NEW CONTEXTS OF ONGOING CONFLICT AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM:

Disengagement, Disassociation, Reintegration and Reconciliation

IOM
UN MIGRATION

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Publisher: International Organization for Migration
17 route des Morillons
P.O. Box 17
1211 Geneva 19
Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 717 9111
Fax: +41 22 798 6150
Email: hq@iom.int
Website: www.iom.int

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ACRONYMS

AUC	African Union Commission
CVR	community violence reduction
DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DDRR	disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation
FTF	foreign terrorist fighter
IAWG on DDR	Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRS	information, counselling and referral services
IDDRS	Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards
ISWAP	Islamic State West Africa Province
NSAGs	non-State armed groups
PRR	prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration
PVE	prevention of violent extremism
SPRR	screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reconciliation
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council resolution
VEO	violent extremist organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Today's conflict settings and security threats present novel challenges for States in managing, resolving and recovering from conflict while responding to the need for accountability and justice and maintaining adherence to human rights commitments and due process. In the context of armed conflict, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of armed group members has traditionally played an important role in solidifying peace and de-escalating conflict. However, in contexts of unresolved or ongoing conflicts and/or conflicts involving sanctioned violent extremist groups, DDR must be reframed.[1] In particular, where sanctioned violent extremist groups are involved, United Nations Security Council resolutions 2178, 2349 and 2396 have called for prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration (PRR), which adds an expectation of accountability beyond acts of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, to include crimes of terrorism. Established DDR practice, processes and tools can be useful in supporting the reintegration of former associates of armed groups designated as terrorist organizations, both as nationals in conflict contexts such as Nigeria and as former foreign terrorist fighters returning from conflict zones to their countries of origin, but they must be modified and synchronized with other frameworks such as PRR.

DDR viability and practice has traditionally been predicated on several preconditions: (a) a signed peace agreement or cessation of hostilities that establishes a legal basis; (b) agreed eligibility criteria; (c) voluntary participation; (d) sufficient trust in the peace process; (e) political will of the parties to the conflict; (f) minimum guarantee of security; (g) conditions for sustainable reintegration; and (h) national ownership. Contexts of unresolved conflicts and where violent extremist groups operate not only lack some of the preconditions but also present new challenges, specifically the expectation of bringing terrorists to justice. Responding to these new challenges, IOM has developed – in cooperation with several United Nations partners and in close coordination with host governments – a model for the disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation (DDRR) of associates of sanctioned violent extremist groups. The United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR is also working to address many of these issues in the redrafting of the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards.

While drawing heavily on years of experience with DDR programming, the IOM DDRR programming is distinct in several respects. First, while DDR has traditionally been predicated on the parties to the conflict establishing lists of eligible participants negotiated following a peace process, in these new contexts, eligibility is based on an assessment or screening process to determine how individuals should be categorized to determine subsequent treatment and handling. In contexts of United Nations-sanctioned terrorist groups, blanket amnesty for those who disengage from sanctioned armed groups is not possible, and eligibility for participation in DDR-like programmes will likely be contingent on determining an individual's legal status and possibly future risk.[2] Second, to be useful, DDR processes and tools – including reinsertion, rehabilitation and reintegration processes – must be modified to operate with a complementary framework emphasizing the potential prosecution of those who have committed terrorist acts. Third, reintegration in contexts of ongoing conflict presents new challenges and risk to both disengaged fighters and their communities of return.

[1] Refer to the Annex for the definition of sanctioned violent extremist groups.
[2] Blanket amnesty has never been extended to those guilty of genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity.

The four-pillared DDRR approach of IOM is context-specific and developed and implemented alongside national governments and local partners to create viable, reliable, transparent and nationally owned legal and operational processes to support exit and reintegration pathways for former associates where sanctioned violent extremist groups are involved.[3] Centrally, this approach initially focuses on supporting governments in building the legal foundations and operational frameworks necessary to better define the treatment, handling and identification of individuals who could be eligible for a rehabilitation and reintegration protocol and subsequently on the unique challenges of rehabilitation, reintegration and reconciliation in contexts of unresolved conflict. DDRR likewise aims to address the concerns and needs of the communities of return to ensure successful reintegration and foster social cohesion in mitigating risks of future conflict and potential re-engagement of returned associates.

Key lessons learned and elements for success that must inform the development of tailored context- and conflict-sensitive DDRR programmes include the following:

- Joining a violent extremist organization (VEO) is a phenomenon shaped by diverse and complex factors. In addition to an array of structural and individual drivers (such as psychological factors, socioeconomic motivations, the pursuit of utopian ideals, seeking a sense of purpose or efficacy and history of grievances or marginalization), it is often difficult to distinguish between those who have joined voluntarily and those who have done so under duress. Moreover, a person can play a variety of roles in a VEO, ranging from active combat to support activities. DDRR needs to take these individual aspects and contextual factors into account, adhering to key principles but **avoiding generic approaches to DDRR**.
- Where VEOs are present, the need to establish a **system to determine an eligible caseload for a DDRR** programme is pivotal to distinguishing and reconciling the expectation of bringing perpetrators of terrorist acts to justice and the expectations for their rehabilitation and reintegration. This can be done through a national framework compliant with international human rights standards and the expectations of accountability under the United Nations counter-terrorism resolutions. These frameworks must also address the expectation of voluntary participation in DDR processes.
- The development and implementation of **legal and operational frameworks** is therefore essential for DDRR to address these concerns. These frameworks must align with minimum international and domestic requirements, as well as benefit from effective international cooperation, national ownership and a whole-of-government approach, community acceptance and a whole-of-society approach.
- **Risk management** is necessary to consider the programmatic, reputational, financial, legal and personal risks to programme beneficiaries, as well as governments and supporting entities' staff.
- **Transitional rehabilitation** is an interim process of rehabilitation in a non-prison setting that may be useful in addressing a range of issues faced by disengaged former associates prior to reintegration and return to communities.

[3] In the present work, IOM uses the term "associate" to mean all persons (regardless of age, relationship, gender and others) with whom the national-level or regional-level authorities have some responsibility or authority over (that is, through custody or otherwise), and whom they believe had some contact with VEOs without presuming or prejudging the nature of their relationship to the armed group in question. This may include the following: (a) combatants or fighters; (b) those performing a broad range of non-combat roles (such as espionage) and support functions (such as clerks, housekeepers and cooks); and (c) civilians accompanying fighters, such as children forcibly taken away by violent extremist affiliates.

- Successful DDRR programmes must be premised on robust context analysis guided by **conflict sensitivity**, informing the interaction between the programme activities and the contexts of ongoing conflict and unresolved extreme violence.
- **Strategic communication** to explain the programme and pathways to reintegration is critical for disengaging associates and communities. It should outline the legal and operational frameworks developed by government authorities and clarify the eligibility criteria and the legal status of individuals who complete the programme.
- **DDRR is not a linear process**. Activities in each phase must be designed organically to efficiently complement each other. Activities can take place simultaneously in more than one phase and/or in different sequences.
- A **gender-sensitive** lens is essential, supported by solid gender-sensitive analysis and a comprehensive understanding (inclusive social network mapping) of each person's association and disassociation path. A focus on addressing perceptions in host communities and of returning women, a consideration of women's role as amplifiers and agents of peace, the meaningful participation of women in all phases of the DDRR process and especially for the development of legal and operational frameworks, and efficient coordination with civil society actors is critical.
- Meaningful and timely **community participation** is key as community buy-in is essential in the DDRR process. Moving beyond a focus on individual reintegration, DDRR programmes must engage **communities in reintegration** as early as possible in the process.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 25 years, IOM has supported disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes for former combatants/fighters, their dependants and the communities of return in the post-conflict transition and recovery phase, primarily through reintegration activities.[4] The involvement of IOM in DDR stems from the Organization's commitment to the prevention and resolution of the drivers of crisis-induced displacement, as well as its mandate to provide reintegration assistance for migrants and displaced populations, including former combatants/fighters. Examples of this work have been presented in a compendium of projects, published in early 2019.[5]

Today's conflict settings and security situations present novel challenges for States in managing security and providing solutions to conflict. As a result, the wealth of knowledge that has been gained overtime by the international DDR community of practice needs to be built upon to recast new and adaptive approaches. Traditional DDR processes and tools may be helpful but must be adapted to address the range of needs specific to legal and operational aspects of addressing exit from United Nations-sanctioned violent extremist groups and in contexts of ongoing conflict.[6] Working with several United Nations partners and in close coordination with host governments, **IOM has developed a DDR-related model for the disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation (DDRR) for members of sanctioned violent extremist organizations** (VEOs). This approach deviates from DDR practice in significant ways, and focuses heavily on supporting governments in building the legal foundations and operational frameworks necessary to facilitate successful long-term reintegration and conflict management, including to better define and identify individuals who could be eligible for a rehabilitation and reintegration protocol, as distinct from those who may be subject to criminal or judicial proceedings. In facilitating the reintegration of former associates within these new contexts, IOM works to reduce the risk of recruitment into criminal or violent extremist groups by addressing the drivers of conflict and building resilience at the individual and community levels. Because violent extremist groups are involved, IOM is particularly attentive to addressing the potential negative reactions communities may have to returning former associates by rebuilding social cohesion through community-based reintegration programming attentive to reconciliation.

