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**The Impact of Civilians Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)
on Post-Conflict Security in South Sudan**

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to analyze the significance of Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) interventions in post-conflict rehabilitation, specifically focusing on their role in ensuring sustainable peace and security sector reforms in South Sudan.

Methodology: This study employed a comprehensive approach to evaluate the impact of DDR programs in South Sudan. It involved a critical review of academic literature, reports, mitigation programs, and credible news sources from reputable organizations to assess the effectiveness of DDR initiatives in promoting long-term peace and stability.

Findings: The findings underscored the crucial function of DDR programs in post-conflict security within South Sudan. They highlighted the positive effects of DDR interventions in fostering reconciliation, curbing arms proliferation, and facilitating the successful reintegration of former combatants into society.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: This study will contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical implementation by emphasizing the indispensable role of consistent international support for DDR initiatives in fragile post-conflict environments like South Sudan. It recommended continued investment in DDR programs to sustain peace-building efforts and enhance security sector reforms in the region.

Keywords: *Civilians Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration, DDR, South Sudan, Post-Conflict Security, Peace, Arms Proliferation, Security Sector Reforms, Reconciliation*

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INTRODUCTION

The Republic of South Sudan entered the world stage after announcing its independence in 2011. This historic occasion signaled the end of a protracted and brutal civil war that had devastated the area and taken countless lives. There was a general feeling among the international community that South Sudan had finally turned a page in its history, moving from conflict to peace and stability. But as South Sudan began a turbulent journey marred by political unrest, ethnic conflict, and ongoing insecurity, the euphoria of independence quickly faded (Theron, 2020).

A struggle for political supremacy among political elites during the post-independence era resulted in a widening rift within the government and a subsequent descent into conflict (Theron, 2022). The ongoing internal conflict in South Sudan, which is characterized by intercommunal violence and power struggles, not only undermined the country's initial promise of independence but also kept its people in a cycle of instability and suffering (Olonisakin et al., 2016). Civilians Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs have emerged as a glimmer of hope for restoring and maintaining peace and security in South Sudan against this background of ongoing unrest (Theron, 2018).

DDR initiatives have the potential to address some of the main causes of insecurity in South Sudan because they are recognized as an essential component of post-conflict peace building (Okoi and Okoi). DDR initiatives seek to destroy the system of violence that has pervaded the nation for years by disarming combatants, demobilizing armed groups, and reintegrating former combatants into society (Kimotho, 2017). They provide a way to achieve lasting peace and security, promising to both lessen the spread of weapons and promote peace between communities torn apart by conflict.

Despite the optimism surrounding DDR initiatives, their success in fragile and conflict-affected contexts like South Sudan still needs to be critically assessed (Mangok, 2022). Initiatives for DDR must contend with a variety of difficulties in these conditions. The implementation of disarmament and reintegration efforts faces significant challenges from factors like political unrest, ethnic distrust, and the sheer size of the initiatives (Ansorg and Gordon, 2020). Additionally, for DDR programs to have a lasting impact, the international community's support and maintenance are essential.

In the context of South Sudan, this essay aims to thoroughly examine the complex dynamics of civil disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs. It will examine the difficulties the country faces after a protracted conflict and assess the contribution that DDR initiatives make to long-term stability and security. The study will use a thorough research methodology that combines critical literature reviews, analysis of academic journals, reports, and reliable news sources. This methodological framework aims to present a nuanced understanding of the function that DDR programs perform in the broader context of post-conflict peace building in South Sudan. Three main theories were applied to ground the study. They include; Liberal Peacebuilding Theory, The Security Sector Reform (SSR) Theory, and Social Capital and Community Resilience Theory.

Theoretical Review

Liberal Peacebuilding Theory

The Liberal Peacebuilding Theory, as outlined by McAuliffe (2017), offers a framework that posits the establishment of liberal democratic institutions, economic development, and the promotion of human rights as fundamental elements for fostering long-term peace and security

in post-conflict settings. The Liberal Peacebuilding Theory's emphasis on the establishment of liberal democratic institutions aligns with the broader goals of DDR programs in South Sudan (Paffenholz, 2021). These programs aim not only to disarm and demobilize combatants but also to facilitate their transition into productive civilian roles within a democratic framework. By examining the extent to which DDR initiatives contribute to the consolidation of liberal democratic institutions in South Sudan, the study seeks to assess their potential impact on long-term peace and security.

