

Enhancing Women's Meaningful Involvement in Reintegration: Lessons from Cameroon

Evyn Papworth



Cover Photo: Migrant women at a workshop organized by IOM Cameroon. March 30, 2023. Emily Pinna/IOM.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

EVYN PAPWORTH is a Policy Analyst for the Women, Peace, and Security program at the International Peace Institute.

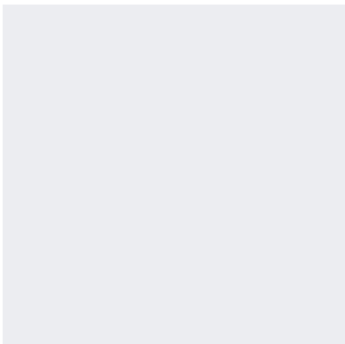
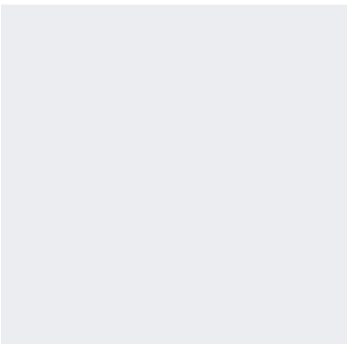
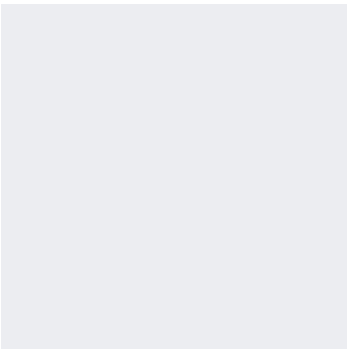
Email: papworth@ipinst.org

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ABBREVIATIONS

ALVF-EN	Association for the Struggle against Violence against Women in the Far North (Association de Lutte Contre les Violences Faites aux Femmes Extrême Nord)
CSOs	civil society organizations
DDR	disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
DDRR	disengagement, disassociation, reintegration, and reconciliation
GYPI	Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LOYOC	Local Youth Corner
NDDRC	National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee
P/CVE	preventing and countering violent extremism
WOs	women's organizations
WPS	women, peace, and security

Executive Summary

Gender-sensitive approaches to disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) processes tend to focus on the exclusion of women as participants in DDR programs. There has been less attention to including women's civil society organizations (CSOs) in the design and implementation of DDR programs. One recent effort to involve women's CSOs in reintegration was a project led by the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC) of Cameroon, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and UN Women. Funded by the Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI), this project focused on enhancing women's roles in the reintegration aspect of DDR. This project highlights both the benefits and the challenges of including women's CSOs in reintegration processes.

Including women's CSOs in the reintegration process in Cameroon has had several benefits. First, women's CSOs that had never been formally involved in the reintegration process learned what it was and how they could contribute. They also learned how they had already been contributing to reintegration through their prior work, even if this work had not previously been recognized as part of the DDR process. Second, the capacity building provided by the program created an entry point to shift dynamics between women and men, as women took on greater leadership roles within their communities. This work empowering women returnees may have begun to lead to a shift in gender dynamics in some communities. Finally, the project created opportunities for greater coordination and collaboration between civil society, the government, and international actors.

Despite its successes, the project encountered several challenges. Women involved in the project faced risks resulting from both the sensitive nature

of their work and their perceived rebellion against gender stereotypes. They also did not have the resources needed to address the specific needs of men in the reintegration process, though some tried to proactively engage men to avoid backlash. One of the biggest challenges was the limited capacity and resources of women's CSOs in the Far North of Cameroon, including language barriers and the lack of adequate funding through the project. There were also questions over the sustainability of the gains achieved considering the project's short time frame and the long-term nature of reintegration. Finally, there were more general challenges around avoiding the instrumentalization of women participating in the project.

As they consider how to collaborate with women's CSOs during the reintegration process, member states can consider the following recommendations to ensure the process is not only more gender-responsive but also leads to more sustainable outcomes:

- Develop a gender strategy as part of the overall DDR strategy;
- Establish an infrastructure for systematic and sustained collaboration with civil society;
- Invest in women's CSOs' long-term capacity to support reintegration;
- Communicate details on the operationalization of the DDR process so that CSOs are set up for success;
- Consider the role of masculinities when developing DDR gender strategies; and
- Anticipate and proactively address safety risks facing women's CSOs supporting reintegration.

Introduction

Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) processes have typically incorporated gender by examining the inclusion and needs of women ex-associates, including ex-combatants,¹ as called for in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security (WPS).² However, less attention has been paid to the role of women's civil society organizations (CSOs) participating in and leading community engagement and reintegration efforts as part of DDR. One example of where this is happening is the Far North region of Cameroon, where women's organizations have recently become formally involved in the DDR process related to the Boko Haram insurgency.

In 2023, the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC) of Cameroon, the International Organization for Migration (IOM),³ and UN Women launched a project funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI) that aimed to support and enable women's organizations to participate meaningfully and sustainably in the DDR process in Cameroon, particularly in the Far North region. The GYPI project was implemented from February 2023 to December 2024 as part of the NDDRC's Gender Strategy 2021–2025 (see Box 1).⁴

Gender-sensitive approaches to DDR tend to focus on the exclusion of women as participants in DDR programs. The GYPI project took a different approach by promoting the inclusion of women in

the design and implementation of DDR programs, with a focus on reintegration. The project recognized the effectiveness of community-based models of reintegration and the reach that civil society organizations have within their communities. This approach was reflected in the NDDRC's broader gender strategy for the DDR process, which aimed to address women's political marginalization by prioritizing their participation in reintegration not only as ex-associates but also as community members.

The Cameroon case reveals how including women's CSOs in DDR processes can increase the effectiveness of DDR programs while also challenging gender norms, potentially leading to broader shifts in gender dynamics in participating communities.

Engaging women's CSOs in DDR programs may also expand opportunities for their formal and informal participation in peacebuilding processes and governance and security institutions.⁵ However, the

successful engagement of women in reintegration programming is dependent on the availability of adequate resources and political will. Overall, the GYPI project provides insights into how women's civil society organizations can be meaningfully included in the design and implementation of DDR programs.

This report analyzes the gendered considerations and lessons learned for engaging women's CSOs in the implementation of reintegration programming in the Far North of Cameroon through the GYPI project.⁶ Over the course of the project, the engagement of

Including women's CSOs in DDR processes can increase the effectiveness of DDR programs while also challenging gender norms.