As a supplement to the compendium of IOM DDR projects, this document aims to present the experience of IOM in implementing adapted DDR processes and tools in contexts where preconditions for DDR programmes are lacking, such as contexts where United Nations-sanctioned violent extremist groups operate.[7] This document is the first in a series meant to outline and discuss DDRR and its various components. Other documents in the series cover in more detail the topics of eligibility for DDRR, as well as transitional rehabilitation and reintegration. The series is meant to be read together to provide a holistic and detailed overview of the experience of IOM in DDRR and support practitioners in engaging in DDRR programming. This document specifically provides a broad overview and discusses the changing landscape of DDRR, presents good practice and challenges, and provides a concrete and structured tool to

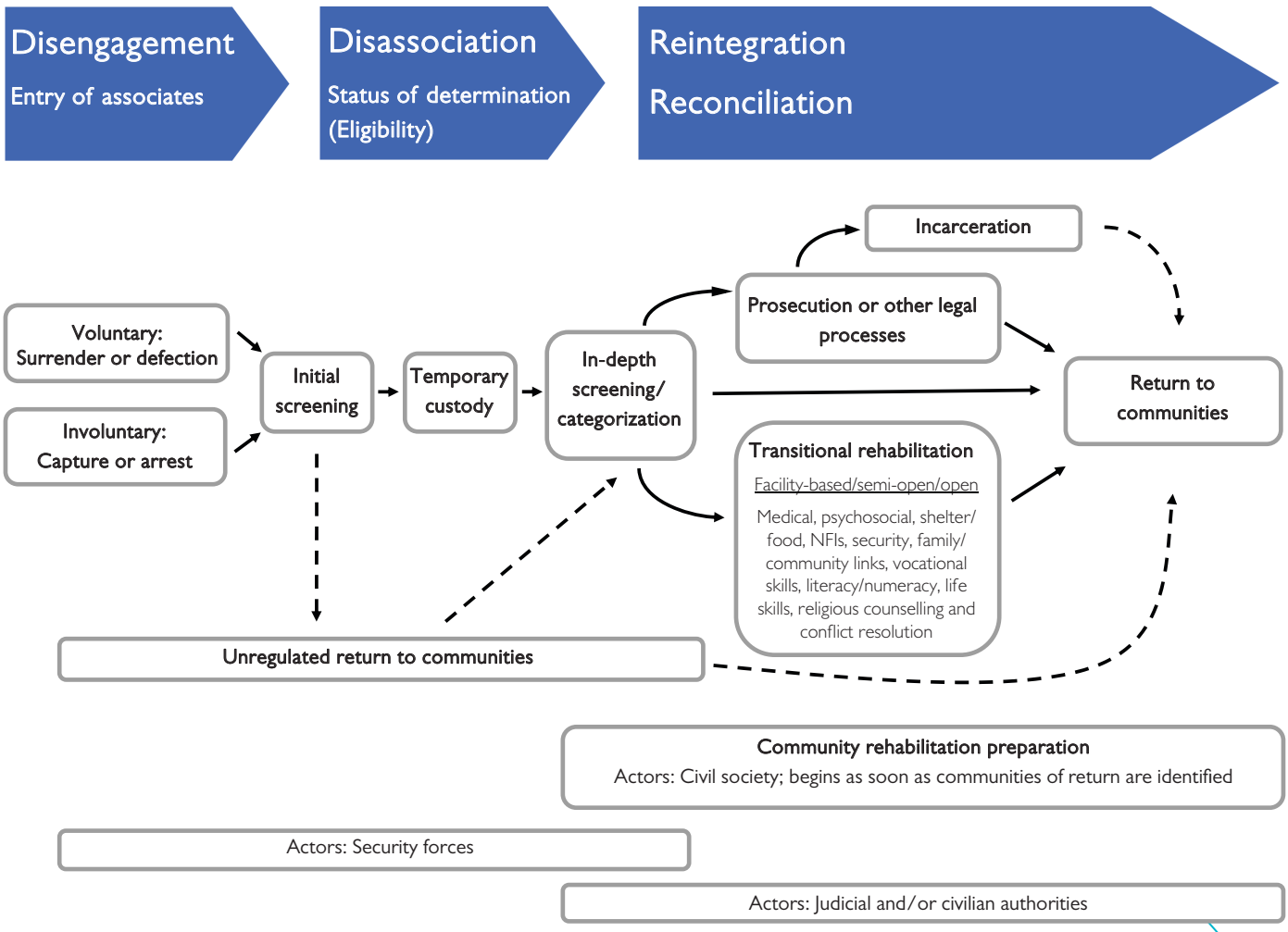
[4] See the Annex for the complete definition of "combatant" and discussion of fighters.
[5] See IOM, 2019b.
[6] Please refer to the Annex for the definition of "sanctioned groups". Though individual countries and regional organizations may have their own sanctions, IOM follows the United Nations Security Council resolutions that pertain to United Nations-sanctioned groups.
[7] This refers specifically to traditional DDR, or first-generation DDR, based on four criteria: (a) a negotiated ceasefire and/or peace agreement; (b) minimum guarantee of security; (c) trust in the peace process and political will to engage in DDR; and (d) voluntariness.

design DDRR through the **four-pillared approach** used by IOM. Broadly, it is divided into two parts: the first outlines the needs that arise out of contemporary conflict contexts and presents the distinctive approach that IOM has developed to support States in addressing these needs; and the second part details some key elements for the success of DDRR programming in new contexts, as well as the importance of the new terms and concepts associated with DDRR, highlighting key achievements, challenges and lessons learned across current IOM programmes. As a preamble to guide the reader, an overview of how IOM conceptualizes DDRR is provided.

Overview of the IOM disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation approach

To illustrate how IOM conceptualizes the process of DDRR, Figure 1 presents the flow of former associates of United Nations-sanctioned VEOs through four phases of treatment and handling.[8] While there are contextual differences and variances in how States address and handle these caseloads, this framing reflects the generic process based on the experiences of IOM across multiple contexts.

Figure 1. Disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation



Note: The actors in the screening process are not only limited to security forces, but depending on the context, may also include judicial actors and/or civilian authorities.

[8] This flowchart is illustrative. It was developed based on the IOM intervention in the Lake Chad Basin Region.

DDRR begins when associates of VEOs disengage (**phase 1**), be it voluntarily (surrender or defection) or involuntarily (capture or arrest). In most cases, these individuals will be taken into custody by security forces. With attention to the protection of human rights and due process, these persons, upon disengagement, should be registered and screened to determine their further treatment and handling. The initial screening process is intended to identify whether individuals should be released or face further investigation to determine both the nature and degree of their association with a sanctioned group (**phase 2**). This may lead to some individuals being further investigated for possible judicial action, while others established to be associates of sanctioned groups may be eligible for a non-prison rehabilitation and reintegration programme. The process of taking suspects into custody and determining their status and further treatment and handling is contingent on the establishment of a legal framework consistent with international legal and human rights standards.

Screening constitutes the beginning of the disassociation phase and uses legally defined criteria and processes to categorize cases. Broadly speaking, three considerations have dominated the categorization of associates through screening: (a) suspicion of certain types of crimes; (b) degree and nature of involvement with the VEO; and (c) level of risk to the communities. Theoretically, those who are determined through the screening process to have a low level of non-criminal association with the group, and/or to be of no risk to the community, could be returned directly to their communities. Such cases might include hostages or individuals very loosely associated with, and deemed to have no substantive ties, to the group. A second category might focus on those often referred to as "low-risk" or "low-profile", whose criminal culpability and risk are deemed low and who could be remanded to what may be referred to as transitional rehabilitation or other non-prosecutorial process (**phase 3**).[9] A third category might include "high-risk" or "high-profile" individuals who should be criminally prosecuted depending on domestic laws, obligations under international law and United Nations Security Council resolutions.[10] DDRR is thereby separate from the processes associated with prison-based rehabilitation.

For eligible persons, transitional rehabilitation[11] would aim to assist a former associate in a supervised setting, in advance of more sustained reintegration assistance upon return to a community (**phase 4**).[12] Rehabilitation may consist of the following: (a) individual counselling and psychosocial assistance; (b) health and physical rehabilitation assistance; (c) skills development, which could include re-socialization and civic education, life skills, vocational training and business development and other related socioeconomic capacity-building support; and (c) re-establishment or strengthening of family or community links prior to return to communities. Reintegration continues at the community level and addresses the socioeconomic needs of the individuals while supporting the recovery of the community. This intervention could be integrated with reconciliation support tailored to the specific contexts and include restorative justice forums, community trauma healing activities or other transitional justice undertakings to re-establish a basic foundation for the longer-term process of individual and community recovery.

[9] While association with a VEO may be a criminal offence in some jurisdictions, this screening is an effort to differentiate those clearly responsible for terrorist acts from those guilty of lesser crimes, such as association. The degree of criminal responsibility is contingent on domestic and internal laws.

[10] Criminal liability and risk are two distinct criteria that do not always go in the same direction. Someone might be genuinely repentant and ready to move on from a terrorist group but have committed serious terrorist acts, in which case they must be brought to justice.

[11] Transitional rehabilitation is a government-led process by which the State, through a set of rehabilitative activities and interventions tailored to the personal profile of each participant, assists eligible former associates of VEOs to prepare for reintegration into the community while at the same time assisting families and communities to prepare for that return.

[12] See transitional rehabilitation in section 1.2.5 of this document.

1. CONTEMPORARY CONSIDERATIONS AND CHALLENGES IN DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION

1.1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION EVOLUTIONS

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) is a series of processes and activities with intersecting political, military, security, humanitarian and socioeconomic aspects that contribute to "security and stability in a post-conflict recovery context" (Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (IAWG on DDR), 2006:6). DDR is focused on addressing the needs of former combatants and fighters in their transition to civilian status through the removal of weapons, disengagement from military structures and integration into civilian life with an emphasis on social and economic (re)integration (ibid.). DDR processes also contribute to stabilization efforts, creating contexts conducive to peace processes (IAWG on DDR, 2019:1).

Conceptually, DDR practice can be understood to have evolved through three iterations. Though the distinctions are not categorical, they are umbrella terms for corresponding sets of practices and goals (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2010a). These variations reflect and respond to weaknesses or shortcomings in previous practice to address contextually specific needs. Each approach has value and offers options in the contexts for which they were designed.