Furthermore, the theory's focus on economic development resonates strongly with the goals of DDR programs, which often include provisions for vocational training, employment opportunities, and economic reintegration for former combatants (Paffenholz, 2021). The promotion of human rights is another key aspect of the Liberal Peacebuilding Theory that informs the study. DDR programs in South Sudan must prioritize the protection and promotion of human rights, including the rights of former combatants, displaced persons, and vulnerable populations affected by conflict.

The Security Sector Reform (SSR) Theory

This theory asserts that restructuring and reforming the security sector, including military, police, and other security institutions, is crucial for sustainable peace and security (Jonyo, 2021). The SSR Theory provides a lens through which to examine the broader implications of DDR initiatives beyond the immediate disarmament and reintegration of former combatants. The study seeks to explore whether DDR programs lead to a more accountable and effective security apparatus by addressing systemic issues within the security sector. This includes issues such as corruption, human rights abuses, and institutional weaknesses that may have contributed to or exacerbated the conflict in South Sudan (Perito, 2020).

One aspect of applying the SSR Theory to ground the study involves assessing the extent to which DDR programs contribute to institutional reforms within the security sector. This entails examining whether DDR initiatives include measures to strengthen the capacity, professionalism, and accountability of security forces, including the military and police. By evaluating the implementation of DDR programs through the lens of SSR, the research aims to identify areas where reforms are successful and areas where further improvements are needed to enhance the effectiveness of the security sector in promoting peace and stability (Perito, 2020).

Furthermore, the study explores how changes within the security sector, facilitated by DDR programs, influence post-conflict security dynamics in South Sudan. This involves examining whether improvements in security sector governance, oversight mechanisms, and inter-agency coordination contribute to reduced violence, improved law enforcement, and enhanced public safety (Jonyo, 2021). By analyzing the impact of DDR initiatives on security sector performance and effectiveness, the research aims to provide insights into the broader implications of disarmament and demobilization efforts on post-conflict security outcomes.

Moreover, the SSR Theory underscores the importance of addressing underlying structural factors that contribute to insecurity and instability in post-conflict settings. This includes addressing root causes of conflict such as social inequality, political marginalization, and economic deprivation, which may have implications for security sector reform efforts (Perito, 2020). By incorporating an understanding of these broader structural dynamics into the analysis, the study aims to assess the potential of DDR programs to contribute to sustainable

peace building by addressing root causes of conflict and promoting inclusive security sector governance.

Social Capital and Community Resilience Theory

This theory examines the role of social capital, trust, and community resilience in post-conflict environments, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of peacebuilding efforts. The Social Capital and Community Resilience Theory offers a lens through which to examine the potential impacts of DDR initiatives (Obi and Babatunde, 2019). One aspect of applying this theory involves assessing the extent to which DDR programs contribute to rebuilding social capital and strengthening community ties. This entails examining whether DDR initiatives foster cooperation, collaboration, and mutual support among community members, thereby enhancing social cohesion and resilience in the face of ongoing challenges.

Moreover, the study explores how DDR programs influence community trust in post-conflict settings. Trust is essential for effective governance, conflict resolution, and social stability, and rebuilding trust is often a critical component of peacebuilding efforts (Jayawardana, 2019). By analyzing the impact of DDR initiatives on community trust, the research aims to assess whether these programs contribute to restoring faith in institutions, including the government, security forces, and civil society organizations, thereby enhancing overall social cohesion and stability.

Furthermore, the study investigates the role of local communities in the design and implementation of DDR programs and how their inclusion contributes to better post-conflict security outcomes (Jayawardana, 2019). Involving local communities in DDR initiatives is essential for ensuring that interventions are contextually relevant, responsive to community needs, and sustainable in the long term. By examining the extent to which DDR programs engage with local communities, the research aims to assess their effectiveness in addressing underlying drivers of conflict, building social capital, and promoting community resilience.

