



Office of Transition Initiatives

Lessons Learned

DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMING

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants is often a first step in the transition from war to peace. The overarching goal of DDR is to ensure stability and public security in a post-conflict environment – ideally as part of comprehensive security sector reform and development strategy – by eliminating the threat of former combatants derailing peace or recovery.

USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) works to advance peace and stability in complex, dynamic environments. OTI interventions have largely focused on the “R” of DDR, where assistance can make or break a country’s post-conflict transition. OTI is only one strategic U.S. foreign policy tool in post-conflict environments and cannot address the totality of reintegration requirements. Past and present country program descriptions are included as annexes.

Context for DDR Programs

To increase the impact of DDR, a number of conditions should be in place. These include: (1) a military victory, signed peace agreement, or cessation of hostilities (i.e., a demonstrated commitment to end conflict or willingness to transform conflict); (2) political will and local ownership of the program’s success; (3) agreement between factions on key definitions and processes for DDR, including eligibility criteria; (4) a nonpartisan guarantor of the process; access and transparency of all military units and combatants and functioning command and control; monitoring and enforcement; (5) engagement of the development community at the beginning of the DDR process to integrate it with broader security sector reform and diplomatic and development efforts (i.e., determining eligibility criteria for participants and justice and amnesty for past abuses); and (6) a multi-donor approach.

USAID/OTI DDR Programs	
ANGOLA	1996-98; 2003-04
BURUNDI	2004-2006
COLOMBIA	2001-2002
DR CONGO	2004-2006
EAST TIMOR	2000-2002
GUATEMALA	1997-1998
HAITI	1994-1996
LIBERIA	2004-2006
PHILIPPINES	1997-2001
SIERRA LEONE	1999-2001
SRI LANKA	2010-present

Range of OTI DDR Programming

OTI has supported DDR objectives, primarily economic and social reintegration, with the following activities:

- ❖ demobilization camps and infrastructure;
- ❖ socioeconomic surveys of ex-combatants;
- ❖ temporary jobs, cash-for-work on infrastructure rehabilitation, stipends, subsidies;
- ❖ vocational training, career counseling, job placement – agricultural skills, carpentry, mechanics;
- ❖ income-generation activities – livestock management, agricultural inputs, microcredit;
- ❖ psychosocial support and life skills training;
- ❖ civic education – conflict management, good governance, human rights;
- ❖ community-focused reintegration – beneficiaries include ex-combatants, marginalized youth, internally displaced populations, refugees, and war-affected community members;
- ❖ quick-impact community investment projects (e.g., rehabilitating schools, repairing markets);
- ❖ strategic communication on reintegration processes, overall DDR efforts, and/or political transition; and,
- ❖ institutional support for government entities to foster linkages between government and communities.

Lessons Learned in Program Design

Political Will Is Fundamental to Viable Reintegration – A certain degree of local “buy-in” and political commitment must exist from the beginning for programs to succeed. In nearly all OTI DDR programs, there have been challenges to political will or full government engagement, which can pose threats to long-term stability. In *Haiti*, the government viewed ex-combatants negatively, resulting in a lack of official support for their reintegration. In *East Timor*, competing priorities and lack of consistent engagement by civilian leadership, former military high command, and the UN resulted in delays in demobilization efforts. Programs have attempted to promote greater government DDR buy-in through various means: by receiving funding from and reporting to the national institution in charge of DDR in the *DRC* and by bringing together government, former rebels, and communities in *Mindanao* to identify priority recovery projects. Additionally, disseminating timely and balanced information – through radio broadcasts and by distributing wind-up radios – increased involvement by a range of stakeholders in the DDR processes in *Liberia*.

DDR Programs Must Be Contextually Designed – DDR programs involve more than merely giving people tools or skills. Effective reintegration programs must analyze the means, motives, and opportunities that drive individuals/groups to pick up arms, including underlying socioeconomic factors such as culture, the state of the economy, social ties, and political party affiliations. Programs should be designed to target identified motivations and opportunities. For example, in some places money is the sole motivator, so a livelihoods program would be effective. In other places, where social inequities are the motivating factor, a psychosocial component could be absolutely critical.

A Community-Focused Approach Is Critical – Community-focused reintegration is one of the most effective ways to foster sustainable reintegration and reconciliation. Focusing on areas where people are returning and where ex-combatants and war-affected communities are defining their new roles in society is vital to overall peace and stability. The success or failure of DDR programs has less to do with employment or jobs and more to do with how and to what extent people are accepted back into their communities. Interventions in *Sierra Leone*, *DRC*, *Burundi*, and *Liberia* have mixed ex-combatants and other community members in training/education programs and fostered collaboration through quick-impact projects that address communities’ priority recovery needs.