Throughout the 1980s and the 1990s, DDR was traditionally implemented in the aftermath of conflicts, following a military victory or a peace agreement. The legal parameters for DDR processes were often codified within the peace agreement, or a subsequent agreement or frameworks defined by a joint commission, establishing credibility and fostering trust. Traditional or **first-generation DDR** represents a highly technical and predominantly military focus on the disarmament and demobilization of individual former combatants, often with less attention paid to long-term reintegration challenges. Consistent with the highly structured nature of first-generation DDR, the processes were predicated on a defined set of preconditions and operating assumptions:

- Signing of a negotiated ceasefire and/or peace agreement that provides a framework for DDR;
- Establishment of implementation processes, in part to clarify eligibility criteria;
- Voluntariness of participation in the reintegration process;
- Trust in the peace process;
- Sufficient political will of the parties to engage in DDR;
- A minimum guarantee of security;
- Recognition of the need for economic conditions and opportunities for long-term reintegration;
- National ownership.

However, by the mid-2000s, traditional DDR practices were deemed by many to be insufficient in addressing some of the peacebuilding objectives, including the need for sustainable reintegration. Informed by experience, **second-generation DDR** emerged, which placed greater emphasis on reintegration and community inclusion, incorporating community stabilization, and community-based security and community violence reduction (CVR) approaches (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2010b). Addressing the needs of both the broader community and former combatants/fighters builds trust and sets the ground for addressing longer-term peacebuilding objectives. This more inclusive approach, it was argued, created a conducive environment for the reintegration of the former combatants/fighters and was viewed as supplemental to traditional DDR.

Figure 2. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration generations

First-generation DDR

Disarm combatants, separating individuals from formations, focus on processing individuals out of armed groups and individual focus on combatants.

- Signed peace agreement
- Legal framework for DDR
- Clear and uncontested parties to a conflict, clear eligibility
- Sufficient political will
- Defined military structures, uniformed combatants

Second-generation DDR

Shifting from individual case management to a more inclusive community-based approach through involving entire communities in the return and reintegration and mitigating social frictions by accounting for diverse community needs.

- Traditional peace process may be contested, underway or inexistent
- Peace process may be fragile
- Contexts where a wide array of porous armed groups under unclear leadership are present

Third-generation DDR

Support reintegration efforts at the community level, preventing further recruitment and providing off-ramping options for eligible categories in complex contexts often during ongoing conflict or where sanctioned groups are involved.

- Absence of peace agreement, or peace process may be contested, underway or inexistent
- Absence of political will
- Absence of conditions for long-term reintegration
- In the midst of ongoing conflicts
- Context of counter-terrorism or counter-insurgency operations and as such may include tools such as CVE and PVE
- May require the use of DDR-related tools, CVR, etc.

Contemporary contexts of ongoing conflict, the absence of peace agreements and/or the presence of violent extremism have spurred another reexamination of DDR practices and standards. As a result, the legal and political frameworks giving form and authority to DDR processes and eligibility criteria are often absent. Additionally, in contexts of ongoing conflict and/or the presence of VEOs, substantial security threats persist. To address these new contexts and challenges, **third-generation DDR** builds upon second-generation DDR's focus on socioeconomic reintegration to also incorporate legal, social and political engagement as part of achieving broader peacebuilding objectives. Third-generation DDR is acutely concerned with reducing the vulnerabilities of individuals that join VEOs and is increasingly connected to broader conflict management, prevention of violent extremism (PVE) and peacebuilding (Muggah and O'Donnell, 2015). By rebuilding social bonds between communities and former associates, fostering acceptance within communities for disengaged associates and addressing the drivers and structural factors that can be exploited by VEOs to recruit individuals, third-generation DDR offers more sustainable economic, social and political alternatives to conflict. For example, third-generation DDR goes beyond the narrative of poverty being the prime incentive for youth to join VEOs (Saldinger, 2015).

1.2. SPECIFICITIES OF DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION IN NEW CONTEXTS

New conflict contexts not only lack some of the preconditions typical of traditional DDR, but also present new challenges. As membership in or association with VEOs becomes more fluid, disengagement often occurs individually or in small groups, and is influenced by the evolving military situation or other contextual factors. Exit from VEOs can be voluntary or the result of capture or arrest and involve returning directly and informally to communities. In the absence of proper legal and operational structures, former associates who come in contact with State authorities are often held in detention facilities for prolonged time periods, a situation creating human rights and security challenges and linked to increases in radicalization or (re)recruitment. Where defection or disengagement is informal, communities receiving defecting or surrendered associates without any support are often unprepared to respond to the challenges they face, especially where social cohesion is weak and recruitment into VEOs is ongoing. Informal defection or disengagement can also lead to future problems with authorities and in clarifying legal status.

In sum, governments and local populations are faced with challenges that include the following: (a) absence of political will; (b) lack of a legal framework or operational parameters, including tools and processes to determine the eligibility of former associates for rehabilitation and reintegration processes (screening); (c) risk management; (d) particularities of disengagement and disassociation from VEOs; (e) the need for transitional rehabilitation; and (f) the absence of conditions for reintegration and reconciliation.

1.2.1. Absence of political will

Contemporary conflicts often take place in fragile contexts, with weak institutions and rule of law (Piedmont, 2015). Governments dealing with VEO activity in their territory tend to focus on military and security responses, while de-escalation and resolution of conflict are less prioritized. The first challenge of DDRR initiatives is often to effectively engage with State authorities in creating and supporting positive "off-ramping" options for individuals who have separated or could separate from VEOs and demonstrate that viable pathways exist for economic and social inclusion and political participation.

Promoting safe and reliable pathways out of VEOs as a contribution to conflict dissolution, and prevention of recruitment and strengthening of social cohesion as a method towards sustainable peace may be challenging. It requires shifting the focus from a predominantly military and security agenda to include peacebuilding approaches for reconciliation (in particular in anti-terrorism legislation) and opening pathways for restorative justice processes. Understandably, this may be considered politically risky by decision makers, and at the community level, generate feelings of resentment or concerns of impunity that need to be addressed through an inclusive process.

1.2.2. Lack of a legal framework and operational parameters for disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation

An alternative legal structure must be established to frame DDR-like activities and define eligibility criteria. Governments may require technical assistance in creating foundational frameworks, processes and systems to guide the treatment and handling of former associates. Institutions should be adequately capacitated, and if necessary, created to provide efficient coordination, both at the national and local levels and between security and civilian authorities.

United Nations Security Council resolutions 2178 (on terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism) and 2396 – Screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reconciliation

UNSCRs 2178 (United Nations, 2014) and 2396 (United Nations, 2017a) call upon Member States to develop **prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration (PRR)** strategies in addressing violent extremism. This framework is proposed to address the needs of terrorists, including FTFs and family members, with an emphasis on a whole-of-society approach, including various civil society, government and community actors and the meaningful participation of women. UNSCR 2396 expands the applicability of PRR outside of FTF contexts and adds the critical component of screening (individual assessments), distinguishing between suspected terrorists and accompanying family members, as well as developing and conducting individual risk assessments, as it is necessary to recommend further action. The importance of screening has been emphasized and is now cross-cutting to the United Nations, as well as the African Union in screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reconciliation (SPRR) strategies.

UNSCR 2349 – Disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration and accountability in the Lake Chad Basin Region

UNSCR 2349 (United Nations, 2017b) calls specifically for DDRR in Lake Chad Basin to address the needs of persons associated with Boko Haram and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) on a regional level through disarmament, demobilization, deradicalization, rehabilitation, reintegration and prosecution when appropriate. This call differs from a traditional DDR process, encouraging governments in the region to "develop both rehabilitation programmes in custodial settings for detained terrorist suspects and sentenced persons, and reintegration programme to assist persons either released from custody having served their sentence on those who have complement a rehabilitation programme in an alternative setting. …"

Importantly, gender should be considered, in line with UNSCR 1325, through gender-sensitive research, data collection on the drivers of violent extremism and the impacts of PVE programming on women's human rights and women's organizations.

To support these efforts, the United Nations is developing guidance on the implementation of Security Council resolutions pertaining to the SPRR of people associated with sanctioned groups (especially UNSCRs 2178, 2396 and 2349). Additional regional instruments such as the Regional Stabilization Strategy for the Lake Chad Basin Region – spearheaded by the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the African Union Commission (AUC) – have contextualized and incorporated DDR and SPRR.

United Nations Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards

Released in 2006, the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) is a tool meant to guide DDR practice – compiling best practices and lessons learned – and represent agreed-upon policies and standards of the United Nations. The document was reviewed in 2019 and is being updated in response to the changing landscape of DDR and the new contexts, including violent extremism; the update is to situate DDR under the Sustaining Peace Agenda through the twin resolutions (A/RES/70/262 and S/RES/2282) and work at all stages of conflict, from prevention to conflict resolution and development.

The new approach to DDR spelled out by the IDDRS revision allows for DDR to take place in contexts where preconditions are lacking yet calls for the support of local-level peace agreements, attention to a regional approach, support for governments in developing a framework for DDR and an emphasis on prevention. However, international frameworks and tools should be further developed to capture the complexity of new scenarios and provide holistic guidance for implementation.

Two new modules (among others) in the IDDRS – 2.11 (Legal Framework for UNDDR) and 2.30 (Community Violence Reduction) – discuss the synergies between DDR and violence reduction and offer guidance on the legal obligations of the State to prosecute while also emphasizing their accountability to transitional justice. The necessity of screening is once again highlighted as a foundational step to DDR.

A comprehensive legal or political framework must be developed to deal with disengaging and captured associates. This includes a **legal basis for DDRR**, which provides guidelines for any temporary detention, lists the crimes for which VEO associates may eventually be held accountable, and the conditions under which any individual can be "remanded" to a non-voluntary DDRR process. This legal basis should be consistent with existing normative frameworks outlining a legal exception or exemption from criminal prosecution for certain involvement or acts committed while associated with or as a result of association to a VEO. In contexts with strong anti-terrorist norms, this may be a complicated task that assumes solid documentation and understanding of the dynamics of VEOs, as well as profound reflections on justice and social cohesion.