Additionally, the Social Capital and Community Resilience Theory highlight the importance of empowering communities to resist relapse into conflict (Wahba, Das & Chun, 2022). Sustainable peacebuilding requires not only addressing the immediate symptoms of conflict but also addressing underlying grievances, inequalities, and vulnerabilities that may persist long after the cessation of hostilities. By analyzing the impact of DDR programs on community resilience, the study aims to assess whether these initiatives contribute to addressing root causes of conflict and promoting long-term stability.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This study used a systematic-analytic approach to synthesize existing literature, research, and expert opinion. The method included defined inclusion and exclusion criteria for the selection of relevant literature, extraction and data analysis. To identify themes and patterns related to civilians disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. Systematic review involves gathering all possible research relevant to business in the energy industry, and reviewing and analysing the results (Merli, Preziosi & Acampora, 2018). During the systematic review, the quality of the studies were evaluated, and a statistical systematic-analysis of the study results was performed based on the quality of the studies. Systematic-analysis is considered a valid, objective, and scientific method for analysing and combining various findings to identify themes for the study (Merli, Preziosi & Acampora, 2018). To obtain more reliable results, a systematic analysis was carried out on studies across the globe. Following the statement on the

reporting quality of systematic-analyses (QUORUM) and the emergence of registries such as the Cochrane Library Methods Register, a large number of systematic reviews of the documented material. In 2009, the statement Priority Reporting Section for Systematic Reviews and Systematic-analyses (PRISMA) (Page et al., 2021) was published and it has greatly contributed to the standardization and improvement of improve the quality of systematic reviews and systematic-analyses. The PRISMA and QUORUM guidelines were applied in the selection of studies that were systematically reviewed in this search.