1 Ex-combatants can be understood as "rebels or insurgents who fought in the ranks of armed groups and who are demobilized following a political process or voluntary surrender," as well as "combatants from extremist groups who have entered so-called de-radicalization phase." Ex-associates can be understood as "all persons who, regardless of age, gender, alliances, and circumstances that led to their involvement, have lived under Boko Haram's control for a period of time, without presuming or prejudging the nature of their relationship with Boko Haram, and who have voluntarily surrendered to the authorities to be rehabilitated and reintegrated." It includes "ex-combatants, former hostages, wives, and children of Boko Haram members, and persons who played auxiliary roles (informants, recruiters, supply workers, smugglers, telephone operators, etc.) in Boko Haram camps." Saibou Issa et al., *The Boko Haram Crisis through Words* (Editions L'Harmattan, 2020).

2 UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (October 31, 2000), UN Doc. S/RES/1325.

3 It is also worth noting that the IOM's approach at the regional level for the Lake Chad Basin is through the lens of disengagement, disassociation, reintegration, and reconciliation (DDRR). While this is not the terminology used in Cameroon, "in the absence of a formal peace process where women's participation can be formally assured, the DDRR model gives great importance to their involvement in and contributions towards preventing violent extremism." See: IOM, "Gendered Dimensions of Disengagement, Disassociation, Reintegration and Reconciliation in the Lake Chad Basin Region," 2021.

4 UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, "PBF/IRF-519: Enhancing Women's Meaningful Involvement in DDR Policy Design and Implementation in Cameroon Based on the National DDR Gender Strategy 2021–25: Strengthening of Platforms for Women's Associations," available at <https://mptf.undp.org/project/00140054>.

5 IOM, "Gendered Dimensions." For work on women ex-combatants specifically and transition pathways to formal and informal politics, see: Claudia Cruz Almeida, Véronique Dudouet, and Johanna Maria Hülzer, "Political Reintegration and the Continuation of the Struggle after War: Women Ex-Combatants in Formal and Informal Politics," Berghof Foundation, March 2024.

6 IPI conducted nine interviews (seven virtually and two in-person) with relevant stakeholders leading up to June 2024. In June, the author traveled to Yaoundé, Cameroon, for a regional workshop and spoke with ten participants in both individual and focus group formats (this included two in-person follow-up interviews with previous interviewees). This research was facilitated by a Cameroonian researcher who also provided interpretation (as many of the interviews were in French).

Box 1. The NDDRC, IOM, and UN Women's DDR project in Cameroon

The project “Enhancing Women’s Meaningful Involvement in DDR Policy Design and Implementation in Cameroon Based on the National DDR Gender Strategy 2021–2025: Strengthening of Platforms for Women’s Associations” was jointly developed by Cameroon’s NDDRC, the IOM, and UN Women. The project worked with twenty-five women’s organizations in the Far North region of Cameroon.⁷ These organizations were coordinated by two larger implementing organizations, the Association for the Struggle against Violence against Women in the Far North (*Association de Lutte Contre les Violences Faites aux Femmes Extrême Nord*, or ALVF-EN) and Local Youth Corner (LOYOC), which worked more directly with the NDDRC, IOM, and UN Women. Following selection, the participating organizations underwent capacity-building training on program implementation.⁸

The total approved budget for the project was \$2,000,000. Approximately \$150,000 was disbursed between LOYOC and ALVF-EN. Each of the twenty-five smaller organizations received grants of approximately \$8,000, with twelve funded by the IOM and coordinated by LOYOC and thirteen funded by UN Women and coordinated by ALVF-EN.⁹

The three pillars of the GYPI project were capacity building, a mechanism for financing women’s civil society working on DDR and reconciliation, and coordination with civil society organizations for implementation of the NDDRC gender strategy.¹⁰ The GYPI project had three desired outcomes: (1) “Women’s organizations’ (WOs) have strengthened access and grounds to engage and deliver on DDR coordination and programming in coordination with existing DDR coordination fora”; (2) “WOs are further embedded within national and regional implementation of reintegration and reconciliation processes in Cameroon”; and (3) “WOs participate more regularly and systematically in DDR coordination fora implementation through structured practices of engagement with the NDDRC, in line with the NDDRC Gender Strategy 2021–2025, for long-term impact.”¹¹

As part of project activities, women’s CSOs led awareness-raising campaigns, educational talks, and community dialogues that led to shifts in perceptions and mindsets within the community to prepare them to accept ex-associates. They also conducted activities focused on economic empowerment within communities as well as social cohesion, such as community meals.¹² The project also emphasized mental health and psychosocial support.

The GYPI project is notable in that it prioritized not only the inclusion of women ex-combatants but also the agency of women to lead reintegration efforts. This holistic approach opens an entry point for transforming gender roles and power dynamics at multiple levels, including in leadership and more formal peacebuilding processes, which can in turn strengthen collaboration between the government and civil society. While the NDDRC works across three different regions, the GYPI project focused only on the Far North.¹³

However, lessons learned from the project’s implementation can also apply to other regions in Cameroon, such as the Northwest and Southwest as well as the broader Lake Chad Basin.

and local contextual analysis. The findings in this report are informed by interviews from civil society leaders in Cameroon, as well as officials in governmental and international nongovernmental organizations. Some of the organizations interviewed focused more on sensitizing communities on reintegration in contexts of direct return to communities (those not going through transitional centers), while others worked directly with ex-associates. Due to capacity, not all organizations were able to be interviewed, which is a potential limitation of the research findings. While seven of the organizations interviewed were led by women, the remaining two were led by men.

7 Of over 100 civil society organizations in the Far North region, over forty organizations went through the selection process, resulting in the final twenty-five. Organizations taking part in the GYPI project were required to have legal documentation, which was a barrier to participation.

8 Interview with woman CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

9 UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, “PBF/IRF-519.”

10 Regional workshop for Lake Chad Basin countries on strengthening the involvement of women’s and civil society organizations in DDR processes, hosted in Yaoundé, Cameroon, June 24–25, 2024.

11 UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, “PBF/IRF-519,” p. 21.

12 IOM, “Suivi et Évaluation par un tiers du mécanisme de petites subventions GYPI DDR pour le réseau des organisations des femmes pour une réintégration inclusive au Cameroun dans le cadre de la mise en oeuvre du projet PBF GYPI DDR-Gender,” internal document, August 2024.