It also entails the development of appropriate **screening and categorization systems** – considering relevant and existing international standards, human rights obligations and national justice frameworks – to effectively distinguish between those who should be considered for further legal review and possible prosecution and those who could be immediately eligible for DDRR. Recent practice in this area is pointing towards a two-phased process, with an initial screening aimed at identifying individuals of no legal interest (e.g. not associated) or those who were associated and who may present a risk. This initial screening is followed by a secondary "in-depth" screening of those believed to have more substantial ties with a VEO or who present a risk, consisting of a thorough criminal investigation establishing the nature of an individual's involvement.

The emerging approach to screening of individuals associated with a sanctioned violent extremist group seeks to categorize individuals into one of at least three categories: (a) persons who are not associated and can be immediately released into the communities; (b) those associated but potentially eligible for non-prison-based rehabilitation and reintegration; and (c) individuals who may be investigated further for possible criminal prosecution.

The screening process is complicated for numerous reasons including limited investigative capacity and difficulties in ascertaining facts and collecting evidence, particularly in contexts of ongoing conflict.[13] Standard operating procedures for collecting and preserving information analysed in the screening process must be developed by the government to guide investigators in the event of a subsequent judicial process so as not to jeopardize its admissibility before a court of law. Moreover, the information collected and analysed in the process of screening is of sensitive nature, requiring the concurrent development of data protection protocols and adequate capacity-building and training of government authorities in charge of the process.[14] Additionally, violations of human rights and due process within the justice system, including prolonged detention, must be avoided and may contribute to vulnerabilities for radicalization or (re)recruitment into violent extremism.[15] Because of these and other challenges, a report on UNSCR 2178 encourages Member States to seek alternatives to incarceration, when appropriate, in addition to rehabilitation and reintegration (United Nations, 2015).

All persons exiting VEOs should be screened. For those who may have spontaneously disengaged directly into communities, formal screening may have been initially bypassed or handled via local or traditional systems of justice and reconciliation. However, if not eventually screened, their legal status may remain unresolved, limiting their access to services including formal DDRR processes and creating other risks.

Determining whether to pursue legal action or recommend another course of action such as a transitional rehabilitation is neither straightforward nor without risks. Alternatives to prosecution may be perceived as unfair by victims, jeopardize transitional justice objectives and may not be consistent with UNSCRs.

Screening should be nationally owned and implemented. When appropriate, IOM programmes may offer technical guidance to government counterparts ideally supported by human rights and rule of law–mandated United Nations entities, and should advocate for a screening process respectful of international human rights obligations and national justice frameworks. Moreover, transparency in the screening process is important to develop community trust and improve prospects for successful reintegration of returnees into communities.

1.2.3. Risk management: Security challenges in contexts of ongoing conflict and violent extremism

Because of security challenges, persons participating in DDRR programmes in contexts of ongoing conflict face a higher level of vulnerability to reprisals or re-recruitment than in contexts where conflicts have ended. The returnees may also be perceived as threats by the communities of return. Both these elements must be efficiently factored into all phases of DDRR programmes.

[13] For more information, see UNSC CTED, 2020.
[14] Information must be collected, taking into account due process (ibid.).
[15] For guidance on violent extremists in prison settings, refer to UNODC, 2016.

Moreover, there may be security risks to the DDRR programme itself, especially if it is perceived to encourage defections from violent extremist groups or, at the minimum, prevent recruitment. All efforts should be made to prevent security risks to the programme, beneficiaries and staff. Reputation risks to assistance organizations should also be addressed. These may include specific communication protocols guiding all staff interactions and messaging and ensuring a low-profile posture in support of government actors who should be leading these efforts.

1.2.4. Particularities of disengagement and disassociation from violent extremist organizations

In the context of violent extremism, the dynamics of joining or exiting a group are complex, with an array of intertwined social, economic, psychological, ideological and/or other factors influencing a person's decision to join or stay in a VEO.[16] As previously discussed, there are many cases in which a person's involvement with the VEO is involuntary or forced. This has important implications for the disengagement and disassociation aspects of DDRR programmes.

Disengagement

In traditional DDR, **disengagement** is a voluntary process by which one or more individuals separate from an armed group, implicating a change in behaviour that may or may not be accompanied by a corresponding change in ideology. In the context of violent extremism, disengagement may be voluntary, through defection, or involuntary, through arrest or capture.

Disassociation

Disassociation means disconnecting or separating. It refers to a process of severing formal, social and psychological ties with an armed group. It is an intentional break in association from the group. This process of disassociation is both an individual's disassociation from an armed group, as well as the community's perception of the individual's disassociation from the group.

For DDRR, both disassociation and disengagement are necessary: a change in behaviour (disengagement), for instance leaving a violent extremist group, and the breaking of social, psychological and/or ideological ties with the violent extremist group (disassociation). A person who has been abducted to forcibly serve the VEO may be physically engaged but without a social or psychological commitment. Similarly, a person can disengage from a VEO without disassociating from it. This would be the case of an individual leaving without abandoning the VEO's ideology. Governments and supporting agencies can facilitate "prosocial" disassociation through rehabilitation and resilience-building efforts in both prison and non-prison settings for preparing former affiliates to re-enter society.

[16] It should be reiterated that though some violent extremists are ideologically motivated, this is not true of all violent extremists, as they may have joined due to familial ties, because of suffered injustices and discrimination by rival groups or political actors, economic reasons or out of pragmatism.

1.2.5. Transitional rehabilitation

Transitional rehabilitation in VEO contexts constitutes a set of activities and interventions tailored to the specific needs of the former combatant or fighter and may be necessary (although not necessarily sufficient) measures in preparing an individual to return to civilian life. Typically, transitional rehabilitation programmes will include the following: (a) individual counselling and psychosocial assistance; (b) health and physical rehabilitation assistance; (c) skills development, which includes re-socialization, civic education, life skills, vocational training and business development, and other related social and economic capacity-building support; and (d) re-establishment or strengthening of family or community links prior to return to communities. In some contexts where violent extremist ideology may be an issue, DDRR processes may also include constructive dialogue around ideological and religious topics, complexity thinking, conflict resolution, religious counselling or other sensitization activities with appropriate consideration for individual rights, freedom of beliefs and religion. In traditional DDR settings, some aspects of "transitional rehabilitation" may occur as part of the demobilization process in cantonment settings and include skills development or psychosocial activities. As shown in Figure 1, in DDRR, this process takes place as part of the disassociation phase and constitutes a bridge to the social reintegration phase. Transitional rehabilitation supposes that an efficient screening and categorization process has taken place, and that participation is either voluntary or mandated through proper judicial processes.

Transitional rehabilitation activities may take place in closed facilities where all the participants are hosted. This may be advantageous from a logistical and security standpoint, but it is costly and can present difficulties in fostering and strengthening a person's relationship with one's family and community, as well as protection and legal challenges with respect to the legal basis for mandated rehabilitation. Alternative "open" facility models allow participants to temporarily exit the premises in carrying out professional activities, or in some cases, they may live outside the facility but be required to participate and attend classes.

In traditional DDR, participation in DDR programmes is typically voluntary (including cantonment or reinsertion activities). Responding to the expectation that United Nations-sanctioned VEO associates be brought to justice and ensure security for communities, transitional rehabilitation may be mandated in DDRR programmes. If participation is compulsory and participants are not free to leave, transitional rehabilitation may be construed as deprivation of liberty, unless well grounded in domestic law and compliant with international human rights law.[17] Additionally, poorly designed transitional rehabilitation efforts, where the legal framework is unclear, and/or without a well-structured rehabilitation and reintegration programme, may discourage associates from exiting the group.

[17] See article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, where it addresses persons not charged with an offence. See also Human Rights Committee CCPR/C/GC/35, paragraph 15.

1.2.6. Absence of conditions for reintegration and reconciliation

In the absence of a peace agreement, it is challenging to effectively institute a reintegration and reconciliation effort, not only because of the increased security risks due to ongoing conflict but also the lack of a foundation to create sustainable peace. Hence, the purpose and scope of reintegration and reconciliation activities in DDRR differs from those of traditional DDR. In addition to individual reintegration activities, DDRR is concerned with addressing the needs of the communities of return to foster social cohesion, prevent further violence and conflict, and prevent re-engagement and (re)recruitment into VEOs. This emphasis on community-based reintegration and reconciliation processes is intended to address the needs and perspectives of both the disengaged associates and the community. Importantly, community reintegration is not individual reintegration at the community level but rather concerned with community-wide engagement and benefits from the reintegration process, and includes participative dialogue and the encouragement of collective action. To be most effective, community-based activities should begin before former fighters return and continue in parallel to the individual-focused process of transitional rehabilitation. Reintroduction of former associates to the community can then occur with a strong foundation established with community members.

2. FOUR-PILLARED APPROACH OF IOM

The experience of IOM in DDRR is focused on context-specific programming, driven by community-based planning, and developed and implemented alongside local partners, in a concerted effort to ensure that DDRR is fit for purpose. After a short presentation of the experience of IOM in DDR, the following section provides insights into the Organization's DDRR work in contexts of violent extremism through the **four-pillared approach**. This approach is illustrated through case studies, highlighting both lessons learned and challenges.