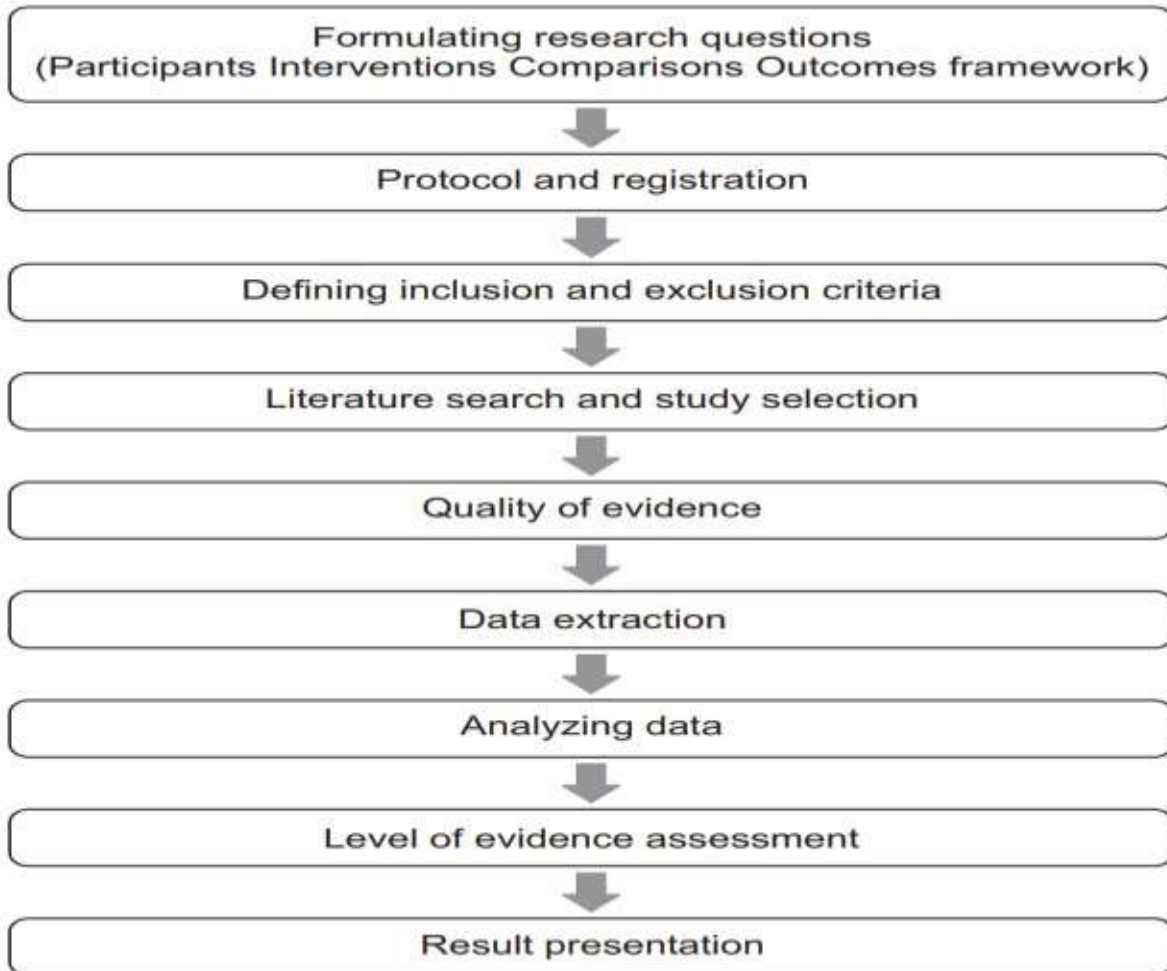


Figure 1: Flowchart Showing Systematic Review Adopted (Page et al., 2021)

Data Collection Procedure

Formulating Research Questions

A systematic review that brings together all existing empirical studies in the globe on civilians disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration using well-defined systematic methods to get answers to a specific question (Planta, 2018). Systematic-analysis is the statistical procedure that analyses and combines the results of several similar studies. When formulating the research questions for this study, it is important to clearly identify the Population, Intervention, and Comparative, Outcomes (PICO) indicators that are the focus of evidence-based research on civilians' disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. In addition, the selection of research questions is based on logical evidence (Planta, 2018).

Protocols and Registration

For this systematic review, pre-registration of a detailed search plan is required. To make the research process transparent, the primary and secondary results and methods were defined in advance, and when changes were made to the methods, other members of the selection support team would be informed. Screening was based on PROSPERO because many studies were registered with the institution and registration numbers were recorded at study reporting, to share the protocol at the time of planning (Liu et al., 2024).

Defining Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The selection and use of appropriate literature in this study necessitated a search of a consistent, structured and systematic database for existing studies on ethics in energy sector. In this study, different techniques were used to obtain relevant documents. Identification and listing of online databases, journals, and libraries relevant to the study were conducted. Identifying and using keywords, phrases, and terms also improves relevance and accessibility to refined sources.

Databases Used

Databases for journals focusing on conflict, war and peacebuilding were preferred when selecting sources.

Table 1: Electronic Databases Used in the Review

Conflict databases	Peacebuilding databases
Journal of Conflict Resolution	Journal of Peace Research
International Journal of Conflict and Violence	Global Change, Peace & Security
African Journal on Conflict Resolution	Conflict Management and Peace Science
Peace and Conflict	Cooperation and Conflict
Studies in Conflict & Terrorism	Journal for Peace and Justice Studies
Media, War & Conflict	Global Governance
Emerald	Journal of Refugee Studies
Springer journals	Security Dialogue
Web of Science	African Journal on Conflict Resolution

Source: Generated by Author

Search Terms, Phrases and Keywords

In this study, Boolean search suggestions helped provide insight into the combination of keywords, phrases, and terms to produce results that were relevant to the document used (Gusenbauer and Haddaway, 2020). The following terms were used;

- a. Civilian AND disarmament
- b. Peacebuilding AND disarmament
- c. Conflict AND disarmament
- d. Peacebuilding AND conflict

Inclusion and Exclusion of Literature

Quantitative and qualitative articles were used selectively in the literature review. Although quantitative research methods use observation and intervention methods, the latter is prone to bias and confusion. The descriptive and analytical aspects of qualitative design apply numerical

methods to data collection. On the other hand, qualitative research design focuses on how people experience or perceive situations; therefore, suitable for the purpose of the study (Gusenbauer and Haddaway, 2020). To ensure a suitable basis for an evidence-based search, it is essential to conduct a broad search that includes as many studies that meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria as possible. Efforts have been made to identify not only published studies but also abstracts, ongoing studies, and pending studies. Among the studies retrieved from the search, duplicate studies were to be excluded, studies that met the inclusion/exclusion criteria based on the abstract, and a final selection of studies based on the entire population. To maintain transparency and objectivity throughout this process, the selection of studies was performed independently by at least two investigators, who were invited to participate in the search.