13 For an overview of the overall gendered dimensions of DDR in the Lake Chad Basin Region, see: IOM, “Gendered Dimensions.”

women's CSOs has evolved as they received capacity building on reintegration and education on the DDR process in Cameroon. Although the long-term impact of the GYPI project remains to be seen, this changing engagement has created a potential entry point to facilitate a shift in societal gender dynamics. This could include shifts in the roles women play in both conflict and peacebuilding, including as ex-combatants and ex-associates, as facilitators of family members returning "from the bush" (as interviewees referred to the conflict zone), and as leaders within their communities. This shift in women's roles could also impact men's roles, illustrating the need to include a masculinities lens in DDR work.

DDR and Gender, Peace, and Security in Cameroon

Since 2014, the Far North region of Cameroon has experienced attacks from Boko Haram. Women and girls are often disproportionately impacted by these terrorist attacks, including through sexual violence, kidnapping, and forced marriage. For instance, women in the Far North have reported being afraid to send their daughters to public spaces due to fears that they would be abducted.¹⁴ Since 2016, the Southwest and Northwest regions have also experienced violence due to the Anglophone crisis, which began when members of the English-speaking population in Cameroon began to protest cultural marginalization by the Francophone-dominated government.¹⁵ While the Boko Haram crisis is a subregional issue that originated in Nigeria but has impacted the broader Lake Chad Basin, the Anglophone crisis is primarily internal.¹⁶ These crises have resulted in widespread sexual and gender-based violence, internal displacement, and an urgent need for humanitarian aid.¹⁷

In response to the ongoing conflict and violence perpetrated by armed groups, the president of Cameroon created the NDDRC through a

presidential decree in 2018. The NDDRC's primary mandate is "organizing, supervising, and managing the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-fighters of Boko Haram and armed groups in the Northwest and Southwest Regions willing to respond favorably to the Head of State's peace appeal by laying down their arms."¹⁸ A key component of the NDDRC's reintegration efforts is "sensitizing and providing multifaceted assistance to home communities" to facilitate reintegration. Since its establishment, the NDDRC has focused on the protection of children and the incorporation of gender considerations into the DDR process.¹⁹ One challenge the NDDRC faces is that it is mandated to cover both the Boko Haram conflict in the Far North region and the Anglophone conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions.

DDR in Cameroon

In Cameroon, some ex-associates reintegrate by returning directly to communities, while others go to one of the three DDR centers the government has established. Within these centers, individuals receive psychological, health, social, and economic support as well as livelihood training in areas such as sewing and agriculture. Prior to leaving the centers for reintegration, ex-associates receive identification documents and start-up kits to help generate income. Although individuals are encouraged to transit through a DDR center, some choose to defect directly into communities for a variety of reasons, such as security concerns or fear of being detained. However, this integration directly into communities is discouraged. In 2025, the Cameroonian government is planning to reintegrate around 600 people out of the approximately 3,000 at the three camps, the majority of whom have been there for three to four years.

Under the GYPI project, women's CSOs have primarily focused on both supporting returnees and working within their communities to sensitize them

14 National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC), "Gender Strategy of the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee of Cameroon (2021–2025)," Government of Cameroon and UN Women, p. 11.

15 Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, "Cameroon," December 1, 2024, available at <https://www.globalr2p.org/countries/cameroon/>.

16 Virtual interview with NDDRC official, February 2024.

17 Human Rights Watch, "Cameroon," in *World Report 2024: Events of 2023* (Seven Stories Press, 2024).

18 Presidency of the Republic of Cameroon, "Press Release: Creation of a National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee for Ex-Fighters of Boko Haram and Armed Groups in the North-West and South-West Regions," press release, November 30, 2018.

19 IOM "Disarmament and Reintegration: Cameroon Has Made the Protection of Children in the Context of DDR a Priority," November 10, 2023; IOM, "Capacity Building of the NDDRC on Gender: Promoting Deeper Inclusion in Cameroon," August 20, 2024. Focus group with four CSO leaders in Cameroon (three women and one man), June 2024.

and prepare them to accept ex-associates. This is particularly challenging for those who community members may stigmatize because they may have committed crimes against them.²⁰ This stigma often has a gendered element to it, as community members may treat women ex-associates differently than their male counterparts. To help mitigate this stigma, the DDR process in Cameroon includes community-based outreach and activities aimed at promoting social cohesion and reconciliation.

This approach is consistent with lessons learned from past DDR processes about the importance of focusing on community-based reintegration alongside targeted support for ex-combatants and ex-associates. Such approaches ensure community members are also included in the planning process and can receive concrete benefits, which can help avoid feelings of resentment and exclusion that could undermine the success of reintegration.²¹

Women ex-combatants or ex-associates face greater stigma “because the society sees you as a deviant.”

DDR efforts in the Far North region of Cameroon have faced several challenges, including the government’s highly centralized approach, distrust among stakeholders, and the lack of a clear timeline for reintegration for those being held in the DDR centers.²² In light of these challenges, researchers have argued that “reintegration needs to be reframed as a whole-of-society, bottom-up endeavor.”²³ The GYPI project is a promising step in this direction, but it is not a substitute for the structural work that remains to be done.

Cameroon’s DDR Gender Strategy

The NDDRC’s 2021–2025 gender strategy, drafted in collaboration with UN Women, is anchored in the four pillars of the WPS agenda.²⁴ The gender

strategy was created after the NDDRC encountered unexpected numbers of women returnees coming to the DDR centers and realized that addressing gender dynamics would be key to the process.²⁵ It includes a comprehensive analysis of the needs of men, women, girls, and boys in the DDR process and emphasizes that women, girls, and families associated with armed groups should have increased access to DDR services. It also notes the joint involvement of ex-associates and communities in implementing reintegration.²⁶ The adoption of the gender strategy combats the idea that women are solely victims of the conflict, instead recognizing that they are also active stakeholders in facilitating DDR and building peace.²⁷

The NDDRC gender strategy has three main objectives: (1) increased involvement of women and girl ex-combatants and ex-associates of armed groups and families in

the disarmament process; (2) consideration of the specific needs and interests of women and girls associated with armed groups in demobilization activities and services; and (3) the community, economic, social, political, and security reintegration of ex-combatants in a gender-sensitive way, particularly women, girls, and families associated with armed groups.²⁸