Breaking Command and Control Structures Is Important – Commanders can be particularly potent spoilers to stability, so it is important for programs to channel their political aspirations towards peace. Many reintegration activities, such as civic education and vocational training, have been more suited to rank-and-file fighters rather than their leaders. In *East Timor*, some former senior guerrilla fighters were hired as program staff and played a valuable role in working with beneficiaries to explain reintegration efforts and develop income-generating activities. In *Mindanao*, former rebel representatives chaired community committees to determine priority training and rehabilitation projects. However, in *Haiti*, lack of effective officer engagement meant that the program was not as effective as it might have been with their involvement.

M&E Should Measure the Right Results – A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework should be in place before a DDR process begins. Baseline data on participant needs as well as information on conditions and resources in target communities is fundamental, not only to M&E but to program design. In *East Timor*, a socioeconomic survey of all Falintil members helped determine relevant income-generating activities and technical training. In *Sierra Leone*, focus groups with a broad coalition of stakeholders shaped the concepts for a training curriculum. In the *DRC*, community members were interviewed on stability and the role of ex-combatants before, during, and after the program to measure changes in ex-combatants’ behavior and the overall perception of stability in the region. It is critical that indicators specifically capture how interventions are increasing stability and public security – the overall goal of DDR assistance – and addressing spoilers and destabilizing elements.

Longer-Term Investment Is Essential – While OTI can help catalyze collaboration and community recovery, follow-on support is vital to maintain stability and security. Pilot reintegration efforts in target communities should factor in the feasibility of replication and expansion to a national level. Most DDR environments face limited economic opportunities for program beneficiaries, impeding the sustainability of engaging ex-combatants in productive activities. In *Haiti*, only 6 percent of vocational training program graduates were employed. Donor coordination is critical, not only to use other programs as platforms to employ ex-combatants or foster economic revitalization, but to help facilitate ongoing support to reintegration objectives.

ANNEX A

ANGOLA (1996 – 1998)

In November 1994, the Government of the Republic of Angola and representatives of the National Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) signed the historic *Lusaka Protocol* peace agreement. It ended 20 years of civil war that devastated the country's infrastructure, displaced more than a million people, and created several hundred thousand refugees in neighboring states.

In July 1995, OTI began demobilization activities focused on quartering, civic training, and education for almost 9,500 ex-combatants, including approximately 200 child soldiers. In addition, OTI supported a Community Revitalization Project (CRP) to facilitate a "return to normalcy" and reintegration within rural communities, including supporting the return of displaced populations, demobilized soldiers, and their families; rehabilitating social infrastructure; and revitalizing the economy in target areas. A strategy was developed for each area to support these objectives, based on consultations with local authorities and community members, which outlined the cultural, political, and economic history of the region, the demographics, the state of physical and social infrastructure, and potential for economic productivity. Representative groups were formed from local and municipal leaders to identify projects, mobilize the community, and manage resources. Actual community projects required a minimum community contribution (generally in the form of labor and materials) of 60 percent of the total project value. Linkages between communities under rebel and government influence were promoted through shared infrastructure improvements, such as road and bridge rehabilitation. Economic productivity was fostered by providing vocational training and tools in various sectors (e.g., carpentry, blacksmithing, and tailoring).

Program evaluations indicated that resettlement was achieved more easily when a "critical mass" of projects was created in a particular region. Assistance contributed to communities' perception of security, but only in an absence of organized military deployment, action, conscription or recruitment. Where support was provided, there was a significant increase in the perceived presence of government authorities and line ministries.

The direct impact on demobilized combatants was difficult to ascertain, given that the actual quartering of UNITA troops and their demobilization was an ambiguous process. Despite individual successes, a lack of political will meant peace did not take hold. The peace process began to unravel in June 1998, and by late 1998, both UNITA and the government stepped up military recruitment and fighting escalated.

ANGOLA (2003 – 2004)

The death of UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi in February 2002 provided the impetus for the negotiation of a third agreement (the Luena Accord) to end hostilities. On August 2, 2002, UNITA's armed force was formally dissolved. Around 90,000 UNITA combatants were demobilized and assisted to return home, with the majority receiving cash payments in support of initial reinsertion; some were absorbed into the Angolan Army. In addition, an estimated 4 million IDPs, refugees, and demobilized families returned after years of displacement. A national program, the Angola Demobilization and Reintegration Project (ADRP), was prepared by the Government based on the Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) framework, negotiated and signed with the World Bank.

