

# Rwanda (RDRC, 2001 – 2008)

## Context

### Conflict

Following Rwanda's 1994 genocide, amongst the more than two million displaced persons in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (herein DR Congo) were members of the former Armed Forces of Rwanda (FAR, in *French Forces armées rwandaises*) and the Interahamwe militia belonging to the Hutu ethnic group. This situation enabled armed combatants to regroup and launch new attacks on Rwanda, with consent from the government of the Congo. In the DR Congo, both armed factions formed the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR, in *French Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda*). On numerous occasions, the Rwandan Defence Forces (RDF, in *French Forces rwandaises de défense*) intervened in the DR Congo in efforts to dismantle the FDLR, which led to a rise in tensions in both countries.

### Peace process

Following the Arusha cessation of hostilities agreements (1993) and the Lusaka ceasefire agreements (July 1999, cessation of hostilities in the DR Congo, regularisation of borders, Joint Military Commission, etc.), Rwanda and the DR Congo signed the **30 July 2002 Pretoria Accord**. Amongst other promises, the Rwandan government committed to withdrawing its troops from the DR Congo and adopting effective measures to return its combatants, with collaboration from MONUC (United Nations Organization Mission in the DR Congo) and different UN agencies. The agreement also agreed to a later dismantling of active members of the FDLR. Both countries agreed to stabilise security on their common border.

### Transitional Justice

The new national unity government of Rwanda has attempted to create mechanisms to try 100,000 persons accused of participating in the 1994 genocide. The government created the Gacaca court system, incorporating traditional mechanisms of justice and reconciliation, and its first rulings were passed in early 2005. Gacaca courts use participatory justice mechanisms to uncover truth, accelerate trials for genocide, eradicate the culture of criminal impunity, and strengthen Rwandan unity. The courts do not work to recover or trace the origins of weapons.

Gacaca courts have jurisdiction over suspected planners, organizers, and leaders of the genocide. A major challenge for the system is to connect reconciliation to DDR, an essential element of Rwanda's post-war rehabilitation strategy. Human rights organizations have questioned the adequateness of Gacaca, arguing the courts cannot pass just sentences because court officials lack training and are susceptible to being used for revenge.

In September 2006, the government submitted a list of leaders sought for serious crimes in Rwanda and worked with MONUC to expand a list of leaders of the Hutu Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (known by its French acronym FDLR). According to official Gacaca sources, approximately 55,000 individuals accused of participating in the genocide will be sentenced to community service rather than imprisoned.

### Security Sector Reform

A lack of real reconciliation between the different actors has complicated greatly changes to the security sector and has contributed to political instability both regionally and nationally. The main problem lies in the mass proliferation of private security companies. In early 2007, the government completed research into private security companies after growing concern about their use of weapons. The research concluded with the government issuing prohibi-

## Summary

Type of DDR	Demobilization of armed opposition groups and security-sector reform
Groups to demobilize	Total Demobilization of approximately 36,000 ex-combatants of the armed forces (20,000) and of armed groups (16,000)
Implementing bodies	Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission
Budget	\$67.6 million
Timeline	Begun in December 2001, previewed to end in December 2008
Status / synopsis	The Rwanda programme continued to demobilise armed persons, including some 38,731 ex-soldiers of the armed forces (100 percent of anticipated) and 6,423 adults of armed opposition groups (27 percent of anticipated). The Executive of the MDRP visited the country in February to evaluate the progress of the programme.

## Basic facts

**Population:** 10,009,000  
**Refugee population:** 80,955  
**GDP:** \$ 3,319,993,600  
**Per capita income:** \$ 860  
**IDH:** 0,435 (165th)  
**Military expenditure:** \$ 56,000,000  
**Military population:** 33,000 (armed forces); 2,000 (paramilitaries)  
**Arms Embargo:** No