Table 2: Summary the Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria Applied to the Literature Used in the Study

Inclusion and exclusion of literature	
Inclusion	Exclusion
Studies whose respondents/participants were conflict, disarmament and peacebuilding experts.	Studies whose respondents/participants were not conflict, disarmament and peacebuilding experts.
Research papers were published between 2000 and 2023.	Research papers published before 2000, except those about theories.
Research papers published in peer-reviewed journals.	Studies published in non-peer-reviewed journals.

Identifying Relevant Papers/Studies

According to Stovold, Beecher, Foxlee and Noel-Storr (2014), Cochrane's systematic review follows a rigorous standard. Consider Stovold et al. (2014), a study flow diagram was included in the review based on the PRISMA reporting guidelines. A PRISMA chart template was used to summarise the identification of relevant full articles used in this study, shown in Figure 2.0.

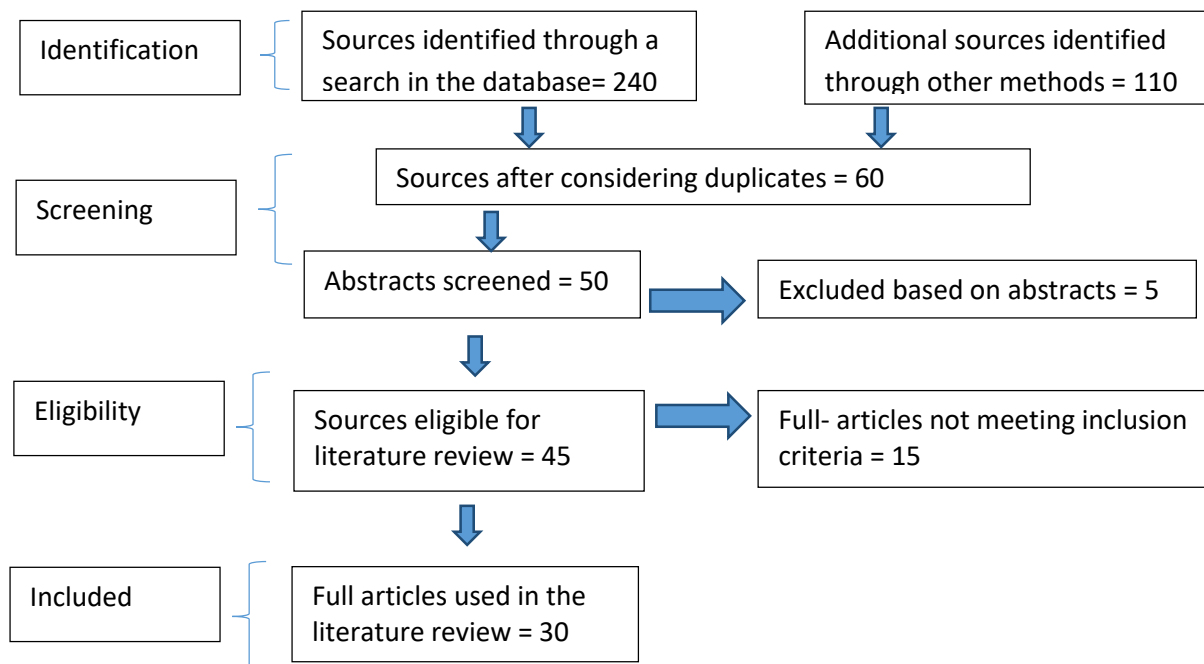


Figure 2: Study Selection Process (Stovold et al. (2014)).