The adoption of the gender strategy is an indicator of the Cameroonian government’s political will to ensure that the DDR process is gender-responsive. This political will enabled the development of the GYPI project and was crucial to its implementation. The adoption of the gender strategy also created an entry point for women’s organizations and the government to work together on this project, which can enable their collaboration in other areas.²⁹

20 Focus group with four CSO leaders in Cameroon (three women and one man), June 2024.

21 UN DDR, “The Integrated DDR Standards: Module 4.30: Reintegration,” September 2022.

22 See, for example: Lydie C. Belporo, “Building Peace through DDR Programs: Lessons from Reintegrating Boko Haram Ex-Recruits in Cameroon,” RESOLVE Network, August 2021; Annabelle Bonnefont and Junko Nozawa, “Realizing a Whole-of-Society Approach to Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration in the Far North Region of Cameroon,” Global Center on Cooperative Security, November 2022.

23 Bonnefont and Nozawa, “Realizing a Whole-of-Society Approach.”

24 Regional workshop for Lake Chad Basin countries, June 24–25, 2024.

25 Virtual interview with NDDRC official, February 2024.

26 NDDRC, “NDDRC Gender Strategy.”

27 Virtual interview with NDDRC official, February 2024.

28 NDDRC, “NDDRC Gender Strategy.”

29 Virtual interview with IOM official, February 2024.

Box 2. Stereotypes and stigmas facing women ex-associates in DDR programs

Women ex-combatants and ex-associates are often excluded from DDR programs due to gendered stereotypes and stigmas, which in turn leads to their exclusion from broader peacebuilding and negotiation processes.³⁰ The stereotype that women are inherently more peaceful than men renders women who participate in violence as socially deviant.³¹ At the same time, women may have different reintegration and protection needs than men.

Although most ex-combatants and ex-associates reintegrating directly into communities are men, there are many women and children in Cameroon's DDR centers. This is due partially to the nature of the conflict dynamics and family structures within Boko Haram, where women are often kidnapped and assigned as a "wife" to new male recruits, but also to the fact that when a man returns from the bush to a DDR center, his wife and children are allowed to come and live with him, even if they were not in the bush together.³² Other women who had followed their husbands or boyfriends into the bush when they joined Boko Haram, either by choice or by force, follow them to the DDR camps, where they are often perceived to be "reintegrated automatically."³³ This perception reflects gendered assumptions that men have more agency to join armed groups while women play secondary roles. One report found that in the Lake Chad Basin, communities saw men's reintegration as more important, "partly due to the belief that a woman's situation would be automatically resolved by addressing the needs of her male relatives."³⁴

In reality, women may have held a variety of roles in Boko Haram, including as combatants, cooks, informants, or other "associate" roles. Some may have chosen to join Boko Haram due to the promise of increased social standing and find it difficult to return to civilian life where they lose this standing and have to return to traditional gender roles.³⁵

Many women and children were also kidnapped and forcibly taken into the bush and have suffered high levels of sexual violence. Many women returnees choose to go through the DDR centers instead of directly back to their communities for security reasons, believing they will have more opportunities at the DDR center and face less stigmatization than they would in the community.³⁶ This points to the gendered security risks that women face, particularly due to the added stigma they encounter.³⁷ One interviewee stated that women ex-combatants or ex-associates face greater stigma "because the society sees you as a deviant" for occupying what is "not considered to be a woman's role.... People see you differently."³⁸ This stigmatization can also hinder women's reintegration by undermining their self-esteem and making it harder for them to speak about their experiences.³⁹ However, many women also face stigmatization in the DDR centers, where assumptions around "promiscuity" of women ex-combatants can make them more vulnerable to sexual harassment.⁴⁰

The agency of women ex-combatants and ex-associates is also frequently subsumed under and denied by the actions of men. In one case, a community did not accept a woman who had returned with her children, citing

30 Dyan Mazurana and Linda Eckerbom Cole, "Women, Girls, and Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration," in *Women in Wars: Contested Histories, Uncertain Futures*, Carole Cohn, ed. (Polity Press, 2012). See also: Alexis Leanna Henshaw, "Female Combatants in Postconflict Processes: Understanding the Roots of Exclusion," *Journal of Global Security Studies* 5, no. 1 (2019); Wenche Iren Hauge, "Gender Dimensions of DDR—Beyond Victimization and Dehumanization: Tracking the Thematic," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 22, no. 2 (2020); Leena Vastapuu, "Not Enough Soldier, Not Enough Civilian: The Continuing Under-representation of Female Soldiers in Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) Programmes," in *Routledge Handbook of Feminist Peace Research*, Tarja Väyrynen et al., eds. (London: Routledge, 2021).

31 Laura Sjoberg and Caron E. Gentry, *Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Women's Violence in Global Politics*. (Zed Books, 2007).

32 Follow-up interview with man CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

33 Ibid.

34 IOM, "Gendered Dimensions," p. vi.

35 Ibid; Donnelly, "Gender and DDR."

36 Virtual interview with man CSO leader, February 2024.

37 Phoebe Donnelly, "Gender and DDR: Lessons Learned from DDR Research," Folke Bernadotte Academy, 2022.

38 Focus group with two NDDRC officials, Cameroon, June 2024.

39 Ibid.

40 Donnelly, "Gender and DDR."

her husband's killing of people and burning of places.⁴¹ Women and their children may also experience stigma if they were sexually abused (or believed to be sexually abused) by the armed groups. An IOM report analyzing the gendered dimensions of disengagement, disassociation, reintegration, and reconciliation (DDRR) in the Lake Chad Basin found that returning women are seen as lacking agency and therefore as untrustworthy, as communities feel that their male relatives within the armed group can easily influence them.⁴²

The Benefits of Engaging Women's Civil Society Organizations in Reintegration

Interviews revealed three key benefits of the GYPI project. First, women's CSOs that had never been formally involved in the reintegration process learned what it was and how they could contribute. They also learned how they had already been contributing to reintegration through their prior work. Second, the capacity building provided by the program created an entry point to shift dynamics between women and men, as women took on greater leadership roles within their communities. Finally, the project created opportunities for greater coordination and collaboration between civil society, the government, and international actors.

"Before the official DDR started, [women] were already doing the work. We didn't know it was DDR."