OTI assistance for DDR focused more on grassroots efforts and small grants – within a larger program – to promote public debates on reintegration issues, civil society advocacy on human rights and related topics, awareness campaigns on reintegration, and support for community revitalization and civic participation in areas with large numbers of ex-combatants and families.

ANNEX B

BURUNDI (2004 – 2006)

In August 2000, seventeen Hutu and Tutsi political parties signed the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, bringing an end to more than seven years of civil war. The successful shift of power in May 2003 – from a Tutsi to Hutu transitional president – was an important milestone. In November 2003, the last major rebel group joined the transitional government. The National Commission for Demobilization, Reinsertion, and Reintegration (CNDRR) was put in charge of DDR. It commenced operations around December 2004, but only began to process out significant numbers of demobilized ex-combatants in the final months of OTI's program in 2006. As a result, official ex-combatants were not a primary program beneficiary.

Rather than trying to respond to opportunities in all geographic areas, OTI focused on two provinces, with the expectation that large numbers of ex-combatants would resettle there and in light of a history of ethnic conflict and high number of IDPs in those areas. The program included a month-long, community-based leadership training program for influential community members related to conflict resolution, vocational skills training, and small community grants. The vocational training was shaped by discussions with ex-combatants in assembly areas who, after agricultural inputs and land, identified job skills and access to microcredit as their greatest need. Curriculum assumed an illiterate audience. The training was carried out by a staff of 238 teachers and the use of eight vocational training schools; topics included brick and tile making, carpentry, and tailoring, as well as small-business management, numeracy and literacy skills, and civic education related to human rights, democracy, and elections.

A small-grants component aimed to foster cooperation among divided populations. Projects ranged from capacity-building grants for local-level conflict resolution to small-scale infrastructure rehabilitation (i.e., schools, community centers, and water systems) to help ease the impact of large numbers of returnees. Despite limited economic opportunities, the program attempted to provide linkages to the labor market through the formation of associations and access to micro-credit. Fifty-five percent of the participants were from vulnerable groups and remained in their communities during the conflict; the rest of the participants were equally divided among ex-combatants from different armed groups (largely self-demobilized), returned refugees, and IDPs.

The small grants component was an effective means of bringing together formerly feuding ethnic groups, refugees, IDPs, and people that had remained in communities on projects they prioritized. An evaluation of the program noted that demobilization did not keep pace with the creation of the vocational training centers, limiting ex-combatant participation. It also highlighted the value of further assessing the utility of some of the rehabilitated infrastructure for communities' longer-term well-being, although the process of identifying and improving the infrastructure was as important, if not more, than the end product.

ANNEX C

COLOMBIA (2001 – 2002)

OTI helped the Government of Colombia (GOC) prepare for a potential large-scale release of child soldiers as part of a peace process. The former child soldier reintegration program aimed to significantly strengthen the GOC's capacity to receive, counsel, rehabilitate, and reintegrate former child combatants into Colombian society; to clarify their legal status; and to develop a quick-response mechanism in the event of a large-scale release. The project's major counterpart agency was the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF); assistance also addressed its capacity needs.

The program helped improve the technical, professional, and physical capacity of four of ICBF's existing "specialized treatment centers" (to provide housing, counseling, and vocational skills training) for ex-combatant children; support the construction and initial operation costs of two additional treatment centers; and provide for the operation of an emergency reception center in Bogota to attend to child combatants with special care needs. OTI's efforts included advocating to the ICBF the importance of having community and family-based networks up and running to support ex-combatants once they left the ICBF system that could support family reunification, vocational training, half-way houses, and productive projects.

It is estimated that over 200 children benefited from the program, with quality of care being raised significantly through improvements in ICBF staffing (quantity and quality), and through NGO programs addressing children and center staff. The program's impact was limited as the massive demobilization of 600 ex-combatant children did not happen. In addition, the capacity of ICBF and other GOC agencies to provide post-treatment services to ex-combatants needed further assistance upon the end of OTI's program.

OTI handed over the project to the USAID Mission for management and served as an advisor and institutional memory in the interim.

ANNEX D

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC of the CONGO (2004 – 2006)

In December 2002, after seven years of war, the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) signed a peace agreement in South Africa which called for the establishment of a transitional government incorporating all rival factions, integration of all military forces, and a DDR program for around 200,000 armed combatants.

OTI's program was composed of two phases. The initial phase launched a general community-focused reintegration (CFR) effort in eastern DRC, the locus of the fighting. While an official DDR process had not begun, this initiative served to pilot reintegration support as a possible model for the DRC's official DDR program. OTI sought to mend war-torn communities by assisting community members, ex-combatants, and victims of sexual violence to reconcile and rebuild their communities. This objective was particularly important given that many traditional DDR programs had focused on ex-combatants. However, it was critical that interventions not be seen as benefiting perpetrators of the war while ignoring those who did not fight.