2.1. DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION EXPERIENCE OF IOM

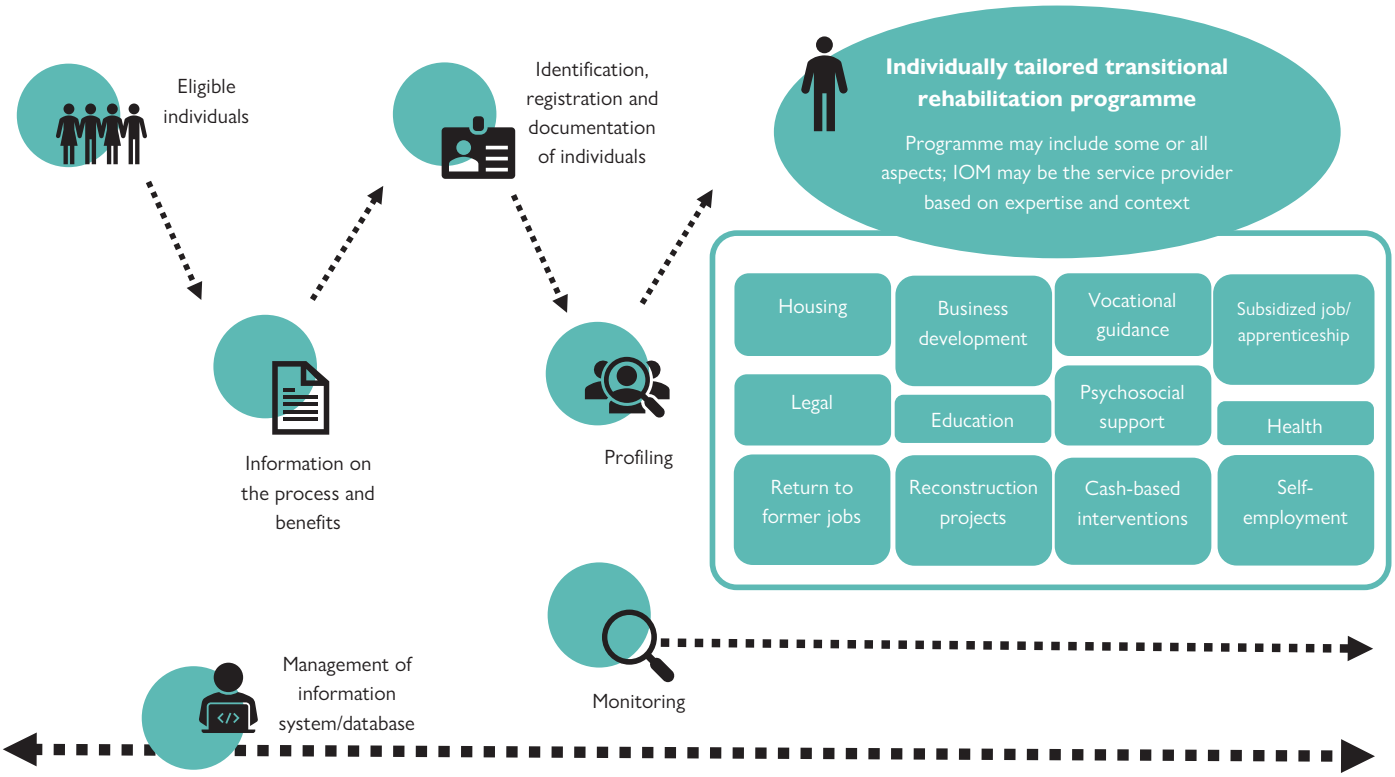
In its efforts to help prevent and resolve conflict as a principal driver of crisis-induced displacement, IOM has a long history of engagement in peacebuilding and conflict management programming, including support to DDR processes.[18] Since 1992 and in close coordination with Member States, IOM has provided significant assistance to the reintegration of former combatants and other former associates of armed groups while addressing the needs of victims of conflict and particularly communities of return. The Organization's history of engagement in this field spans 35 countries, with 44 active operations in 2019.

Support to traditional DDR processes of IOM focuses predominantly on reinsertion and reintegration programming, using a combination of individual and community-based assistance models in providing benefits for former combatants/fighters, their dependants and the return communities to improve socioeconomic integration and social cohesion conducive to peace and stability. IOM has also provided governments with technical assistance, capacity-building and support in engaging communities, and framing policies, processes and legislation.

[18] For a more in-depth examination of the approach and experience of IOM within the field of DDR, see IOM, 2019b.

IOM has pioneered an individually focused reintegration assistance methodology built on a case management and monitoring model – the information, counselling and referral services (ICRS) methodology. The ICRS utilizes profiling and data management in identifying needs and providing counselling to establish links with existing providers of social and livelihoods assistance, such as vocational training, psychosocial support, trauma counselling and health assistance. When using ICRS, IOM takes all reasonable and necessary precautions to preserve the confidentiality of personal data and the anonymity of data subjects. All personal data shall be collected, used, transferred and stored securely in accordance with the IOM data protection principles.[19]

Figure 3. Information, counselling and referral services



2.2. IOM IN CONTEMPORARY DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION SETTINGS – FOUR-PILLARED APPROACH

While drawing heavily on years of experience with DDR programming, the IOM DDRR programming is distinct in several respects. DDRR is intended to create viable, reliable, transparent and nationally owned legal and operational processes in supporting exit and reintegration pathways for former associates in contexts of ongoing or unresolved conflict or where sanctioned violent extremist groups are involved. DDRR responds to the need for exit and reintegration options in contexts where traditional DDR cannot be applied by addressing requirements defined in UNSCRs calling for SPRR of members of sanctioned groups (UNSCRs 2178, 2349 and 2396), with consideration to prevention of recruitment or re-recruitment.

[19] See IOM, 2010.

Centrally, this approach focuses heavily on supporting governments in building the legal foundations and operational frameworks necessary to define and better identify individuals who could be eligible for a rehabilitation and reintegration protocol. Individuals determined to be eligible for rehabilitation and reintegration remain distinct from those who may be subject to criminal or judicial proceedings, particularly those suspected of association with sanctioned violent extremist groups. Once an eligible caseload is established, the effort focuses on both individual and community-based reintegration assistance, designed to support diverse community members as well as former associates through processes that create conditions for equitable socioeconomic recovery, social and political participation, and social cohesion.

Figure 4. Four-pillared approach of IOM

2.2.1. Pillar 1 Assessment, context analysis and national planning

Fundamental aspects of pillar 1 are assessments of and support to the following: (a) intragovernmental institutional mapping and coordination; (b) legal and legislative frameworks; (c) return and reintegration models; (d) conflict and stakeholder mapping of conflict drivers and community tensions that may affect rehabilitation and reintegration objectives, highlighting opportunities and challenges to community receptivity and identifying stakeholders that are key to peacebuilding; and (e) identification of regional synergies and outcomes as a way of establishing regional collective outcomes. This is especially important to ensure standards and information-sharing, when appropriate, in affected regions.

The national political engagement, legal, transitional justice, policy, security and infrastructure frameworks are assessed and aligned. Regional and transnational elements, especially important in contexts of violent extremism, are integrated in the assessment.

2.2.2. Pillar 2 "Upstream" government support

"Upstream" government support consists of engaging with national and local authorities and providing assistance to establish and support the development of legal frameworks and government structures in support of DDRR, as well as establishment of a reliable system for registering, screening and referring disengaged associates into a safe, organized and human rights-compliant transition and ultimately reintegration process. Partnership is key in ensuring the collective ownership and collaboration between civilian and security authorities, government partners and technical experts with systematic input from non-State actors.

Upstream government support processes include activities that foster trust-building and the exchange of best practices, such as study tours for selected government representatives to other countries or in regional workshops. Support for the development and implementation of registration and identification processes is also central. In the four-pillared model, this is built upon the IOM ICRS system, which acts as a registration and profiling database.

Upstream processes may also include support for setting up transition centres and developing transitional rehabilitation programmes for implementation in these centres, which allow individuals to receive tailored support to ease and solidify personal disassociation, as well as prepare them for return and reintegration. Transitional rehabilitation is a central feature of disengagement and reintegration processes. It aims to address the rehabilitation needs of individuals, including skills development, provision of psychosocial and health assistance, and eases the acclimation process while buying time to assess and analyse the needs and perceptions of return communities to support successful reintegration.

2.2.3. Pillar 3 Individual case management

This component is pivotal to the success of DDRR approaches as it acknowledges that failure to address individual-level circumstances, vulnerabilities or grievances during screening, transitional and reintegration planning can jeopardize the success of community-, national- or regional-level reintegration strategies.

Activities necessary under pillar 3 include the following:

- **Individual assessments upon enrolment in DDRR programmes:** These are undertaken to evaluate psychological and physical conditions, reasons for disengagement and disassociation, as well as factors that influence each individual's association with a VEO. This process also assesses individual skill sets and return intentions to tailor an individualized response catering to and leveraging these specificities.
- **Individualized response:** Based on the outcomes of each individual's entry assessment, a variety of rehabilitation support, including inter alia, psychosocial support and various forms of individualized counselling, health assistance, vocational training and livelihoods support can be provided.
- **Individual assessments upon exit:** These assessments gauge whether after completing the rehabilitation phase, the individual is prepared for community reintegration. The exit interview assesses individual motivators, intentions and capabilities to recommend the next course of action.

2.2.4. Pillar 4 Community-based reintegration and reconciliation

Creating peace and addressing recovery requires a broad array of interventions designed for assisting individuals and contributing specifically to the restoration of social cohesion in communities affected by violent extremism, and those receiving disengaged affiliates.

Without addressing the deficit of inter- and intracommunal trust, broken networks of mutual support and social justice, recovery, reintegration and reconciliation efforts may in fact contribute to deepening animosities, suspicions and perceptions of inequity, sowing the seeds for future instability and violence. Furthermore, the return of both former associates and displaced persons into communities may strain the provision of basic services, local infrastructure, and already-limited livelihood opportunities, creating conditions for new tensions to arise.

Efforts to create environments conducive to return, reintegration and reconciliation will therefore be key in creating reliable off-ramping options and demonstrable avenues for safe reinsertion at the community level for those who disengage. In turn, the engagement of the population in restorative peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts is critical in creating conditions conducive to the resolution and prevention of conflict.