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## Program Design

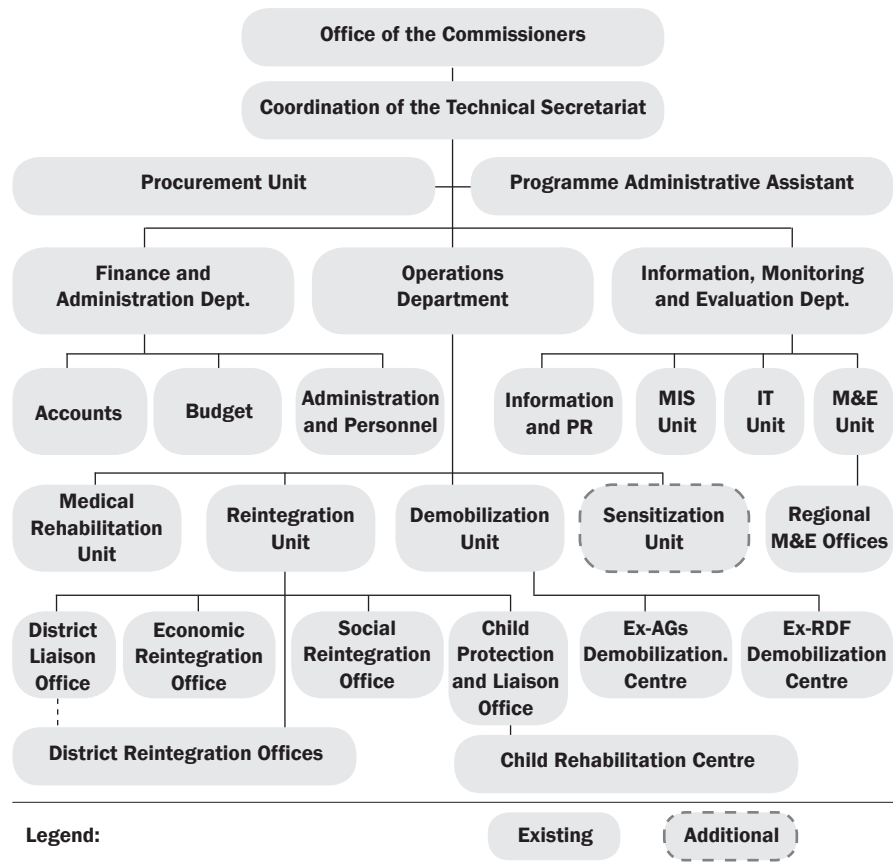
### Type and Designation of DDR

DDR in Rwanda is overlooked by the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Program, RDRP. It involves demobilization of armed opposition groups and security sector reform.<sup>3</sup>

### Implementing bodies

MONUC is responsible for disarming combatants, ensuring their security, and transferring them to home countries where the MDRP helps them reintegrate into their national territories. Created in 1997, the RDRC is responsible for counselling the national government, identifying problems related to social reintegration, and giving guidance to the Technical Secretariat. The Technical Secretariat is responsible for program implementation, calculating annual programming costs, coordinating program phases, administering resources, and managing control and evaluation. The national office assists 12 provinces with reinsertion and reintegration, done by Community Development Committees. The DR Congo and Rwanda created joint strategies of information exchange and sensitization, in response to the presence of Rwandan armed groups in the DR Congo.

Graph 01. RDRC



Source: RDRC

The RDRC and its partners established a Technical Coordinating Committee whose goal it is to coordinate all agencies nationally and internationally. Members of the committee include the International Committee of the Red Cross, MONUC, UNICEF, the World Food Programme, the UNDP, and the Rwandan Ministries of Health, Local Administration, Youth, Finance and the Economy, and Defence. Other participants include NGOs and donors, the UK Department for International Development, German Technical Cooperation, the World Bank, and the embassies of the Netherlands, Japan, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, and France.<sup>4</sup>

tions on a number of companies and demanding greater guarantees from companies on their use of arms, as outlined in national legislation. This strict abidance to legislation came as part of the government's commitments to the UN Program of Action for Small Arms and Light Weapons.<sup>1</sup>

### Other Disarmament Initiatives

Parliament approved in March 2008 a law to criminalize acquiring, possessing, manufacturing, selling, or storing illegal small arms and ammunition, with penalties ranging from a fine to imprisonment. The law is based on the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime.<sup>2</sup> The government destroyed 160 tonnes of ammunition and explosives in late July 2008. There is an estimated 629 km<sup>2</sup> of territory to demine.

### Background to DDR

Demobilization and repatriation occurred in two phases. The first phase took place from September 1997 to February 2001 and involved the demobilization 18,692 soldiers belonging to the Rwandan Patriotic Army (known by its French acronym APR). 2,364 of the soldiers were children. Military operations in the DR Congo and difficulties on the border led to persistent insecurity, which impeded reductions to military expenditures and a higher diminution of APR combatants. A lack of economic resources, moreover, has limited the furtherance of social reintegration programming in Rwanda. Meanwhile technical and managerial limitations have frustrated the expectations of ex-combatants. The budget for the first phase of DDR was \$19.4 million, or an average \$1,036 per combatant (1997-2001).