The initial phase aimed to have 80 percent youth participation, with youths defined as those between 18 and 35. The first component included a life skills and civic education training course called the "Youth Education and Skills Program (YES)," modeled after an earlier USAID program for child soldiers in Sierra Leone. It was composed of five themes: (1) health and well-being; (2) reaffirmation of values (including psycho-social assistance for war trauma); (3) conflict management and leadership; (4) agricultural skills, income generation, and project management; and (5) democracy and governance. These modules could be adapted for a range of time periods depending on community needs; in most places, the training lasted four months. Over a 22 month period, 16,800 people in over 240 communities took part. A large portion of beneficiaries were ex-combatants, although they could not be counted officially in the absence of an official DDR process.

The second component involved small grants to support community rehabilitation projects. These projects required community participation through donation of labor and/or materials, aimed to address urgent social needs, foster reconciliation among different groups (refugees, displaced persons, victims of sexual and other violence, ex-combatants), and reinforce lessons from the training. The CFR program also raised awareness of the political transition and advanced the reintegration process through wide dissemination of accurate, timely, and balanced information via shortwave radio and listening clubs.

Once the community reintegration pilot was operational and demonstrated a positive impact on participants' behavior, the World Bank adopted the model for its first program as part of the official, national DDR process managed by the Congolese DDR agency, CONADER. Through the World Bank (including funding from USAID's Democracy and Governance Office), CONADER directly funded OTI to implement a DDR program (phase two of OTI's program from October 2005 to August 2006) to benefit 16,240 participants, 11,240 of whom were ex-combatants. All participants received the YES training; ex-combatants and community members were also offered vocational training and a start-up capital kit (\$175) or cash-for-work on infrastructure rehabilitation. Program outreach relied on master trainers, who trained local facilitators – some ex-combatants – nominated and democratically elected by communities for demonstrating leadership potential. Additionally, six-member Community Management Committees, including participation by local government officials and learning facilitators, were established to help oversee reconciliation efforts and facilitate sustainability of interventions.

The program was a success. The training occupied ex-combatants and helped to mitigate their rejoining armed groups. It also built a network of learning facilitators, community committees, and radio listening clubs upon which other USAID programs could build. While the program was management intensive and could benefit from further analyses on replicability, implementation timeframe, and large-scale outreach, its handover success was evidenced by CONADER adopting a community-integrated focus and by additional funding from USAID and the World Bank to continue the program.

ANNEX E

EAST TIMOR (2000 – 2002)

The post-referendum violence and near total destruction of East Timor in 1999 led to the establishment of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) to provide an interim civil administration and peacekeeping mission. As a move towards stability, the leadership of Timorese guerrilla forces (Falintil) struck an agreement with the UN to move all of its active duty troops into a single cantonment, until such time as a new national army could be formed. It was not until February 2001 that 650 troops were selected from among the roughly 1,900 former guerrillas to join the newly forged East Timor Defense Force (ETDF). OTI's objective was to support, through the Falintil Reinsertion Assistance Program (FRAP), the reintegration of the 1,308 guerilla fighters who were not selected or chose not to join the ETDF.

Before support commenced, the program conducted a socioeconomic survey of all members, particularly to help better respond to the needs of ex-combatants. The year-long program included: transport to host communities, a transitional safety net consisting of a \$500 subsidy provided over a five-month period (allowing beneficiaries to address their own priority needs); rapid employment generation to provide six to eight weeks of salary working on rehabilitation priorities; vocational-technical and other forms of training; and reintegration packages that included income-generating activities. Beneficiaries developed income-generating proposals, while program staff helped to make activities more viable in light of local economic and market conditions. The program employed Falintil veterans, including some former commanders, to serve as liaisons between the program and its beneficiaries and provide counseling and information. Beneficiaries viewed these individuals as accessible, responsive, and helpful.

Other donors supporting the program included the World Bank and Government of Japan. However, given that OTI was a major funder, it served on a FRAP steering committee, known as the Commission for the Reinsertion of Falintil Veterans (CRFV), along with the Falintil High Command and UNTAET representatives, to facilitate coordination and sound program oversight.

While the program primarily emphasized economic versus social reintegration, the broad respect for the former guerrillas within society and the guerrillas' own commitment to a peaceful, independent East Timor significantly supported their overall reintegration. In addition, the program was developed in 2000, before formal demobilization took place, allowing donors to plan sufficiently; the design was considered relatively simple and straightforward, contributing to successful implementation.