Typical pillar 4 activities include the following:

- **Community-based peacebuilding and reintegration:** These efforts that respond to community apprehensions are informed by the findings of the community-based assessments, engage willing members of the receiving community and reintegrate individuals in joint discussions to assist in the formation of effective communication links to enhance social cohesion and reconciliation. Acknowledging potential stigma attached to returnees' association with VEOs and the receiving communities' potential perception of their own victimization, reconciliation within and among host communities is a key component of successful reintegration. Community reconciliation will seek to remove the stigma surrounding returning victims and perpetrators, and sensitization campaigns will aim to minimize the risk of retaliation against returnees.
- **Community-based services and community cohesion support:** These include shared trauma counselling, as well as labour market integration, improvement of basic services and infrastructure, and the capacity-building of civil society and local authorities. Local social networks, traditional and religious influencers, civil society organizations and private sector, among other actors, will be crucial in reaching a wider audience to support DDRR efforts.
- **Strategic communication and outreach:** Information dissemination and strategic communication will be a central tool for dispelling rumors and ensuring public understanding of the wider government plans, programmes and processes, as well as creating conducive conditions for return and reintegration processes and preventing further recruitment. Diverse media and communication tools made available to return communities and affected populations may include the following: (a) contextually appropriate use of electronic media, public discussions, social media and art and cultural events; (b) concrete policy and programming information; and (c) thematic discussions about conflict, peace, reconciliation and recovery. Participatory discussions that may include government representatives and/or members of civil society will allow communities to engage with sensitive topics and express their hopes, needs and desires.

Additionally, across all four pillars, clear and audience-tailored communication strategies are employed for ensuring that the governments' efforts to protect citizens' security and create conditions permissive for return and reintegration are well received and supported by individuals, communities and counterparts at all levels, nationally and regionally.

3. CASE STUDIES

In response to governments' requests for systems and capacity assistance, IOM is currently implementing various programmes based on the four-pillared approach.

3.1. SOMALIA

In 2012, the Government of Somalia – together with partners, including IOM – embarked on a process to develop the National Programme on the Treatment and Handling of Disengaged Combatants and Youth at Risk. This national programme aimed to establish a comprehensive process for low-risk former male associates of Al-Shabaab to reintegrate into communities. In 2019, the national programme expanded its mandate to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of disengaged women and children as well. It is estimated that there are presently 2,000 disengaged male combatants, and many more disengaged women and children in need of support. As members of Al-Shabaab increasingly disengage and seek alternatives to armed conflict, a comprehensive and transparent DDRR process is critical to counter re-engagement in criminal violence and support a return to civilian life.

Challenges to DDRR in Somalia are many. First, in a context in which clans and armed groups seek representation and change their alliances accordingly, efforts to revive a functional central government have become problematic. Second, unemployment is cited by communities as the primary driver for violent behaviour and criminal activity among young people in Somalia, making the rehabilitation and reintegration phases of DDRR especially challenging. Third, the lack of transparency around the screening process is creating uncertainties among the local population, as well as associates of Al-Shabaab possibly looking to disengage. Fourth, the ongoing violent conflict presents serious operational challenges to the DDRR process, as it complicates disengagement and creates obstacles for successful rehabilitation and reintegration.

The work of IOM in Somalia is centred on its support to the Government, with an overall objective of contributing to community security and stability through the rehabilitation and community-based reintegration of former associates. Since 2014, IOM has been managing and overseeing the direct implementation of DDRR activities in close partnership with the Ministry of Internal Security at the federal and State levels. Notably, IOM has supported the Government in constructing, setting up and managing four transitional rehabilitation centres that provide comprehensive transitional rehabilitation assistance for male and women former associates. The rehabilitation programmes

for women differ significantly from those of men, as the women and their children are not required to reside in the transition centres. Centres have been named in a neutral way to protect the women from stigmatization or physical danger.

In 2020, to promote government ownership and foster sustainability, IOM significantly increased its upstream support for the Government at both the federal and State levels to take over the direct implementation of coordination and technical oversight, screening, entry processes, weekend leave, exit processes and security of transitional rehabilitation centres.[20] This is a great achievement for the Government.

IOM is partnering with grass-roots civil society organizations to address complex issues surrounding reintegration, prevent violent extremism, and promote community resilience, acceptance, reconciliation and ownership. IOM Somalia has engaged in the following community-based reintegration activities:

- In order to strengthen the continuum of care for disengaged persons, from transitional rehabilitation through the process of reintegration, the community was engaged to provide individual support for disengaged men and women for up to six months. Beneficiaries received access to livelihoods-focused case management, safe spaces where they can engage with youth community members in structured and unstructured activities, one-on-one and group religious counselling, and mentorship from former disengaged persons to help them navigate challenges and obstacles for socioeconomic reintegration.
- IOM brought together diverse stakeholders (that is, government, community members and disengaged combatants) through a variety of outreach and sociocultural activities grounded in Somalia's rich oral culture (such as sports, religious, cultural, poetry, storytelling, theatre, music and art events). These groups were brought together to build a community-wide understanding and awareness of the disengagement and reintegration process, enabling them to see the benefits of the programme and promote community ownership. Other key activities included community dialogue to exchange information and discuss community issues (abay-abay), traditional dispute resolution mechanisms, and trauma healing sessions to promote community resilience, acceptance and reconciliation.

3.2. LAKE CHAD BASIN REGION

IOM supports the Lake Chad Basin governments in their efforts to de-escalate the Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) conflict. The DDRR approach of IOM for the Lake Chad Basin Region integrates the various elements of the protection, prevention, stabilization, transition and peacebuilding equation to create nationally tailored, positive off-ramping options for individuals who have separated from Boko Haram or ISWAP; along with community reintegration and reconciliation mechanisms, this approach is a critical step for regional peacebuilding and restoration of social cohesion.

[20] IOM support to screening activities has been limited to capacity-building and technical support, never including a direct involvement of the Organization in screening activities.

Figure 5. Lake Chad Basin Region

Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

Notable steps were taken by the Government of Nigeria through the introduction of Operation Safe Corridor, a presidential initiative where military and civilian agencies collaborate in the rehabilitation and reinsertion of repentant Boko Haram/ISWAP affiliates. In the Niger, the Government has developed a national programme for the handling of defectors from VEOs (Programme National de Prise en Charge de la Reddition) and adopted an amendment to Article 399.20.1 of its Criminal Code, which establishes the conditions for former affiliates of armed groups to be exempted from criminal prosecution. The Government of Cameroon has also taken a notable step to address this issue by expediting Decree 2018/719, which provides for the establishment of the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee under the authority of the Prime Minister. In Chad, significant measures have been taken under the leadership of the Ministry of Justice to develop a legal and institutional framework, namely through the adoption – in 2019 – of a presidential decree establishing a DDRR coordination mechanism and a steering committee whose main activities include the implementation of tools and processes for the screening and profiling of disengaged persons. Activities aimed at the reintegration of disengaged associates have been adopted in parallel. These efforts are framed in sustained work at the regional level, which culminated in August 2018 with the adoption of a regional stabilization strategy – elaborated by AUC and the Lake Chad Basin Commission – that emphasizes the importance of pillar 3 of the DDRR approach.

Lessons learned from this context include the importance of basing all activities on a comprehensive context analysis, together with a complete actors and stakeholders mapping at the national and local levels. This is however difficult because of a persistent lack of reliable information on conflict dynamics.

Moreover, building political momentum around the issue and concepts of DDRR is complex and requires working with multiple actors across different sectors and levels of government while simultaneously ensuring the participation of affected populations in the design of reconciliation and reintegration activities. Political will is critical and must be nurtured. To that end, IOM supports constant capacity-building, which requires continuous cooperation with international partners, as well as constant communication and regular consultations with national and local authorities. The frequent rotation of government staff is an added difficulty.

Building efficient categorization tools and processes can prove to be tricky, as it requires to challenge existing assumptions about associates' roles and commitment to VEOs. In particular, it is often wrongly assumed that those who defect voluntarily must automatically be considered "low risk", because criminals or persons ideologically committed to a VEO would never spontaneously surrender.

Regional harmonization is critical in this type of very fluid contexts with a lot of cross-border movements. Joint study tours of government representatives have proven to be an effective way to increase communication and exchange between countries. Additionally, it is indispensable to keep a regional overview, and when possible, aim at aligning policies and fostering productive communication between structures dedicated to DDRR. Finally, it can be noted that the active participation and involvement of the communities and local authorities in the design and implementation of the rehabilitation and reintegration process is very important, as well as encouraging the private sector to participate.

4. LESSONS LEARNED AND ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESS

Tailored, context- and conflict-sensitive DDRR approaches must be developed in each case. Nonetheless, a series of lessons learned and elements for success should inform all such efforts.

DDRR is not a linear process. The different phases of the process previously outlined are not linear. Rather, activities in each phase must be developed in an organic fashion to efficiently complement each other. For example, both family and community members must be included in pillar 3 activities in order to link the rehabilitation and reintegration phases and prepare the communities for the return of former associates as early as possible.

With respect to the support provided to government authorities for the **development and implementation of legal and operational frameworks**:

- **Legal instruments must align with minimum international and domestic requirements.** In order to be recognized by the international community, legal instruments that anchor the possibility of DDRR must conform to minimum standards of international human rights law and the specific principles related to SPRR/DDRR that are listed in UNSCRs 2178, 2349 and 2396. Domestically, the legal framework should take the form deemed most appropriate by the authorities in charge. Its conformity with overarching domestic frameworks, and especially constitutionally recognized principles, should be guaranteed. Within these boundaries, it is in the jurisdiction of the sovereign State to define the exact formal and material content of applicable legal dispositions. It is also possible for a State to decide to tackle various caseloads of disengaged associates in a sequenced manner.