Recognizing the Contributions of Women's Organizations to Reintegration

The GYPI project provided an opportunity for women's CSOs to better understand DDR and women's participation in the process.⁴³ Interviewees expressed that many of these organizations did not know what DDR was prior to the project. Because of the project, they were able to learn about DDR and undertake new activities related to reintegration and reconciliation such as community dialogue,

awareness raising and sensitization on the DDR process, and women's empowerment. One interviewee described how participants "are now mastering the issues around DDR. They know what DDR is all about and they are now impacting their community."⁴⁴ For example, one organization held a workshop on "tolerance and forgiveness" for women who had been negatively impacted by Boko Haram to help them understand the rationale for the DDR process and make them more open to accepting ex-combatants.⁴⁵

The project also helped women's CSOs understand how they had already been supporting reintegration efforts outside of the formal DDR process. Many of the

CSOs were focused on issues such as providing education and health services, addressing gender-based violence and female genital mutilation, and supporting internally displaced people. While this work is important to broader reintegration efforts, it had not been recognized as part of DDR efforts prior to the GYPI project. One civil society leader highlighted that "before the official DDR started, [women] were already doing the work. We didn't know it was DDR."⁴⁶ She noted how her organization had started working with women who had been taken hostage by Boko Haram long before the start of the formal DDR initiative. She emphasized that "this experience taught us that women were implementing informal and unrecognized activities that contributed to the fight against violent extremism and helped bring back those who had remained with Boko Haram."⁴⁷

41 Focus group with four CSO leaders in Cameroon (three women and one man), June 2024.

42 IOM, "Gendered Dimensions," p. 8.

43 Follow-up interview with man CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

44 Ibid.

45 Interview with woman CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

46 Follow-up interview with woman CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

47 Virtual interview with woman CSO leader, March 2024.

The GYPI project also showed women's CSOs how they could work with women community members to support the DDR process. While it is important not to essentialize women's roles or place additional burdens on them, many women participating in the GYPI project chose to leverage their role as mothers or wives to call on their children or husbands to return from the bush. One example was how some women sent songs to their children in the bush that carried the message to come back home.⁴⁸ Another woman "made a deal" with her husband that she would join him living at the DDR center if he came back from the bush. This led him to disarm and go to the center.⁴⁹ One interviewee noted that Cameroonian women "are going in the bush where [UN staff] cannot go... it is their community. This is one of the best ideas of this particular project.... The community can go further."⁵⁰ These examples illustrate how women's roles within their families and communities can help them demobilize members of armed groups in ways that are unavailable to international actors. Women community members can also leverage these roles to facilitate the reintegration of those who have returned.

The GYPI project is a positive example of how government-run DDR programs can support women's existing work within their communities through capacity building and small grants. One question arising from the GYPI project is how these ground-up activities can be gradually consolidated as part of the formal reintegration strategy, ensuring that women's organizations have access to the resources and legal infrastructure they need to perform this work sustainably.

Changing Gender Roles through Women's Leadership

Another benefit of supporting the role of women's CSOs in facilitating reintegration is that it can create an entry point for shifting gender dynamics within the participating communities. Working

with women civil society leaders allowed women returnees, especially those who had experienced trauma, to feel more confident in speaking about their experiences. Multiple interviewees highlighted how women were more independent, outspoken, or outgoing after participating in the program. For instance, when members of ALVF-EN visited one of the smaller organizations, they were amazed by how much the returnee women working with the organization had confided in program staff.⁵¹ One interviewee highlighted the importance of building up the self-esteem and confidence of women returnees to help facilitate this. Following feminist and victim-centered principles, they stressed the importance of letting people describe their needs for the reintegration process instead of imposing their own vision for reintegration.⁵²

This work empowering women returnees may have begun to lead to a shift in gender dynamics in some communities. One interviewee noted that "women... are speaking out much more in public, they are taking initiatives, and they are more active in even taking charge of families, which was not the case before. Some traditional religious authorities are also beginning to accompany women and participate in activities."⁵³ Another civil society leader shared how roles were shifting for both women and men:

With this particular project, it's a great step, because whenever these ladies are implementing the activities, you will see the men from these villages coming to participate. The traditional leader from that village will come to participate. All these things before weren't happening—women talking to the community, men sitting and listening. This is a great change.⁵⁴

The fact that religious and traditional authorities supported women's leadership on reintegration might be evidence of broader shifts in gendered expectations in communities. One report on the project noted that due to sociocultural factors in

48 Follow-up interview with woman CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

49 Virtual interview with man CSO leader, February 2024.

50 Follow-up interview with man CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

51 Interview with woman CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

52 Follow-up interview with woman CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

53 Ibid.

54 Follow-up interview with man CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

traditionally patriarchal communities in Cameroon, “it was almost impossible for women to speak in front of men for any reason,” but that members of women’s CSOs were now at the forefront of all planned activities and working with all members of the community.⁵⁵

Supportive male leadership was also essential to the success of the women’s organizations participating in the GYPI project, a couple of which were led by men. When asked why the program was focusing on women’s instead of men’s organizations, a male CSO leader explained, “Women are the direct beneficiaries, but... at the end of the day, everyone is benefiting.”⁵⁶ However, he also noted that the project’s focus on women’s leadership sometimes led it to overlook men who were also working within the organization both under and alongside women. One woman interviewee emphasized that “gender is not about putting men aside and saying ‘we do not need you.’ [It is about saying] you are not the only gender that can read or write; we can read or write too. It is encouragement that our voice counts, and we can do more than we are already doing.”⁵⁷ These dynamics illustrate the importance of accounting for the role of masculinities when designing and implementing DDR projects.

Supporting the role of women’s CSOs in facilitating reintegration can create an entry point for shifting gender dynamics within the participating communities.

