



Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in North Sudan

The signing of Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on 9 January 2005 marked the end of Africa's longest civil war and opened the way for a transition to peace. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is contributing to peacebuilding efforts through activities that facilitate the disarmament, demobilization and, in particular, reintegration into civilian society, of ex-combatants. Without jobs and incomes these groups may otherwise again undermine public security and constrain progress towards development. The reintegration of ex-combatants and associated groups is essential for peace and stability. The CPA envisages catering for a total of 180 000 DDR participants that were either part of, associated with or aligned to the various armed forces in the Sudan.

Most of the DDR participants have opted for agriculture- and livestock-related services including large/small ruminants' restocking, poultry keeping, animal traction, vegetable production, crop production and fisheries as their desired reintegration support. FAO, in collaboration with the North Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (NSDDRC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is providing training and agricultural inputs to assist them to engage in crop production, livestock/poultry rearing and fisheries.

Key achievements

- The introduction of the DDR concept into the food security and livelihood cluster/sector has significantly increased the opportunities for DDR interventions.
- This is facilitating the transformation of former fighters into future productive farmers and livestock keepers, enabling them and their families to fully reintegrate into their communities.
- In 2007, FAO provided over 2 500 ex-combatants in Eastern Sudan with agricultural inputs.
- In 2008, FAO, together with the World Food Programme and partners, established communal farms for over 250 ex-combatants in Blue Nile state.
- In 2009/10, FAO in collaboration with UNDP and NSDDRC has successfully reintegrated a total of 432 ex-combatants in Eastern Sudan (Kassala, Gadarif and Red Sea states), who were trained on animal health care and basic business management skills. They were also provided with goats, sheep and other commodities to help them start up small businesses.

Ongoing activities

- About 350 ex-combatants are participating in a counselling process that is being facilitated by FAO and UNDP. These are expected to be reintegrated into their communities in 2010/11. Most have opted to take part in livestock interventions.
- A joint reintegration project in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states was officially launched in March 2010 and is currently addressing the needs of some 4 189 ex-combatants (2 500 in South Kordofan and 1 689 in Blue Nile), who are opting for agriculture and livestock interventions.



Challenges

- Slow referral process owing to a lack of information dissemination and insufficient organization of ex-combatants.
- Misconception by ex-combatants that the reintegration package provided is a pension from the Government rather than assistance for their reintegration.
- Communication with beneficiaries is difficult as there are inadequate information and communication channels for contacting them in remote and scattered areas.

The way ahead.....

The DDR is the backbone of consolidating any peace agreement. Without the successful reintegration of former fighters, sustainable peace, and accompanying social and economic development will not be possible. Therefore, the work FAO is undertaking with NSDDRC and UNDP will be central in assisting Sudan to achieve its social and economic goals and to foster peace and development throughout the country.