- **Voluntariness.** In order to respond to the challenges related to the voluntary participation in DDRR processes, a series of legal and operational elements can be put in place, including the following: (a) clear criteria and processes to determine who is eligible to enter a DDRR process; (b) description of the alternatives available to DDRR (if any) and their implications; (c) complete description of the location, content and duration of the programme, as well as rules for certification (release) after completion of the programme; and (d) in case of a facility-based programme, rules for facility management. Ideally, these elements should be coupled with a targeted communication campaign destined to increase transparency and thereby build public awareness and trust.
- **International cooperation is indispensable.** Developing and implementing new legal and operational frameworks is a complex task for which both the international community and States are still ill prepared. International cooperation is indispensable, as no singular United Nations agency has all the necessary knowledge and experience in providing comprehensive support to Member States in work that stretches across multiple disciplines ranging from international criminal law to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, including extremely technical subjects such as determination of eligibility and screening. It is essential that United Nations agencies engage with governments in a structured and coordinated manner. On this topic, IOM works with the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and UNICEF.
- **Government ownership and community buy-in is critical (whole-of-society approach).** Building political will for DDRR is a complex matter, especially because it requires shifting the focus away from military and security agendas and reconciling strong notions of retributive justice anchored in anti-terrorism legislation with the necessity to open way for restorative justice processes. Promoting the benefits of creating a safe and reliable pathway out of VEOs as an adequate approach to conflict dissolution, preventing radicalization and recruitment, and strengthening social cohesion is complex. Decision makers might consider it a political gamble, and it can generate feelings of injustice or resentment at the community level. In practice, putting emphasis on the immediate benefits of the approach (such as dealing with the issues and dangers related to protracted detention) has proven to be efficient. In any case, it is indispensable to allow sufficient time for true "ripening" processes to take place both at the political and community levels.
- **Cooperation with and within governments is imperative (whole-of-government approach).** Developing and implementing a DDRR programme requires the participation of multiple government sectors, including the military and security, justice and social services. However, efficient cooperation across these entities can be challenging because of weak State structures. In traditional settings, debates and possible disagreements in these issues are settled during the peace process and formalized in the political agreement. In the absence of such an overarching tool, in practice, States often choose either to create a special structure dedicated to DDRR or establish a coordination body or mechanism to ensure effective collaboration between existing government entities. It is noteworthy that oftentimes, the impetus for DDRR is not situated either in the most adequate entity or at the optimal decision-making level. The experience of IOM shows that technical-level committees are often best suited to push such a process forward.

Risk management and analysis are critical aspects of DDRR processes and tools. There are clear security risks while operating in ongoing conflict, as well as legal risks associated with programming for violent extremist associates. Other political and reputational risks arise in DDRR processes, including the politicization of DDRR programmes. Similarly, there may be greater financial risks on contexts of ongoing conflict, as these DDRR programmes and tools are costly and fewer donors may be willing to fund these sensitive programmes.

Conflict sensitivity is the ability to understand the context, the interactions between a programme's activities and the context, and to act on this understanding to honour the institutional commitment and responsibility not to harm those the programme is trying to assist and implementing effective interventions for change. Especially for DDRR, conflict sensitivity should include a thorough analysis of the evolution of the conflict, the agenda of the VEO, and dynamics of joining and exiting the VEO. Aspects of marginalization, stigma and nepotism should be carefully considered in reintegration activities, particularly in the selection of participants for training programmes and job placement so as to avoid the failure of effectively reintegrating or the possible perpetuation of structural violence.

Strategic communication is essential to help create the preconditions necessary for the return and reintegration of associates. In contexts of ongoing conflict, fear, suspicion and animosity towards former associates of VEOs are high, particularly those perpetrating extreme violence on civilian populations. Sustained efforts to keep populations informed about rehabilitation and reintegration processes are essential in building confidence and trust in the processes and paving the way for eventual reintegration and reconciliation. Strategic communications should outline the legal and operational frameworks developed by government authorities, describing the pathways put in place to exit VEOs, the eligibility criteria and the legal status of individuals who complete the programme. Efficient strategic communications increase the DDRR awareness and understanding of receiving communities, empowering them to take ownership of the disengagement and reintegration process. Strategic communications tools and processes should reflect a two-way communication between authorities and affected communities.

Meaningful **community participation** early and in all phases of the process is key, because communities are essential participants in the DDRR process, and its success rests on the community's openness and constructive contributions. Communities must be consulted during the development of legal and operational instruments and processes to ensure that their needs and expectations are included. The inclusion of meaningful community participation from the onset presents the additional advantage of fostering transparency.

Transitional rehabilitation programmes must be comprehensive and tailored to the specificities of violent extremism. As part of pillar 3, transitional rehabilitation programmes must consider all context-specific factors related to violent extremism where they operate. DDRR programmes cannot focus solely on socioeconomic drivers of recruitment or as a solution to reintegration. Contextual push/pull factors of violent extremism must be addressed, as well as fundamental issues of community stabilization and recruitment. Transitional rehabilitation programmes that are not facility based are of increasing interest, and gathering lessons learned from similar projects in consultation with communities and practitioners to develop context-specific non-facility-based transitional rehabilitation aspects should be prioritized.

As part of pillar 4, DDRR programmes integrate **community-based reintegration with individual reintegration**. Shifting from an emphasis on individual former associates and individual-level interventions, contemporary DDRR contexts necessitate methodologies and interventions that concurrently address reconciliation and reintegration. This community-based focus is paramount to promoting peacebuilding in the midst of conflict and fostering true community reintegration. Further, community-based reconciliation and reintegration activities should start early in the DDRR process. Typically, registration and profiling activities at the beginning of pillar 3 activities allow former associates enrolled in the DDRR programme to provide return intention information that can be used to prepare communities for reintegration and reconciliation. These activities should start and be formatted to complement individual rehabilitation activities that take place as part of the individual case management in pillar 3. Initiatives at the community level, such as quick impact projects, also help avoid the community's perception of preferential treatment of former associates, which could give rise to tensions and jeopardize progress made.

In 2020, IOM supports the Government of Somalia in opening its first female transitional rehabilitation centre in Baidoa, since named Beer Jinaad or Heavenly Garden. Differing from the centres for male disengaged combatants, the female centre is a day centre, equipped to provide rehabilitation services to up to 100 beneficiaries during the day. © IOM Somalia 2019

Gender and disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation

Due to the holistic nature of DDRR programming, and contrary to very securitized traditional DDR processes, **gender analysis is critical to effective DDRR programming**. With their broader and longer-term objectives, DDRR programmes are designed inclusive of gender sensitivity and gender considerations, and must remain responsive to changing needs and feedback. Efficiently integrating specificities related to women and girls' empowerment and including particular expressions of masculinity into individual rehabilitation and community-based reintegration processes increases their potential for success and contributes in creating conditions conducive to peaceful reintegration and conflict prevention. To ensure gender responsiveness, the structure and content of DDRR programmes must rest on thorough gender analysis, which has to be centred on the role of women in and of itself, and not, as has often been the case, in reference to the role of men.

From its broad experience implementing DDR and DDRR programmes, IOM draws the following conclusions with respect to gender-sensitive DDRR programming:

- **VEOs use complex group messaging on the role and treatment of women as a tactic of war.** Gender violence is often intentionally integrated as a strategy and tactic of war, even if gender violence or violence against women is contrary to the proclaimed ideology of the VEO and therefore banned in principle. This flagrant contradiction affects civil society's perception of the VEO and the relationship between the group and the communities, which in turn has a significant impact on reintegration and reconciliation processes. DDRR programmes must adequately account for this by developing a comprehensive understanding of the group and its members' relationship to what is forbidden and their individual and collective notion of transgression, which is usually extremely nuanced and multifaceted. From a gendered perspective, this must include a solid analysis of intersex relationships inside the group and how these affect former associates' perceptions or behaviour outside the group. This reflection has implications also for asserted or perceived notions of hierarchy and power inside and outside the group that will impact DDRR processes.
- **Drivers for association and disassociation to a VEO are gender specific.** Men are often assumed to play a more active role in their engagement with a VEO than women. Women are generally considered "victims" or followers, and often they are. Counterintuitively, however, paternalistic and ideological factors in and outside VEOs may also constitute reasons for women to willingly join these organizations and take on active roles themselves. Enrolment can be an opportunity for women to emancipate and access education and social positions that are unattainable to them in civilian life.[21] The same paternalistic structures serve as incentives for young men with low income to join VEOs, as in doing so allows them to access women directly, bypassing a "marriage market" from which they are excluded in civilian life because they lack the resources to pay dowry. Being "assigned" a wife in the VEO allows them to move up the social ladder. **For both sexes, eluding highly paternalistic civilian structures is an incentive to join VEOs.**
- **Escape from sexual violence is a driver for association.** The wish to escape sexual violence is a gender-specific motive to join VEOs for women, and the threat of sexual violence while outside of the group is often identified as a key element in explaining women's participation in VEOs. Women and girl victims of sexual violence (and their children) are often negatively perceived by the communities. Thus, successful DDRR programmes must include an in-depth understanding of the sociological dynamics that create or strengthen the negative perception of women and girl victims of sexual violence, and a need to strengthen State-actor knowledge on sexual violence and its sociological consequences. This is probably also true of men and boy victims of sexual violence, but an enormous taboo still exists that impedes the collection of solid data on this aspect.
- **Gender roles in VEOs are complex.** The roles played by men and women in armed groups usually reflect culturally accepted gender roles, as they derive from a region's existing social structures. This fits the logic of radical ideologies, which promote extremist views of members and non-members, advancing a black-and-white view of society. Indeed, the factors linked to women's recruitment, women's dependence on their male relatives and their structural exclusion from economic, political, and social activities oftentimes translate into not only forced participation but also secondary, supportive roles once in the group. However, it is noticeable that, especially in the context of VEOs, a high number of men (a larger proportion than in other contexts) are forcibly recruited to play supportive roles typically attributed to women, such as cooking or fetching wood.[22]

[21] This is related to the group's radical religiosity, as is also the case with female members of other extremist religious groups. See Matfess, 2017 and ICG, 2016.

[22] In the Zamaï caseload of 400 families currently in displacement in the Far North region of Cameroon, all the men claim not to have carried weapons at any point during their year-long stay with the group.