Improving Coordination and Collaboration with Civil Society

To ensure a DDR process is gender-responsive, it is important to involve women’s civil society organizations from the start of project development and implementation. Close collaboration with civil society also builds local ownership of the process, which is critical to long-term success. In Cameroon, however, the DDR program did not fully consider the role and needs of women in the

beginning, with activities directed primarily toward men.⁵⁸ While this began to change with the implementation of the NDDRC’s gender strategy, it was not until the GYPI project that women’s organizations were brought in to help implement the DDR process together with IOM, UN Women, and the NDDRC.⁵⁹

The GYPI project helped better connect women’s CSOs with international organizations and the government. One interviewee shared that in initial consultations with civil society organizations, they stated that they did not have access to the government and did not know how to work with them.⁶⁰ Another interviewee said that “before, as civil society, we would come to criticize what had already been done—to say that this or that should

have been done differently. Now, we have the approach to criticize from within, to make our voices heard, and to speak up so that our perspectives are taken into account.”⁶¹ The project helped create an architecture for the govern-

ment to engage civil society. One interviewee expressed that there is an assumption that the government does not want to work with women’s organizations, but the issue is sometimes more that they do not know how to engage with civil society in a systematic way—something even the UN struggles with:

It is not only having the vision which the gender strategy gave, but it is having [a] specific architecture for a way in which women can systematically have this entry point. So we put a lot of thought into the structure itself, and I think that is a key lesson.... Too often, these strategies and national action plans... are developed but go straight onto the shelf.⁶²

One government official also highlighted the positive collaboration between the state and CSOs

⁵⁵ IOM, “Suivi et Évaluation.”

⁵⁶ Follow-up interview with man CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

⁵⁷ Virtual interview with NDDRC official, February 2024.

⁵⁸ Virtual interview with woman CSO leader, March 2024.

⁵⁹ Follow-up interview with woman CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

⁶⁰ Virtual interview with IOM official, February 2024.

⁶¹ Follow-up interview with woman CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

⁶² Virtual interview with IOM official, February 2024.

through the GYPI project, emphasizing, “The government cannot do successful DDR all by itself. We need the partners, and when it comes to those partners, we need civil society. [We need] for civil society to understand the government is not the enemy, it is not the opposition.”⁶³ While it remains to be seen how this collaboration will continue, the project opened an entry point for involving women’s organizations in working toward a whole-of-society DDR process.

Challenges to Engaging Women in Reintegration

While participants reported benefiting from the GYPI project, the project encountered several challenges in engaging women and women’s organizations in Cameroon’s DDR program.

These included the protection risks facing women working on DDR, challenges engaging with men, a lack of adequate capacity and resources among women’s CSOs, the sustainability of the project’s gains, and the need to avoid instrumentalizing women’s participation.

Protection Risks Facing Women Working on DDR

Gender norms can not only stigmatize and hinder the reintegration of women ex-associates but also harm women supporting DDR programs. Women working within their communities on DDR efforts in Cameroon face risks resulting from both the sensitive nature of their work and their perceived rebellion against gender stereotypes.

One of the larger implementing civil society organizations emphasized that they follow up closely with the smaller organizations to ensure sensitive messaging around DDR within the community, considering many community members are angry and do not want to accept ex-associates. They noted

Gender norms can not only stigmatize and hinder the reintegration of women ex-associates but also harm women supporting DDR programs.

that DDR centers are “a very sensitive issue, so it is difficult to leave a community-based organization to go to the community and say anything around it. They can expose themselves to so many things.”⁶⁴ Similarly, an interviewee from the government highlighted that

we don’t want to come in and create divisions in families and oppose one person or another. It is very important that even though we have access to those places... we have to pay attention that we are not putting women in danger. We are training them and we are leaving; we are not part of those communities. We need to make sure they are secure and

[need to] lower the risk of them losing their families or being violated.⁶⁵

Paying attention to these concerns is crucial for ensuring women’s ability to both safely facilitate and participate in reintegration initiatives.

Women participating in DDR activities organized by CSOs can also face risks. For example, women calling on family members to return home from armed groups can expose themselves to harm if their messages are not well received by those in the armed group. One interviewee therefore called for these community demobilization efforts to be adapted into initiatives such as the broadcasting of short, anonymous speeches by mothers on the radio that do not put individual women at risk.⁶⁶

Lack of Tools to Engage with Men

While masculinities play an important role in the dynamics of armed groups, policymakers often overlook this role when mainstreaming gender in programming on countering violent extremism and DDR. Violent extremist groups like Boko Haram rely on and exploit specific constructions of what it means to be a man to recruit and maintain

⁶³ Virtual interview with NDDRC official, February 2024.

⁶⁴ Virtual interview with man CSO leader, February 2024.

⁶⁵ Virtual interview with NDDRC official, February 2024.

⁶⁶ Virtual interview with IOM official, February 2024.

members, building on existing conceptions of masculinity within society.⁶⁷ These constructions of masculinity have implications for reintegration efforts. For instance, the expectation that men should be the primary breadwinners leads some men to feel ashamed and turn to illicit activities when they are unable to provide for their families. Failure to help men ex-combatants and ex-associates break away from their previously held perceptions about masculinity while navigating new identities can make them more prone to recidivism and perpetuate cycles of violence.⁶⁸

Because of these notions of masculinity, men and boys also need different types of support during reintegration that the CSOs involved in the GYPI project were not always equipped to provide. For example, women's organizations faced challenges educating men returnees on alternative forms of masculinity that did not involve weapons. Weapons are symbols of power relating to traditional perceptions of manhood, and disarmament can provoke men to have an identity crisis.⁶⁹ One civil society leader noted how some men who had returned saw how women in their community had been positively impacted by the GYPI project and came to the civil society organization for help. However, they did not have the tools to support these men. As she explained,

The challenge for men is... [that they] have been used to holding a weapon.... This challenge now is not our concern..., [it is] for those who are responsible for demobilizing and disarming them. The challenge is how to convince them that they can start another life.... We say that... it is possible, that [they] can reintegrate. But I think we have to go very deep with very appropriate tools for men.⁷⁰

While the GYPI project was focused on women's CSOs, these CSOs were not engaging solely with women in their communities. Yet when they

encountered men, they did not always have the resources to address their specific needs in the reintegration process.

Proactively engaging with men is also important to avoid backlash. One interviewee noted her CSO made sure to sensitize and raise awareness among men, including traditional leaders, to be more accepting of women's participation as this was still a sensitive topic and could lead to problems.⁷¹ This focus on broader education and socialization is crucial to make participation in reintegration safe for everyone.

