issues that need to be taking into account in order to contribute to an effective reintegration process of former combatants. There are three main problems that the government wants to address with the communitarian reintegration process.

First of all, there are high levels of stigmatization of the demobilized people within the host communities because of the human rights violations perpetrated by the former combatants. Moreover, in some cases the communities are afraid of hosting back the newly demobilized population because the guerrillas can accuse and attack the members of the communities from supporting paramilitaries (even if they are demobilized) or the people who have deserted the illegal armed groups. In fact, this is the main problem that the communitarian component has to address since, as it was mentioned before, the DDR process has been carried out in the midst of the conflict and does not include all the warring parties in conflict.²¹⁰

²¹⁰ Ibid, p. 23.
In addition, and as a second point, in the communities, as well as in the society in general, there is a sense that the reintegration process is just benefiting those who perpetrated violence and remain illegal, while the communities and the victims of the conflict are not getting any benefit from the government. The government slightly mentions this problem in the public policy by referring to it as “in the communities, and in the society in general, people do not trust in the process and have some kind of resentment since they might perceive that the High Commissioner is addressing its actions exclusively to the former combatants, and the social and economic strategies are not equity with the victims of the armed conflict. In fact, there is a general idea that there is a strong assistencialism towards the demobilized population in a context where victims and perpetrators of violence have to coexist”211.

In this context it is important to highlight that the government recognizes that there is a general sense of inequity related with the benefits that the demobilized population is receiving. Moreover, the government points out that there is not an institutional framework to guide and to support the reconciliation process within the communities and there are not mechanisms established to promote conflict transformation and peaceful coexistence between victims and perpetrators in the host communities.

Moreover, the government has not designed and implemented a reintegration policy conducive to a structural and long term peace building. In the public policy for the reintegration process issued in 2008 it is pointed out that the rural areas, and even some urban zones, do not have the required social and economic conditions for former

combatants to reintegrate into civilian life. On the contrary, the lack of educational and job opportunities make these places to be conducive for ex-combatants to come back to the illegal activities. In addition, in some of these places there is a strong presence of illegal armed groups that have not been through a demobilization process, which creates situations in which the demobilized people can be threatened by these illegal groups.

The project in Cartagena, analyzed from the description and evaluation presented in the final report reflects the same assumption that the public policy on reintegration has about democracy and politics. There is an assumption that there is something wrong in the political way in which the community makes decisions, designs and implements projects. However, both the public policy and the project in Cartagena do not present what the diagnosis of the political situation is, why it should be changed and how this change in the political dynamics is going to contribute to peacebuilding.

注: Ibid., p.25
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Academic peace research, as well as reports and guidelines from international organizations aid agencies, have recently included host communities as a key element that must be taken into account in DDR processes. Reintegration of former combatants, coming from legal and illegal armed groups, into civilian life has two dimensions. The first one is the individual dimension in which each demobilized person receives a package of benefits and services that would help him/her to carry out individually his/her reintegration process into civilian life. The second is the communitarian dimension of DDR.

During the last decade, the DDR experiences in Africa and Asia practitioners and scholars both concurred that host communities must be included in the reintegration process of former combatants. This need emerges from the fact that in post-conflict societies that former perpetrators of violence have to coexist and interact with victims of war in the host communities. Theory and practice have shown that victims have a strong resentment towards demobilized people not only because of the past actions during war time, but also because people in process of reintegration receive benefits that victims, as well as other sectors of the society, cannot access by regular means, such as subsidies, education and job training, among others.
For this reason, this paper stated that a peacebuilding process should take into account the both the dynamics of perpetrator/victim co-habitation that take place in the host communities and the address the concerns of the victims in order to have a more comprehensive public policy and to achieve a sustainable peace. In this context, this paper addresses the discussion of what communitarian reintegration means and implies within the context of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration processes. In order to do that, the paper presented a theoretical review of the most recent literature in DDR that takes into account the communitarian component.