Reviewing the Qualitative Literature

When reviewing the full articles selected for eligibility and verifying that they met the inclusion criteria, a qualitative research checklist was used. The Consolidated Qualitative Research Reporting (COREQ) Criteria was adopted. Liu et al. (2024) note that COREQ allows researchers to report research context, research methodology, study group, findings, analysis, and interpretation of results. According to Stovold et al. (2014), qualitative research focuses on the complex events encountered by healthcare providers and clinicians. Therefore, the qualitative research checklist should include study design, study group and reflexivity, data analysis and reporting. Stovold et al. (2014) notes that creating application and reporting criteria for qualitative studies is difficult due to the indeterminate and fickle nature of the studies compared to quantitative research. Considering that qualitative research includes many epistemological approaches and queries; thus, making the design widespread and controversial, COREQ serves as an essential tool for the development of effective and responsible qualitative research (Liu et al., 2024). The authors acknowledge that COREQ ensures research quality and assists reviewers in evaluating studies. The consolidated criteria for qualitative research reporting are a 32-item checklist that aids the literature review for selected articles. The COREQ checklist provides a systematic approach and an important framework for reviewing selected materials. In fact, the COREQ checklist tool helped identify three areas of qualitative research, including study group and reflexivity, study design, analysis, and outcomes.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

Reduction in Arms Proliferation

The significant decrease in weapons proliferation attained through the Civilians Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs in South Sudan is one of this study's key findings (Ayissi, 2021). The disarmament phase of these programs, which aimed to collect and secure weapons from former combatants and civilian populations, has significantly improved the nation's security situation (Schuberth, 2017). In post-conflict settings, the reduction of arms proliferation is essential because the widespread availability of weapons can fuel violence and thwart efforts to build peace (Day and Hunt, 2022). Small arms and light weapons were widely available and used throughout South Sudan's history of conflict, causing cycles of violence to continue (Suma, 2023). In addition to reducing the immediate threat posed by armed groups, successful disarmament efforts have also helped to foster an atmosphere that is peaceful and secure.

It is important to recognize that obstacles still exist in the country's attempt to completely eradicate illicit weapons. Risks persist due to the permeable borders and the presence of armed groups outside of the DDR process (Suma, 2023). To stop the resurgence of threats related to arms, consistent efforts are therefore required, including border controls and monitoring systems.

Reintegration Success

The successful reintegration of former combatants into society is another significant outcome of the DDR programs in South Sudan (Suarez and Baines, 2022). With the help of this DDR component, it is hoped that ex-combatants will be more likely to live peaceful lives in the future thanks to the economic opportunities, social support, and training they receive (Özerdem, 2022). Reintegration is a challenging process with many facets, especially in post-conflict environments like South Sudan. Promoting long-term peace and stability depends on the

successful reintegration of former combatants. According to the study's results, DDR programs have advanced significantly in this area (Suarez and Baines, 2022).

Effective reintegration programs have met the psychosocial needs of former combatants in addition to offering them opportunities for alternative sources of income. By facilitating the acceptance and reintegration of former combatants into their communities, this all-inclusive approach to reintegration has helped to promote social cohesion (Zürcher, 2022). Still, there are difficulties. Concerns have been raised about the sustainability of reintegration efforts, especially in a nation with few economic opportunities and resources. In order to avoid potential complaints and conflicts, it is also crucial to make sure that the benefits of reintegration are fair across various communities and regions (Özerdem, 2022).

Promotion of Reconciliation and Social Cohesion

Contributing to social cohesion and reconciliation is one of the significant effects of DDR programs in South Sudan. In bridging gaps between communities and former combatants, these programs have been instrumental in promoting mutual respect, trust, and cooperation (Srinivasan and Nouwen, 2020). A crucial component of post-conflict peacebuilding is reconciliation. The study's findings highlight how DDR programs in South Sudan have facilitated reconciliation by giving former enemies a place to converse and work together (Abugbilla, 2022). These programs have been crucial in removing obstacles, resolving issues, and fostering trust between communities.