As with other DDR efforts, political will was a challenge. The limited capacity, competing priorities, and inconsistent participation of the Falintil and ETDF High Command, Timorese civilian leadership, and the UN were limiting factors in addressing follow-up to the program. Like other DDR programs, question arose over eligibility for the program, with upwards of 35,000 self-identified veterans having expected some assistance. While the program helped to successfully reintegrate the majority of former Falintil, there were a few beneficiaries, generally older, more senior, or physically impaired, who had needs beyond what the program could address.

ANNEX F

GUATEMALA (1997 – 1998)

A Firm and Lasting Peace Accord was signed in December 1996 to formally end 30 years of conflict that displaced more than a million Guatemalans and left 200,000 children orphaned. The initial plan for the implementation of the Accords provided a four-year timetable to achieve some 440 commitments. A critical task at the outset was the demobilization of ex-combatants from Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) and their incorporation into the political and economic mainstream, as well as reduction of the Guatemalan army.

OTI's objective was to provide emergency support to facilitate completion of the demobilization process within the tight timeframe set by the accords. To support the reintegration of around 3,000 rebel and military ex-combatants, OTI funded demobilization camps and infrastructure, literacy and civic education programs, vocational training, and scholarships. OTI also supported economic integration activities for URNG rebels throughout the country, including agricultural production on three cooperative farms owned by ex-combatants. A countrywide social communication campaign was run to explain the Peace Accords and rights of returning ex-combatants. In addition, OTI was one of the first donors to pledge support for an ambitious re-training program for 1,722 ex-combatants of the Guatemalan Government's Mobile Military Police units, as part of the downsizing of the national military.

OTI worked closely with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which acted as the overall coordinator of assistance, and the European Union, dividing costs and responsibilities related to construction of the demobilization camps, microenterprise grants to ex-combatants, and other support.

The program was considered successful because OTI was involved from the beginning and the small size of ex-combatants facilitated a relatively stable process of reintegration. When OTI closed its program, an indicator of program success was that none of the ex-combatants trained had neither been implicated in criminal activities nor experienced retaliation by the populace.

ANNEX G

HAITI (1994 – 1996)

In September 1994, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who had been ousted in a military coup in 1991, returned to power under a negotiated agreement between the United States and the regime of General Raoul Cedras. The agreement included the permissive entry of over 20,000 U.S. troops as part of Multinational Force, known as Operation Uphold Democracy. Within this context, two waves of Haitian military (FAd'H) demobilization occurred – the first involved 50 percent demobilizing voluntarily and 50 percent integrating into an Interim Public Security Force; the second wave involved the demobilization of the Interim Public Security Force in June 1995 upon the formation of the new Haitian National Police Force.

OTI's objectives were to (1) mitigate the short-term threat of former FAd'H in order to help protect U.S. forces in Haiti; (2) limit FAd'H negative interference in the broader political transition; and (3) lay a foundation for the reintegration – economic, social, and political – of former FAd'H into Haitian society. All demobilized soldiers were eligible to participate. The demobilized first registered for assistance; if they requested vocational training, they stated their skills and training preferences and participated in orientation sessions. Participants then enrolled in vocational school for six months of training, selecting from 10 vocations (e.g., auto mechanics, electricity, computers). Those enrolled received a stipend (US\$100) for six months, which was roughly equivalent to their military salary, paid by the Haitian government from foreign donor government balance of payment support. The program provided meals and transport money. Upon graduation, soldiers could then participate in an Opportunity and Referral Service (ORS), which provided training on job search skills, employment referrals, and a vocational tool kit.

The program impacted the majority of ex-combatants. It reached out to the estimated 6,250 demobilized FAd'H; of that total, 88 percent registered for assistance. Ninety-five percent of those who registered participated in the training and 94 percent of those graduated. The program was recognized for its speed of assistance – former soldiers waited an average of 10 to 15 days between registration and the start of orientation, thus limiting frustration among ex-combatants. In addition, the stipend provided an immediate source of income for training participants and their families.

While program outreach was impressive, only 6 percent of those who graduated were employed through ORS support, largely due to the poor economic environment in Haiti and the social stigma of the former soldiers. In addition, the program primarily supported enlisted soldiers; only one FAd'H officer participated in the program. Officers were too skilled for the training and many had other sources of income. The program also faced a lack of political will for the overall reintegration effort. There was no post-conflict peace agreement to clearly define reintegration of ex-FAd'H. The government viewed FAd'H as a force that oppressed people for years, while the FAd'H viewed themselves as the country's legitimate security force and demobilization as unjust. In addition, the government faced high turnover and other priorities, which limited public announcements being issued to promote reconciliation and their willingness (and inability, due to fiscal constraints) to pay stipends, pensions, and lost savings to former soldiers – a key demand. Controversy surrounding support to ex-FAd'H also limited linkages with other aid programs, including important microcredit opportunities.