Lessons adopted by the government include the creation of a Technical Secretariat, counselling before demobilization to avoid the generation of false expectations, giving economic aid for social reintegration, making available information and counselling, giving specific assistance to disabled combatants, centralizing information management, and bettering assistance and coordination in general.

1 All Africa, January 14, 2007.

2 The New Times, March 19, 2008.

3 RDRC, <<http://www.rdrc.org>>

4 RDRD, op. cit.

Given the variety of national demobilization and reintegration initiatives in the Great Lakes region, World Bank MDRP began work in Rwanda, after consultations with local governments, donors, and UN agencies. The aim of the MDRP was to centralize programming nationally and advise the Rwandan government on program implementation. UN agencies such as UNICEF, and various international NGOs, focussed their efforts on reintegrating child soldiers. It is important to note that no specific UN peacekeeping force exists in Rwanda, though MONUC plays a major role in the region. MONUC developed a series of methods to improve information sharing on the situation in Rwanda between combatants in the DR Congo and their families, with an end to returning the combatants to their home countries.<sup>5</sup>

## Guiding Principles

DDR work in Rwanda focuses on

- demobilizing approximately 36,000 ex-combatants, 20,000 from the old Armed Forces and 16,000 from armed groups, with support for reintegration into civilian life;
- reinserting ex-FAR members and reducing government military spending by redirecting funds to social and economic projects;
- reintegrating ex-combatants demobilized in a previous phase into social and economic life, in compliance with the Arusha Agreement, bringing the total number of reintegrated ex-combatants to 57,000;
- providing consistent support for ex-combatants, assisting communities with reintegration, and promoting confidence measures in government; and
- ensuring social security and pensions for ex-combatants not given RDRC assistance.<sup>6</sup>

## Participants

36,000 ex-combatants were expected to demobilize, 20,000 members of the old Armed Forces and 16,000 former members of armed groups. In the first phase of demobilization and repatriation, 47,400 and 57,000 ex-combatants were targeted for reinsertion and

reintegration respectively. In the second phase, 20,000 members of the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) were scheduled for demobilization, in addition to 6,500 in the first phase (in total, 35 percent of all demobilized persons), 16,000 of a total 30,000 members of armed groups (the remaining 5,000 will be incorporated into the Armed Forces and will not receive reintegration money), and 15,000 former members of the Armed Forces resident in Rwanda.<sup>7</sup>

There were estimated 21,000-23,000 ex-FDLR combatants in the DR Congo. 13,000 have repatriated and 8,000-10,000 remain to be so. It is not clear whether all these combatants are Rwandan nationals.<sup>8</sup>

## Eligibility Criteria

A member of a Rwandan armed group must show proof of<sup>9</sup>

- Rwandan nationality,
  - status as a combatant,
  - affiliation to an armed group;
- military experience combating the APR in the DR Congo or Rwanda; or
- military ability (e.g., the ability to use a gun).

## Budget

According to the MDRP, the total budget for the second phase of demobilization and repatriation was \$67.6 million. Though the second phase focussed on a new group of 45,000, another 21,650 individuals will receive part of a \$7 million reinsertion and reintegration project.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 01.**

Donor	Million \$	%
World Bank (International Development Association)	32.7	48.3
MDTF	14.4	21.3
United Kingdom, DFID	8.8	13.1
Germany, GTZ	8.6	12.7
Government of Rwanda	2.7	4.0
African Union	0.3	0.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>67.6</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: MDRP, *Rwanda Fact Sheet*.

## Schedule

The first phase of DDR began in September 1997 and ended in February 2001, operating for a total 42 months. The second phase began in December 2001 and was scheduled to conclude in December 2008, according to the World Bank.<sup>11</sup> It is important to note that the MONUC repatriation program in the DR Congo remains active.

## Stages

### Demobilization

Key demobilization activities include transferring identity documents, gathering socioeconomic data, and creating a database of program recipients. Grouping ex-combatants is a good way to facilitate education on hygiene and HIV/AIDS, an opportunity to disseminate information on programming benefits and civilian life, and a way to organize transportation from camps to host communities for reinsertion.