Capacity and Resource Constraints

One of the primary challenges of implementing the GYPI project was the limited capacity and resources of women's CSOs in the Far North of Cameroon. The Far North is one of Cameroon's most linguistically diverse regions, and many smaller community-based organizations lack staff who can speak fluent French.⁷² Although translators are often hired to help bridge this language gap, these translators are usually men, and cultural norms inhibit some women from fully expressing themselves in their presence.⁷³ Literacy is an issue as well. As summarized by one interviewee working within IOM,

We want to work with [these organizations] at the ground level because they are the ones who can enter the community, but... there may be some [who] cannot write... and [if] we have to make contracts with them and give them the money to work, then it's difficult for them to execute and to follow all the steps that we need to make financial reporting.⁷⁴

Many organizations working in the Far North region were also not well-structured and did not meet the legal requirements to participate in the

67 Aleksandra Dier and Gretchen Baldwin, "Masculinities and Violent Extremism," International Peace Institute, June 2022. In the Lake Chad Basin region specifically, young men with low incomes lack the financial capital to pay a dowry and thus are unable to marry. These factors may push them to join Boko Haram because they will have an "assigned" wife and a corresponding boost in social status. See: IOM, "Gendered Dimensions."

68 Donnelly, "Gender and DDR."

69 Ibid.

70 Follow-up interview with woman CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

71 Ibid.

72 Virtual interview with man CSO leader, February 2024.

73 Informal discussion with LOYOC staff, January 2024.

74 Virtual interview with IOM official, February 2024.

project. As a result, the GYPI project only reached a subset of civil society.

Furthermore, civil society leaders shared that the financing channels led to less funding being available for work happening on the ground by the time funds reached the smaller CSOs.⁷⁵ This is indicative of broader global trends, as research shows that local women's CSOs receive "only a fraction of a fraction" of donor allocated funding towards gender equality.⁷⁶ One interviewee noted that the GYPI project was dependent on government institutions that had to approve certain politically sensitive activities, adding a layer of complexity to their work.⁷⁷ More direct funding would be needed to sustain the operational needs of participating CSOs. One interviewee highlighted that "just like the program seeks to make women independent and autonomous, it is also very important that the government or international organizations strengthen [CSOs] so that they can have their autonomy in terms of infrastructure and other basic necessities."⁷⁸ One report noted that the project has equipped CSOs and enabled them to seek out parallel funding, with one of the smaller organizations coordinated by ALVF-EN already receiving some external funding in this way.⁷⁹ This sort of support is necessary to build the capacity of women's organizations to continue contributing to peacebuilding work within their communities beyond the end of the project.

One of the primary challenges was the limited capacity and resources of women's CSOs in the Far North of Cameroon.

While the GYPI project has been an entry point for shifting gender roles and power dynamics, it remains to be seen how this progress will

be maintained and how reintegration efforts will be further developed and sustained overall. One interviewee highlighted that the project "is good because it's a risk taker, and it funds pilot initiatives. But at the same time, if we're going to continue this and if we want to have multiple phases of this grant mechanism and continue to give financing to these small actors, then we're going to need to develop some kind of program off the back of that."⁸³ Extending the project in scope, timeline, and financial commitment could help address some of these concerns.

Uncertainty around the Sustainability of Project Gains

Because the GYPI project lasted less than two years and only finished in December 2024, there are questions over how some of the gains made through the project can be sustained. Reintegration

In the long term, the sustainability of the project is also tied to the success of the broader DDR process. Civil society engagement cannot fully replace core components of DDR that are the responsibility of the government, particularly around disarmament and demobilization. While civil society has an important role to play in complementing the

⁷⁵ Focus group with four CSO leaders in Cameroon (three women and one man), June 2024.

⁷⁶ Rebecca Turkington, "The Underfunded Partner: Women's Civil Society Organizations," Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, September 12, 2016.

⁷⁷ Virtual interview with woman CSO leader, March 2024.

⁷⁸ Focus group with four CSO leaders in Cameroon (three women and one man), June 2024.

⁷⁹ IOM, "Suivi et Évaluation."

⁸⁰ Focus group with four CSO leaders in Cameroon (three women and one man), June 2024.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² IOM, "Suivi et Évaluation."

⁸³ Virtual interview with IOM official, February 2024.

government's work on reintegration, much work remains for the NDDRC to fully operationalize the reintegration component of the national DDR program. As noted by one CSO leader, "the DD has been done but not the... R."⁸⁴ As a result, there is a lack of clarity on the full process and timeline for reintegration, which could make ex-associates fearful to reintegrate through the DDR centers. This uncertainty makes it more difficult for women's CSOs to inform both ex-associates and communities about the reintegration process. Greater progress and clarity on the process is needed to set women's CSOs up for success and help them address misunderstandings.

Avoiding the Instrumentalization of Women's Participation

One general challenge with promoting women's participation in the design and implementation of DDR programming is how to do so without instrumentalizing the women involved. DDR programs often unintentionally depend on women's unpaid care work within their communities to facilitate reintegration by relying on women to care for young, sick, disabled, or traumatized ex-combatants.⁸⁵ DDR programs may also call on women to leverage their role as mothers or wives to call on men to return. While recognizing the role of women community members in DDR is an important starting point for making these processes more gender-responsive and community-oriented, care must be taken to avoid placing additional burdens on them or reinforcing essentialist stereotypes. This requires asking what women would be receiving in return and ensuring the process uses "DDR in service of women" rather than "women in service of DDR."⁸⁶ DDR programs should also consider how they can leverage the gendered roles of men in similar ways. As one interviewee highlighted, a combatant is "not just the child of the mother... [but] also the daughter of the father."⁸⁷

While the government of Cameroon views its DDR programming as peacebuilding work rather than counterterrorism, the engagement of women in efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism (P/CVE) offers lessons for DDR. In P/CVE programming, women's roles as mothers are often instrumentalized as women are seen as an "access point" to the private sphere and a way for the government to stop deradicalization in the home. However, this approach not only treats the symptom rather than the cause but also oversimplifies the complex roles women play in their communities and shifts the blame from the government onto them if they fail to stop their sons and husbands from radicalizing.⁸⁸ Instead, women should be included throughout the process of designing and implementing programming. P/CVE programming also illustrates the importance of addressing structural factors and engaging men to explore alternative forms of masculinity. These lessons can help steer the GYPI project and the government of Cameroon toward meaningfully involving women in reintegration efforts while also ensuring they benefit from programming.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The GYPI increased the capacity of women's civil society organizations to work on reintegration and reconciliation within their communities. This increased capacity in turn created an entry point to shift gender roles and promote collaboration between CSOs and the government by creating more formal channels for women's participation in peacebuilding initiatives. Women civil society leaders were also able to earn the trust and grow the confidence of women returnees. At the same time, the project revealed the importance of engaging men to help them negotiate and support changing gender dynamics.