The primary result of any DDR intervention should be enhanced stability/security. In this light, the program had mixed results. In the short-term, the program productively engaged ex-combatants, although primarily enlisted soldiers, and limited conflict. However, in the medium to long term, Haiti's impoverished economy, the withdrawal of donor funds over time for DDR, the lack of government support for FAd'H reintegration, and the lack of broad security sector reform were exploited by different elements of the ex-FAd'H and their supporters, who reorganized themselves in disparate political and military forces and threatened security 10 years after they were disbanded.

ANNEX H

LIBERIA (2004 – 2006)

In August 2003, following former President Charles Taylor's exile in Nigeria, representatives from Liberian rebel groups, the government, major political parties, and civil society signed a Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA). At the same time, they selected a National Transitional Government to govern the country while preparing for elections in October 2005. Insufficient funding for ex-combatant reintegration created instability and grievances among former combatants. However, between 2003 and 2005, 100,000 combatants were disarmed (larger than an original 50,000 estimate) and 200,000 IDPs and 43,000 refugees were resettled. The conflict included an estimated 15,000 child soldiers.

OTI's community-focused reintegration program, known as YES (Youth Education for Life Skills), helped refugees, IDPs, and ex-combatants reintegrate into their communities and civilian life in support of a peaceful political transition. A focus on youth, defined as ages 18 to 35, was a program priority. The program involved a five-month training curriculum, modified from the Youth Reintegration Training and Education Program (YRTEP) program in Sierra Leone, and addressed life skills, basic literacy and numeracy, health, conflict management, and family issues. The program used a training-of-trainers model similar one used in DRC and Sierra Leone, with Community Management Committees, master trainers, and youth teams mentoring community participants. The program also included a small-grants component to facilitate youth leadership in identifying and implementing community projects, tangibly reinforce the training curriculum, and promote community cooperation. Local contractors were utilized to the extent possible, and winning bidders who used work gangs were compensated. The program benefited an estimated 14,000 citizens in 367 communities.

OTI demonstrated flexibility by adapting the curriculum, targeted towards war-affected populations in rural areas, to respond to October 2004 gang violence among disaffected youth in Monrovia. Adjustments included shortening training to an intensive six-week course on conflict transformation, self-awareness, human rights, leadership, HIV/AIDS, and drug education.

The program also provided quick, temporary employment opportunities for approximately 10,000 recently demobilized ex-fighters through civil reconstruction teams coordinated by UNDP. Job activities included clearing or repairing roads and refurbishing schools and clinics and kept ex-fighters productively engaged. In addition to this intervention, the program had a strategic communications plan to disseminate objective information via radio stations and distribute wind-up radios.

Evaluations indicate program impact was demonstrated by increased commitment to volunteerism among youth who participated in training and increased preventative behavior against HIV/AIDS. However, completion of all training modules was a challenge for some participants, possibly due to the length of the program (five months, four nights per week). Some of the small-grant community projects also faced challenges with implementation delays, organizing the necessary labor or getting materials for the community contribution, and addressing the highest priority needs for communities. However, full reintegration involves a change in the attitudes and behaviors of individuals, and evaluations noted that OTI's short-term mandate could only catalyze a longer-term development transformation.

ANNEX I

MINDANAO/PHILIPPINES (1997 – 2001)

On September 2, 1996, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the largest Muslim rebel group in the southern Philippines, signed a peace agreement to end almost 30 years of conflict. In the agreement, the GRP committed to military, political and development efforts to establish stability, peace, and economic growth within a Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD) in provinces and cities with significant Muslim populations. It was envisioned that if the 1996 agreement could be adequately put into effect by the GRP, other smaller rebel movements would also join the peace process.

OTI's objective was to bring tangible benefits to potential spoilers and promote political stability, targeting Muslim areas of Mindanao to demonstrate peace dividends and create incentives for other Muslim insurgents to lay down their weapons. The OTI program was made up of two phases. In Phase I (1997 to 1999), OTI assisted 4,000 ex-combatants and their families to start economic activity within the MNLF areas through the Emergency Livelihood Assistance Program (ELAP), part of USAID's Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) project. Working in small, often isolated fishing and farming villages, OTI provided livelihood assistance, such as agricultural machinery, based on community priorities; the government and community would contribute labor, basic material, training, or funds. Communities repaid the value of production inputs into a community fund to mobilize savings and leverage future loans. Management committees, composed of representatives from the National Economic Development Authority, civil society, and USAID, provided program oversight. Community committees, chaired by an MNLF representative and including civil society, determined participant and site selection.