Demobilization of the 20,000 ex-Armed Forces combatants is scheduled to occur in four phases, one phase per 5,000 combatants over an 18-month period, with no single combatant remaining in a phase for more than 15 days. Demobilization for returning Rwandan combatants is scheduled to occur after combatants abroad are repatriated. Returning Rwandans and members of armed groups in Rwanda requires additional counselling for reconciliation. Combatants will be allotted 45 days for demobilization.

Sensitization has centred on aspects of the national economy, unity and reconciliation, economic opportunities in integration, and counselling on a voluntary

<sup>7</sup> RDRD, op. cit.

<sup>8</sup> MDRP, op. cit.

<sup>9</sup> RDRD, op. cit.

<sup>10</sup> RDRD, op. cit.

<sup>11</sup> MDRP, *The Demobilization and Reintegration Program*.

<sup>5</sup> MDRP, *Technical Annex*, p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> MDRP, op. cit.

basis. Each armed group receives this sensitization prior to discharge.<sup>12</sup>

### Reinsertion

Reinsertion is a transitional period for ex-combatants, for which the necessities of families of ex-combatants must be provided. The main goal of reinsertion is to return ex-combatants to communities and find sustainable means for them to support their families for a limited time.

Ex-combatants receive a kit of necessities including food for three months and basic survival items worth \$110. They also receive counselling and a national identity card. Individuals demobilized in the first phase are currently being given consideration for services.

Working towards equity in Rwanda, like in other countries, has meant providing, for an unspecified number of women, specialized economic attention to reintegrate women combatants, including women partners of male combatants and females in communities in counselling activities, and monitoring and controlling program impacts. Disabled combatants have been split into two groups, the chronically ill in need of special medical care and the disabled requiring economic and medical attention proportionate to need. Attending to disabled individuals involves medical rehabilitation and treatment for chronic illness.<sup>13</sup>

### Reintegration

The main work of reintegration involves paying ex-combatants sums comparable to what they earned before taking up arms, assisting ex-combatants with reintegration proportionate to their degree of vulnerability, providing choice in electing communities for reintegration, minimizing market irregularities, and finding ways for host communities to participate in the reintegration process. Ex-APR members receive an allowance of \$220 six months after demobilization, with special attention paid to vulnerable persons. The work of social reintegration involves offering counselling, financial aid, job training, formal and informal education, and advocacy. Reintegration, like other approaches to DDR in Rwanda, is split into two phases:

- *Economic reintegration*: creating sustainable living conditions for a set period in order to avoid dependency. Long-term employment creation is connected closely to the private sector because ex-combatants serve as important resources for and contributors to the civilian economy. Specifically, economic reintegration involves counselling, financial support, and formal and informal education.

- *Social reintegration*: supporting family networks and creating informal networks of ex-combatants (discussion groups, associations, etc.) which can assist with reintegration. Another goal is to prevent the stigmatization that sometimes incurs from having been a combatant.<sup>14</sup>

## Evolution

The second phase of demobilization and reintegration focussed on two key principles. The first was a goal to repatriate combatants in the DR Congo. Demobilization in the DR Congo involves returning combatants to their home countries so they can be reintegrated there. The Government of the DR Congo has, since October 2003, however, rejected MONUC efforts to repatriate combatants on a voluntary basis, and has demanded regional groups to drive out the FDLR. Interhamwe leader Paul Rwarakabije returned to Rwanda in late November 2003.

The second principle involved programming in Rwanda itself. After a good start to DDR in early March 2003, the Rwandan government requested assistance for demobilization and reintegration from NGOs and public and private institutions because it deemed Community Development Committees insufficiently competent. The government put emphasis on the demobilization of child soldiers, with funding from the ILO, Save the Children, and UNICEF. From November to December 2005, the MDRP organized three repatriations efforts in the DR Congo. Around 300 ex-combatants demobilized and returned with their dependents to Rwanda.

FDLR leaders remaining in the DR Congo, nevertheless, were accused of issuing threats against combatants intending to demobilize, raising doubts about the entire demobilization program. In an effort to stabilize the region and resolve mutual challenges, Rwanda, the DR Congo, and Uganda committed, in August 2004, to disarming militias operating in their territories over a period of one year, with assistance from the African Union. As part of the initiative, Rwanda destroyed 6,000 small arms in late 2004. Regrettably, though, this effort has progressed slowly and with low numbers of participants. A first group of just 24 FDLR combatants and 46 civilians repatriated in Rwanda on October 13, 2005.<sup>15</sup>

In May 2006, the UN Secretary-General asked for details on incentives offered to the FDLR. In response, MONUC set up six temporary camps, three in North

<sup>12</sup> RDRC, op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> RDRC, op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> RDRC, op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> IRIN, May 14, 2004

Kivu and three in South Kivu, with a capacity for each camp of approximately 400 persons. Participants were encamped for 48 hours. Camps were managed by MONUC, which provided all manner of humanitarian assistance, communicated data to the Mixed Commission, and coordinated the RDRC.