84 Follow-up interview with man CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

85 Radhika Coomaraswamy, "Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325," UN Women, 2015; Donnelly, "Gender and DDR."

86 Informal discussion with British High Commission in Cameroon, June 2024.

87 Follow-up interview with man CSO leader in Cameroon, June 2024.

88 Sophie Giscard d'Estaing, "Engaging Women in Countering Violent Extremism: Avoiding Instrumentalisation and Furthering Agency," *Gender & Development* 25, no. 1 (2017).

The project represents an innovative approach to ensuring the perspectives of both ex-associate women and women civil society leaders are meaningfully included in the community reintegration process. However, women's CSOs will require additional capacity and financial resources to sustain the gains made during the short duration of the project. Care also needs to be taken to ensure that women are not merely delivering DDR programs but are also benefiting from them.

In the longer term, the GYPI project could contribute toward broader changes in society. As noted by IOM, "Purposefully involving women and women's organizations in the design and implementation of DDRR processes will promote their broader integration in state policy and legal spaces, which challenges and changes patriarchal structures that fuel conflict and recruitment."⁸⁹

The GYPI project is a promising entry point to creating an architecture for women's CSOs to participate in Cameroon's DDR process.

However, the future of this participation depends on broader progress in that overall process. Ultimately, women's organizations can complement the formal DDR process, but they cannot replace it.

The project in Cameroon took a proactive approach to implementing gender-responsive reintegration. Lessons from that project are useful for other member states designing their own gender-responsive DDR processes. In particular, the Cameroon case can inform other member states as they consider how to collaborate with civil society during the reintegration process. These recommendations are aimed at ensuring that reintegration processes are not only more gender-responsive but also lead to more sustainable outcomes.

- **Develop a gender strategy as part of the overall DDR strategy:** In Cameroon, the NDDRC outlined a gender strategy early in the

The lessons learned from Cameroon can inform other member states as they consider how to collaborate with civil society during the reintegration process.

DDR process to inform the process's planning and implementation, including resource mobilization. That strategy enabled the creation of the project discussed in this paper and helped link the project to the broader DDR process. Other member states implementing DDR processes should follow Cameroon's example in developing gender strategies for their own contexts. While the format and substance of gender strategies will vary by context, they should consider addressing, at a minimum, the specific roles played by men, women, boys, and girls within armed groups and the broader conflict; the specific needs that women ex-combatants and ex-associates may have when demobilizing and reintegrating; ways to include women civil society members and women's CSOs in the DDR process; a strategy to mitigate risks to women ex-associates and women supporting the DDR process; and strategies to ensure that DDR is not only gender-sensitive but gender-transformative. Member states should seek to build these gender strategies collaboratively with women's CSOs and community leaders. Member states should also implement monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure the DDR program is meeting the goals of the gender strategy.

- **Establish an infrastructure for systematic and sustained collaboration with civil society:** One of the benefits of the project in Cameroon was that it provided a structure for regular interaction between the government, the UN, and CSOs on the implementation of the reintegration process. Continuing this collaboration will be critical to the full operationalization of the DDR process. Drawing on this model, governments developing DDR programs should create national and subnational mechanisms, such as regular consultations and communication channels, for empowering and involving civil society in planning and implementing reintegration programs from the

⁸⁹ IOM, "Gendered Dimensions."


beginning, drawing on community-based planning tools.⁹⁰ These mechanisms should enable communities to articulate their own needs and desires in the planning of the reintegration process to ensure the process benefits not only ex-associates but all community members. These collaborative mechanisms need to be maintained throughout the reintegration process, allowing opportunities for community members to provide regular feedback.

- **Invest in women's CSOs' long-term capacity to support reintegration:** Reintegration is the longest phase of a DDR process and requires long-term investment. When the international community and governments partner with women's CSOs on reintegration, they should plan for sustained financing that directly supports local women's CSOs work on the ground. Governments and international donors should also recognize, fund, and support the reintegration work that women are already doing within their communities and ensure that DDR programs do not inadvertently instrumentalize women's unpaid labor.
- **Communicate details on the operationalization of the DDR process so that CSOs are set up for success:** DDR processes often need to overcome a lack of trust between the government, ex-associates, and communities. One way to build trust is for governments to clearly communicate the steps of the DDR process, the conditions in DDR centers, and the expected timeline from disarmament to reintegration. Having this information more readily available will allow CSOs to share more detailed and accurate information and better complement the full DDR process.
- **Consider the role of masculinities when developing DDR gender strategies:** Projects

supporting the reintegration of ex-associates, including those focused on women's CSOs, should not overlook the role of masculinities in reintegration. Understanding how ideas around femininity and masculinity can drive men and women to violence is critical to a gender-responsive reintegration process. This can help DDR processes transform conceptions of masculinity that link manhood with violence. It can also help ensure these processes are responsive to prevailing conceptions of masculinity, such as by providing men with viable livelihood opportunities in recognition of the link between manhood and being able to provide for one's family and community. All CSOs involved in reintegration, including women's CSOs, therefore require training and support to help men and boy returnees find alternative, nonviolent paths to manhood. Reintegration programming by women's CSOs should also focus on sensitizing men on the role of women in the DDR process to avoid potential backlash against women's increased participation.

- **Anticipate and proactively address safety risks facing women's CSOs supporting reintegration:** The stigmas that can put women ex-associates at risk can also jeopardize the safety of women working on DDR within their communities, for the government, and for CSOs. As part of their gender DDR strategy, governments and project implementors, in collaboration with women's CSOs, should conduct a context-specific analysis of the threats facing both women ex-associates and women supporting the DDR process, outlining the types and levels of risk. Based on this analysis, they should draft a strategy to mitigate these risks, including security training and community sensitization to prevent backlash against women's increased participation.

⁹⁰ For more guidance on community-based reintegration, see: UN Development Programme, "Guidance Note on Supporting Community-Based Reintegration of Former Members of Armed Forces and Groups," May 31, 2024, available at <https://www.undp.org/publications/guidance-note-supporting-community-based-reintegration-former-members-armed-forces-and-groups>.



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777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017-3521
USA
TEL +1-212-687-4300
FAX +1-212-983-8246