In Phase II (1999 to 2001), OTI helped ex-combatant villages become more productive and profitable through the Transition Assistance Grants (TAG) Initiative, or "arms to farms" as it was known by many. The goals were to enhance livelihoods within the former MNLF combatant community by improving productive infrastructure and participatory decision-making processes; strengthen alliances between communities and local and national government units; enhance citizen perceptions of government's compliance with the peace agreement; improve relations between Muslim ex-combatant communities and other noncombatant, Christian and, indigenous elements; and provide support to civil society groups advocating for reconciliation and ethnic and religious tolerance. Counterpart contributions from local government units and community groups remained an important component, demonstrating government commitment to the peace effort. OTI assisted approximately 25 percent of the total number of MNLF ex-combatants.

The program helped address some of the root causes of the conflict by fostering communication and building trust between the government and MNLF communities, largely by jointly identifying priority projects and demonstrating the government's commitment to peace through support to those projects. As a result of OTI's intervention and the government participation, several Christian mayors and government officials began to visit Muslim villages, learning to work directly with their constituents. The program also responded rapidly – from the time OTI made the first contact with a community group, it took an average of six weeks for a community-based project to be developed and approved. Another sign of program success was ex-combatants perceiving their future as hopeful and not re-arming, including during a subsequent conflict between the government and another rebel force, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

As in most post-conflict environments, the ability to generate employment was limited; modest increases in income occurred but weather conditions negatively impacted agricultural production and the ability to put significant income into community funds. When the program was evaluated, it highlighted that follow-up assistance to OTI's efforts – particularly related to capacity building for a new generation of leaders and providing literacy and numeracy skills – was critical if longer-term reintegration and overall stability was to succeed.

ANNEX J

SIERRA LEONE (1999 – 2001)

The 1999 Lome Peace Accord between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front was an effort to end a nearly decade-long war and promote reconciliation and reintegration. One of the greatest threats to peace was the return of thousands of ex-combatants to communities, many of whom had been forcibly recruited as children and who had been taught to survive through violence.

OTI's Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace Program (YRTEP) was one of two significant nationwide reintegration programs. The other was run by the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (NCDDR), which was tied specifically to the demobilization process and was solely targeted towards ex-combatants, providing vocational training and a re-entry package.

The community-based program deliberately targeted both ex-combatants and broader war-affected youth to facilitate reintegration and reconciliation, recognizing that marginalized youth in general threatened stability. The OTI program provided remedial education for youth by-passed by schooling; instruction in basic literacy and numeracy skills, life skills, and livelihood skills development in agriculture and other labor-intensive areas; vocational and psychosocial counseling; and training in civic education. A group of Master Trainers taught the curriculum to Learning Facilitators who were chosen by a Community Management Committee (CMC) composed of community leaders. Many of the concepts and priorities for the curriculum came from focus groups involving a broad coalition of stakeholders, including government, rebel forces, NGOs, and experts on war-related issues. The YRTEP curriculum provided intensive training (two to six hours a week for six months to a year) and included a community activism/integration component, such as infrastructure maintenance, sports clubs, or drama groups with peace messages, bringing diverse groups together in a safe environment. The program was related to, but not dependent on, demobilization, which afforded more flexibility in expanding the program and selecting geographical areas. The program impacted over 46,000 individuals at 2,000 sites in two years; initial site selection focused on locations with the highest density of ex-combatants but shifted to being based more on access and security.

The program had some notable achievements. Many of the Master Trainers and Learning Facilitators became genuine leaders and an anchor of stability in communities. Communities perceived youth behavior as less violent after completing the program, as participants had improved understanding of cultural norms and youth were kept engaged in productive activities. Additionally, the program created a higher degree of community activism and optimism.

However, because of the need for quick deployment, the YRTEP curriculum was not piloted; it was also challenging to calculate the number of ex-combatants versus war-affected participants given that many combatants demobilized unofficially. The short-term mandate of OTI did not allow sufficient time to demonstrate improved rates of literacy. Some participants indicated that they felt only partially prepared to implement what they were taught at the end of the training, and, most importantly, the impoverished Sierra Leone economy could not provide job opportunities for those trained.

USAID's Africa Bureau and the USAID Mission picked up YRTEP management and follow-on projects (through the Skills Training and Employment Generation and Skills Training and Employment Promotion programs) which built on YRTEP gains. These projects aimed to strengthen life skills, further promote social reintegration, create temporary employment, provide psychosocial support, and stimulate cooperation between ex-combatants and community members working together on civic works projects.