While APR child soldiers were demobilized in the first phase of demobilization, around 2,500 youth remained in armed groups. Demobilization and reintegration of the youth conducted in a separate camp involved reunifying them with family, attending to trauma and psychosocial injuries, and giving them access to education and recreation in host communities. Save the Children UK, UNICEF, the Ministry of Gender and Promotion of the Family, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and World Bank MDRP worked with MONUC.

The organizations assisted at an orientation centre where the child soldiers received medical attention and basic training for two or three months, before they were reunited with their families. Rwandan government social workers, working with the Red Cross, located families and distributed orphans to youth centres. Thus far, 624 child soldiers have been demobilized, and of these 534 have reunited with family.

The RDRC, meanwhile, demobilized 372 female ex-combatants. The Ndabaga Association, which advocates for the rights of highly vulnerable groups, is working currently with these women. As for disabled ex-combatants, 8,094 have been taken in.

Regionally, a slow disarmament of Rwandan ex-combatants in east DR Congo raised concerns. The issue concerned the low percentage of repatriated members of armed groups relative to the large-scale repatriation planned. Demobilization of ex-RDF, meanwhile, ran successfully.

Though Ugandan and Burundian armed groups have left the DR Congo largely voluntarily after the signing of peace agreements, remaining to be demobilized are 7,000-8,000 combatants belonging to the FDLR (three quarters in North and one

quarter in South Kivu) and an unknown quantity of combatants repatriated by means of their own. In 2008, MONUC said 6,000 Rwandan ex-combatants had effectively repatriated since 2002.

The MDRP concluded its work in late 2008, saying it had demobilized 29,456 ex-combatants (81.8 percent of the expected figure) and had reintegrated 40,843 (81.6 percent). The MDRP also said it repatriated 6,784 members of the FDLR operating in the DR Congo. Nevertheless, the worsening security situation in the DR Congo slowed the process.

In an evaluation of the reintegration process, the MDRP said ex-combatant and community trust and mutual acceptance improved because communities no longer perceived ex-combatants as threats to local security.

Most ex-combatants used reintegration subsidies to create income-generating work. A weakness was a need to increase awareness of environmental protection by ex-combatants, communities, and leaders. Regarding child soldiers, it was stated that children, as a group, were not homogenous and that greater support was required for education and training. Family reintegration was satisfactory, but psychosocial care and community reintegration need improvement through training. In terms of gender, it was argued more training, health care, and a specific budget were needed.<sup>16</sup>

In October 2008, the Congolese Armed Forces ordered FDLR combatants to demobilize as part of a Nairobi process and a treaty signed in November 2007 to disarm and repatriate 6,000 Rwandan combatants. The Congolese Armed Forces said they would intervene in east Rwanda if the FDLR did not abide by the order. Simultaneously, MONUC launched activities to sensitize residents of North and South Kivu to the process of DDRRR, or disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration, and resettlement. In November 2008,

the UN Special Envoy to the Great Lakes and advisor to Rwandan President Joseph Mutaboba said it was possible demobilized Rwandan soldiers were fighting again in east DR Congo and that their capture was the responsibility of the DR Congo. Rwanda denied Congolese accusations it was supporting rebel leader Laurent Nkunda, and though Rwanda could not show it, it accepted the possibility some Rwandan ex-combatants had joined Nkunda's militias. Rwanda warned the Rwandan Armed Forces would respond forcefully to interference on its territory by the Hutu FDLR or its Congolese allies.

<sup>16</sup> MDRP, op. cit.

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## Glossary

APR: Armée Patriotique Rwandaise

DFID: UK Department for International Development

FDLR: Forces Democratiques pour la Liberation du Rwanda

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GTZ: German Cooperation Agency

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross

IDP: Internal Displaced Person

JRPU: Joint Reintegration Programming Unit

MDRP: Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program

MONUC: UN Mission in DR Congo

RDF: Forces Rwandaises de Défense

RDRC: Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission

RDRP: Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Program

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for the Refugees

WB : World Bank

WFP: World Food Program