Two African cases were briefly presented as examples of reintegration processes and then focused on the reintegration process in Colombia for the primary analysis of the paper. I chose the process in Colombia as a case study not only because of my knowledge of the DDR program in my home country, but also because the Colombian case has many unique features that can contribute to DDR focus within peace studies. First of all, the DDR process in Colombia has been carried out in the midst of the conflict and, consequently, has not included all the armed warring actors. Second, this is a reintegration process that combines two different types of demobilization: the collectively demobilized people coming from the paramilitary groups as a result of a peace agreement with the government of Colombia and the individual demobilization combatant who receive government economic incentives to abandon the armed structures and reintegrate into civilian life. Third, the DDR process has been implemented during the last seven years, which means that it is the program that has lasted the most during the last decade. Finally, the DDR program in Colombia has a strong and very well developed component in the reintegration public policy devoted to work with the host communities.
In the process of analyzing the theory, the two examples of the African cases, as well as the case study of Colombia, many conclusions arise. First, community reintegration can be defined as the process in which the host communities take an active part in, and benefit from, the reintegration program which traditionally was designed exclusively to benefit the former combatants. The communitarian perspective takes into account the fact that there is an existing tension between demobilized people and victims since the former receive benefits from the government, while the latter are still waiting for the government to repair, compensate and restitute them.

For this reason, it is important to create spaces in the host communities in which victims and ex-combatants are able to at least co-exist if not reconcile. These spaces require the inclusion of all the sectors of the society affected by violence and involved in war. The concept of transformative reintegration presented in the theoretical framework is innovative and perfectly fits with this need for an inclusive concept of reintegration. Indeed, transformative reintegration is the process in which not only the individuals who are demobilized, but also the communities in which they settle benefit from the human and economic resources that are devoted to the reintegration process. The “transformative” dimension of the concept has to do with the idea that it is necessary governments invest in developmental projects, which benefit the whole community, on one hand; and contribute to the development of the society, on the other. In this way, by implementing transformative projects, the victims and the members of the community would benefit in the same way that perpetrators of violence do once they decide to demobilize. In those societies where war left weak governmental institutions and the
infrastructure was destroyed, it is necessary that the international community promotes reintegration processes with this transformative perspective.

This transformative perspective depends on the political will of the national government in terms of changing the traditional reintegration program based on economic incentives to assure that former combatants will remain in legal life, to apply a new system in which the whole community benefits from the resources allocated to the reintegration process. It is risky for governments to assume this new transformative perspective since the short term outcome of reaching high levels of security after the demobilization process might not be reached.

In this sense, one can propose to implement reintegration processes composed by two stages. The first, and shorter one, would focus on the individual dimension of the reintegration process in order to stabilize the society and to reach the desired security levels. The second stage would be devoted to include the host communities in the reintegration process and to promote transformative projects.

In this context, by comparing the cases of Sierra Leone and Liberia one can conclude that the success of a reintegration process depends on the design and implementation of a comprehensive program that includes the political, economic and social dimensions referred in the theoretical framework. The fact that Sierra Leone has not experience war since 2002, might be taken as a positive consequence of the achievements in the reintegration program. In addition, the measures and activities developed at the communitarian dimension in this case not only were successful, but also were very well planed and implemented that can be replicated in similar context of post conflict situation. However, Sierra Leone continues facing high levels of
underemployment and it is not clear how the reintegration program contributed to former combatants recognizing democratic values and promoting conflict resolution through peaceful means. Although the Sierra Leone reintegration program was more comprehensive, it does not guarantee a sustainable peace in the long term.

On the other hand, the case of Liberia provides a complete opposite situation in spite of the fact that the reintegration model that was implemented in this country was taken from the Sierra Leone’s experience. As it was mentioned before, the main problem in the Liberian case was the lack of planning, funding and monitoring of the whole process. Nevertheless, the extremely bad social, economic and political conditions in which the DDR program was designed and implemented were the most direct causes of the failure of the DDR program in Liberia.