ANNEX K

SRI LANKA (2010 – present)

Sri Lanka's civil conflict is rooted in a history of long-standing tensions over the fundamental nature of the post-independence Sri Lankan state, largely between the Tamil minority and Sinhalese majority. The current conflict escalated during the 1980s, when Sinhalese and Tamil nationalists provoked open conflict. In July 2007, Sri Lanka's 25-year civil conflict reached a critical turning point when the Government of Sri Lanka (GSL) declared success in its military campaign to clear Tamil separatist movement (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, LTTE) strongholds in the East, bringing the region under full government authority for the first time in two decades. In the North, following several months of intense fighting, the GSL declared its military victory in May 2009. The military defeat of the Tamil movement came at a high price with an untold number of civilian casualties, more than 300,000 displaced from their homes, significant damage to basic infrastructure, the disruption of livelihoods and economic activity, and deep divisions within communities.

In an effort to positively affect Sri Lanka's post-war transition, OTI, through the RISEN (Reintegration and Stabilization of the East and the North) program, is focusing on assisting with the reintegration of former combatants and helping reestablish economically viable and socially cohesive communities. The program prioritizes communities where militant recruitment had historically been high or to which ex-combatants, IDPs, and others are likely to return.

Activities include:

- Quick-impact projects addressing local priorities for economic, social, and cultural recovery in targeted locales;
- Small-scale investment in economically significant infrastructure, livelihood projects benefiting communities, and selective cash-for-work projects to improve economic activity;
- Increasing access to vocational and technical training as well as language training in English and Sinhala (as language remains a fundamental barrier to national reconciliation);
- Re-incorporating war victims, with sensitivity to children and youth, women heads of households, and former combatants within broader recovery schemes; and
- Facilitating sustained communication and cooperation between local authorities (government officials, police, security forces) and citizens to proactively address security and other issues.

As the program moves forward, it must be mindful that the security establishment remains weary of the Tamil community and fearful of the possible reconstitution of a Tamil liberation-like movement. Weapon caches continue to be discovered in former LTTE areas and some LTTE members are known to be at large. The position of the Tamil diaspora is also unclear, with some elements apparently still interested in reconstituting an armed struggle, whether realistic or not. As such, the stabilization of the Tamil communities should not be equated to the pacification of the Tamil population, thus generating further discontent.

The RISEN program is coordinating closely with other local and international initiatives, including efforts by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to collect and verify ex-combatant data in order to provide appropriate referrals to a range of local vocational, life skills, and counseling service providers.

ANNEX L

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

USAID/OTI Web Site Publications

1. [Office of Transition Initiatives 15-Year Report 1994 to 2009](#) (reference to reintegration efforts through country examples) (February 2009)
2. [Liberia Final Evaluation](#) by Social Impact, Inc. (October 2006)
3. [Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, Final Evaluation](#) by Social Impact, Inc. (February 2006);
4. [Community-Focused Reintegration \(Burundi, DRC, and Liberia related\)](#) (2005)
5. [The First Ten Years: An Assessment of the Office of Transition Initiatives](#) (reference to reintegration efforts through country examples) (2005)
6. Special Tenth-Year Edition: [Decade of Transition 1994-2004](#) (reference to reintegration efforts through country examples) (2005)
7. [Final Evaluation of OTI's Program in East Timor](#), Development Associates Inc. (February 2003)
8. [Final Evaluation of the OTI Program in Sierra Leone](#), CARE Inc. and Creative Associates International, Inc. (August 2002)
9. [Final Evaluation of USAID/OTI's Program in Colombia](#) by Gerard Bowers (December 2001)
10. USAID/Office of Transition Initiatives: [Guide to Program Options in Conflict-Prone Settings](#) (Reintegrating Ex-Combatants section – pp. 21-22) (September 2001)
11. [Impact Evaluation Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace \(YRTEP\) Program, Sierra Leone](#), MSI (August 2001)
12. [SWIFT Mindanao Project Evaluation](#): Summary of Findings on Program Impacts (October 2000)
13. Roundtable Report: ["Community-Based Reintegration and Rehabilitation in Post-Conflict Settings"](#), USAID/OTI and UNDP/Emergency Response Division: **Kosovo** and **Philippines/Mindanao** highlighted as OTI case studies (October 30-31, 2000)
14. [OTI's 1999 Five-Year Report](#): (**Angola, Guatemala, Liberia, Philippines/Mindanao** have specific DDR discussions) (May 1999)

For more information please visit www.usaid.gov Keyword: OTI