Reconciliation and the promotion of social cohesion go hand in hand. DDR programs have encouraged community-led initiatives for reconciliation in addition to helping former combatants integrate back into their communities (Srinivasan and Nouwen, 2020). This grassroots strategy has aided in the healing process and has the potential to create a society that is more accepting and peaceful. Recognizing that reconciliation is an ongoing, complex process that may necessitate further efforts outside of the DDR phase is crucial. Long-term reconciliation in South Sudan faces significant obstacles due to ingrained ethnic tensions and historical grievances (Özerdem, 2022). Therefore, it is crucial to continue supporting community-based initiatives for reconciliation.

Challenges and Limitations

Although DDR programs in South Sudan have achieved significant successes, a number of challenges and limitations have been identified:

Security Risks in the Disarmament Process

During the disarmament phase, there were instances of security mishaps and tensions. Some armed groups have resisted disarmament efforts, leading to conflict and violence (Ekyamba, 2020). Furthermore, the disarmament process has revealed the presence of hidden weapons caches, highlighting the persistent challenges associated with the circulation of illegal weapons. The security risks associated with disarmament emphasize the need for careful planning, community participation, and well-trained security forces. Collaborative approaches that involve local communities in the disarmament process can help reduce tensions and improve transparency.

Sustainability of Reintegration

Ensuring the sustainability of reintegration programs is a major challenge. South Sudan's limited economic opportunities and resources pose a threat to the long-term success of ex-combatants' reintegration into civilian life (Özerdem, 2022). Sustainable reintegration requires

a focus on economic development, job creation and vocational training. International support and investment in the South Sudanese economy is vital to providing viable livelihood options for those reintegrating.

Ethnic and Regional Differences

There are differences in the implementation of DDR programs among different regions and ethnic groups in South Sudan. Some communities benefit more than others, which can give rise to underlying grievances and tensions (Alusala and Alusala, 2023). Efforts should be made to ensure that DDR programs are equitable and inclusive, addressing the specific needs and concerns of different communities and regions. Transparency in resource allocation and program implementation is essential to build trust among all stakeholders.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussion, several recommendations can be made to improve the effectiveness of DDR programs in South Sudan:

Enhance Security Measures

- Improve coordination and communication between security forces, DDR teams and local communities to minimize security risks during disarmament.

Sustainable Reintegration

- Develop long-term strategies for sustainable reintegration, including investments in economic development, vocational training and job creation.
- Promote microfinance and entrepreneurship opportunities for reengaged people to improve their economic self-reliance.

Equity and Inclusion

- Ensure equitable access to DDR programs across different regions and ethnic groups, addressing disparities in resource allocation.
- Promote community ownership of DDR processes and engage local leaders and civil society organizations in program planning and implementation. Continue to support reconciliation
- Provide ongoing support for community reconciliation initiatives, recognizing that reconciliation is a long-term process.
- Promote dialogue and understanding between peoples through cultural and educational exchange programs.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this review article highlights the important role of civilian disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs in the context of post-conflict security and peacebuilding in South Sudan. Despite the complex challenges that characterize South Sudan's tumultuous history, the findings of this study confirm the effectiveness of DDR initiatives in several key areas. First, DDR programs have demonstrated the ability to significantly reduce domestic weapons proliferation. This achievement not only contributes to creating a more secure environment but also paves the way for lasting peace and stability.

Second, the successful reintegration of former combatants into South Sudanese society represents a notable achievement of DDR efforts. These programs not only provide veterans with alternative livelihood opportunities but also address their psychosocial needs, thereby promoting reconciliation and social cohesion.

However, it must be acknowledged that South Sudan's journey towards peace and stability remains a complex and ongoing process. Challenges such as security risks during disarmament, sustainability of reintegration efforts and disparities in program implementation must be addressed to ensure the continued success of programs DDR. Furthermore, this study highlights the particular importance of sustained international support for DDR initiatives in post-conflict environments such as South Sudan. The commitment of the international community to provide resources, expertise and finance is needed to promote long-term stability and development. In essence, the DDR programs represent not only a practical disarmament and reintegration mechanism but also a symbol of hope and reconciliation in South Sudan. They open the way to a more peaceful and prosperous future for a country that has endured the ravages of protracted conflict. Therefore, continued investment and strengthening of DDR initiatives must remain a top priority on the path towards a brighter and safer South Sudan.

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