This conclusion suggests that there are other variables that must be taken into account while analyzing and evaluating DDR programs, such as the institutional, economic and communitarian capacities of the societies to face a reintegration process in the aftermath of a conflict. It is not methodologically correct to evaluate cases in which the institutional and economic capacity of the country have not been deeply affected by the war, such as in the case of Colombia, and a case in which all the dimensions of the society were devastated by the armed conflict, as it occurred in the case of Liberia.

These two African cases are important to analyze the case in Colombia in the sense that they help us to understand some the features of a reintegration process in conflicting societies. However, it is important to note that the reintegration processes in Liberia and Sierra Leone took place in post conflict situations, while in the case of Colombia, the reintegration process has taken place during an ongoing conflict.
On the other hand, the analysis of the communitarian component in the reintegration process in Colombia left us also several conclusions and some recommendations. First of all, this program has a concrete component in which the different actors of the community are involved. The sole fact that there is a communitarian perspective in the public policy, as well as the existence of the UTC – specialized in the work with host communities – gives us enough evidence to conclude that in Colombia the reintegration process has an inclusive and long term perspective.

Moreover, the UTC has made an effort to systematize the model that they are applying in Colombia. This model consists of a framework that defines the strategies, timeline and activities that can be applied in a context of communitarian reintegration. The UTC has the main goal of systematizing the whole process with the communities in Colombia in order to create a model that can be implemented or adapted in similar contexts of peacebuilding. This idea emerged due to the fact the initial team had at the beginning of the project limited information and none reference of previous experiences of communitarian reintegration.

One of the main strengthens of the communitarian process is the fact that the UTC had a very good team of professionals, who have been very assertive in the process of selecting the places where the project is going to be implemented, as well in the selection of the operators in charge of the projects. In the cases of Bogotá and Cartagena, the previous experience of the operators played an essential part in the process of implementing the project and reaching the goals. The good quality of the human resources is complemented by the fact that the UTC is the unit of the ACR that has
received more funding per year to implement their projects. This economic factor, allows the UTC to design and implement projects with high levels of quality.

In this sense, the communitarian perspective of the reintegration process in Colombia meets two of the three elements of what I defined as an effective communitarian reintegration process. First, this process has an inclusive perspective of reintegration in the sense that it seeks to include the different sectors of the society in the host communities. Second, the communitarian component has been founded and supported by aid agencies from the international community, specially USAID and the European Union, as well as the national government.

However, as it was mentioned in chapter 5, if communitarian reintegration is conceptually vague and its strategies ambiguous and in some points unclear due to the fact that they are presented in very general terms, the process will be weak and fail. In addition, there are some assumptions in the public policy, as well as in the projects in relation with the nature and the root causes of the conflict in the country. It is assumed that the dynamics at the political level are wrong, and that the solution is to promote and educate people in democratic values. The problem emerges with the fact that it is not clear which political dynamics are wrong, why they are wrong, and why it is necessary to educate people in democracy. It is not clear either how this assumption addresses the political roots of the conflict. This situation is evident in the analysis of both cases in Bogotá and Cartagena.

This problem could be addressed by clarifying those mentioned aspects in the proposals for the implementation of the projects. Moreover, one of the problems evident in the process is that the projects, such as the one in Bogotá, are repeating activities and
strategies that other units of the ACR have been applying. The concrete case in Bogotá is that the reconciliation centers are carrying out counseling and training activities. The ACR has two different units in charge of counseling and to economic reintegration. It is recommended, indeed, that the projects selected by the UTC, enter into an internal coordination process with other areas of the ACR in order to avoid that the activities are repeated.

Finally, the UTC has not implemented the transformative perspective of the reintegration process. This is not a problem since the ACR made a rigorous process to select a strategy to work with the host communities. However, the most important recommendation that one can make to the ACR is to review the concept of transformative transformation and try to promote and support those projects that fit into this perspective. This new perspective would complement the excellent work that the UTC has been already doing because it would allow the ACR to create a more effective and productive projects, which at the same time would lead and contribute to achieve a sustainable process of peacebuilding in Colombia.
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