With respect to community-based reintegration and reconciliation, the following notions are critical for gender-sensitive programming:

- **Gender-sensitive analysis.** DDRR programmes must integrate a careful and comprehensive gender-sensitive analysis as the basis of their reconciliation and reintegration programming. Experience shows that women suffer higher levels of social exclusion than men once they leave a VEO. Therefore, the focus of DDRR programmes in the local context should be on rehabilitation and reintegration structures and processes as indispensable correlatives of disengagement and disassociation, because these processes influence social structures and can create opportunities for transformation and evolution. Even more so, programmes should seek to be progressive and transcend existing social cadres that feed into the construction of gendered identities and profiles and thereby promote transformative women's rights and gender equality agendas. Without such an analysis, interventions risk being based on stakeholders' perceptions of gender, which are often rooted in societal constructs that do not necessarily reflect reality.
- **Improvement of perceptions between the host community and returning women.** Recent work shows the benefits of promoting the perception of beneficiary women with respect to their relationship with the community and to include durable psychosocial support, coupled with work on the communities' perceptions. The focus therefore is on the mutual perceptions of return or host communities and former associates in order to better understand the stigma and document the obstacles to acceptance and will for reintegration.
- **Consideration of women's role as multipliers.** Women are often perceived as warrantors of family honour. In that sense, women have a considerable influence because they can – in the eyes of other members of the community – perpetuate violence or to the contrary, interrupt the cycle of violence. This is an opportunity, as the successful reintegration of a woman will reflect positively on her entire family. Simultaneously, however, it is also an obstacle insofar as it puts additional responsibilities on women and reinforces patriarchist stereotypes that can put them in danger. This reality, combined with the recognized importance of women in the prevention of violence and extremism, speaks in favour of the active involvement of women in DDRR processes (see below) and the inclusion of their interests and needs in strategies and programmes, because women play an essential role as multipliers.
- **Meaningful participation of women.** Involving local women in DDRR processes has been demonstrated to increase peace and security capacity and effectiveness by efficiently bridging formal and informal engagements. In the absence of a formal peace process to guide the de-escalation of the conflict and the lack of formal spaces to ensure women's participation and the inclusion of gender aspects, DDRR processes retain critical importance as platforms for the meaningful engagement and participation of women. Purposefully involving women and women's organizations in the design and implementation of DDRR processes promotes their broader integration in State policy and legal spaces, and thereby contributes to altering the paternalistic social structures identified as drivers of conflict and recruitment. Women's participation must be promoted on an equal footing as that of men, and their efforts towards the promotion of peace, conflict prevention and reconciliation should be formally recognized.

ANNEX: DEFINITIONS

Affiliate	An affiliate of an armed group or sanctioned violent extremist group is attached to the group in an official, a formal or at least in a recognizable manner, though not necessarily as a combatant. This attachment distinguishes "affiliate" from "associate", as the latter term is not definitive and much broader in denoting any sort of relationship or perceived connection. Determining the nature of a person's involvement is the critical point of issue, as it has both legal and programmatic implications on the individual.
Armed forces	They form the military organization of a State with a legal basis and supporting institutional infrastructure.
Armed group	This refers to a group that: (a) has the potential to employ arms in the use of force to achieve political, ideological or economic objectives; (b) is not within the formal military structures of a State, a State-alliance or an intergovernmental organization; and (c) is not under the control of the State(s) in which it operates.
Associate	As differentiated from affiliates, associates refer to all persons (regardless of age, relationship, gender and others) with whom the national-level or regional-level authorities have some responsibility or authority over (that is, through custody or otherwise), and whom they believe had some contact with armed groups or sanctioned violent extremist groups without presuming or prejudging the nature of their relationship to the armed group in question. This may include the following: (a) combatants; (b) those performing a broad range of non-combat roles (such as espionage) and support functions (clerks, housekeepers, cooks); and (c) civilians accompanying fighters, such as women and children forcibly taken away by violent extremist affiliates.
Child associated with an armed group	This refers to any person below 18 years of age who is, or who has been, recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, spies or for sexual purposes (UNICEF, 2007). In contexts of violent extremism, specific concerns for children associated with armed groups arise in screening, risk assessment and judicial measures.

Combatant ***(and discussion of fighters)***	The meaning of combatant is applicable under the International Humanitarian Law, in contexts of international armed conflict (Hague Regulations, 1907). Based on an analogy with the definition set out in the Third Geneva Convention of 1949 relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War in relation to persons engaged in international armed conflicts, a combatant is a person who (IAWG on DDR, n.d.): • Is a member of a national army or an irregular military organization; • Is actively participating in military activities and hostilities; • Is involved in recruiting or training military personnel; • Holds a command or decision-making position within armed forces or groups; • Arrived in a host country carrying arms or in military uniform or as part of a military structure. Combatants can thus be understood as individuals engaged in an international conflict as part of a recognized military or an organized armed group. Whereas, fighters may be broader to also include individuals in an armed group, in addition to combatants. Some domestic laws distinguish between fighters and combatants. However, the term "fighter" is distinct from "combatant" in English, while not necessarily in other languages. Some treaty provisions designate persons (or civilians) taking part in hostilities as "fighters" (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2005: chapter 1, p. 3). Though there is little consensus on the difference between these two terms, the term "combatant" has strong legal implications.
Community stabilization	This is a process and not just a physical product or set of products. This process includes creating the conditions for communities to coexist peacefully, resolving tensions through non-violent means, restoring trust in local leadership and regaining the agency within crisis-affected groups to drive recovery processes over time.
Community violence reduction (CVR)	Community violence reduction (CVR) is similar to community stabilization but with the distinct objective of violence reduction. CVR is not used in contexts of violent extremism, but its methodologies can be adapted and built-upon for these purposes. CVR is a tool that directly responds to the presence of departing or former members of armed groups and designed to promote security and stability. CVR, not unlike community stabilization, is a process of engaging with the community and assessing community needs. CVR may be used in local-level peace agreements, DDR programmes, and most often when disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) preconditions are absent. Typically, CVR-specific programme activities will foster social cohesion and provide former combatants and other at-risk individuals with alternatives to joining armed groups, in the broader goal of violence reduction.

Community-based reintegration	Community-based reintegration is a process that addresses the needs and perspectives of combatants and communities where ex-combatants will reintegrate. Such processes will often expand beneficiary targeting to include non-combatants, such as youth at risk or conflict-affected groups. In contemporary contexts of ongoing conflict, the absence of peace agreements and/or the presence of violent extremism, the beneficiaries will also include associates. A strong community approach will engage ex-combatants and the community in participative dialogue and encourage collective action that advances reintegration alongside broader recovery goals. Community-based reintegration is not simply individual reintegration at the community level, but it holistically engages the entire community, contributing to conditions for sustainable reintegration. This approach is intended to mutually benefit both the community and the returnees, facilitating reintegration and assisting in recovery for all. Community-based reintegration is critical for sustainability of such programmes, beginning as soon as possible, even before the return or introduction of ex-combatants into the community. Community-based reintegration and community sensitization set the foundation for reconciliation and conditions for transitional justice.
Countering violent extremism (CVE)[23]	Countering violent extremism (CVE) is a non-coercive action to oppose violent extremism by reducing the appeal of extremist ideology, preventing recruitment and mobilization towards violence, and rehabilitating former violent extremist offenders. Under this definition, CVE encompasses preventing violent extremism (PVE), but it extends further to include actions with individuals who have already engaged in violent extremism. However, IOM continues to make a distinction between CVE and PVE, as CVE may include confronting and working with individuals who have already been implicated in violent extremism. As such, CVE programming raises concerns over risk and material support restrictions.
Counter-terrorism	This is a securitized approach to thwarting, dismantling, removing and eliminating terrorist acts and organizations. Counter-terrorism happens at the international, regional and State levels and includes policies, laws and strategies implemented by the State apparatus, intelligence agencies, law enforcement and sometimes the military, among others (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2019). For IOM, a distinction is drawn between the highly securitized emphasis of counter-terrorism and the non-securitized approaches of PVE/CVE.

[23] Note, however, that some stakeholders define CVE more narrowly as security-based counter-terrorism measures and see PVE as involving a broader set of initiatives.

Demobilization	Demobilization is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed groups, often including cantonment following a peace agreement. Hence, demobilization comes from traditional DDR and is not applicable in contexts of ongoing conflict, the absence of peace agreements and/or the presence of violent extremism. Of note, because demobilization is a formal process by which an individual is recognized through legal processes and institutions to formally have separated from an armed group, the term "self-demobilization" cannot exist. It is preferable to use the term "spontaneous disengagement", which would infer the exit from a sanctioned violent extremist group by one's own volition without the support of States or other international or national assistance.[24]
Deradicalization	Deradicalization typically connotes an undoing of violent radicalization, that is, a process of relative change whereby a group or an individual relinquishes extremist views and rejects the use of violence to achieve political aims. Unlike disengagement, deradicalization implies cognitive changes in beliefs and attitudes. The term is controversial and insufficiently defined. As such, IOM does not engage in deradicalization work but rather broader processes of transitional rehabilitation.
Disarmament	Disarmament is the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population. It also includes the development of responsible arms management programmes. Disarmament comes from traditional DDR programming, and is not applicable in contexts of ongoing conflict, the absence of peace agreements and/or the presence of violent extremism.
Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration	The objective of the DDR process is to contribute to security and stability in post-conflict environments so that recovery and development can begin. DDR is a process with political, military, security, humanitarian and socioeconomic dimensions. Through a process of comprehensively disarming combatants, preparing them for civilian life and providing them with opportunities for sustainable social and economic reintegration, DDR aims to support this high-risk group members so that they become stakeholders in the peace process. DDR is only appropriate in certain conditions, as it is a political process, and its success depends on the will of the parties to the conflict to demilitarize after conflict. This political will is usually reflected in a commitment by these parties to disarm and demobilize military personnel in formal armed forces or other armed groups, within the framework of a ceasefire agreement or a comprehensive peace accord (IAWG on DDR, n.d.).

[24] IOM's *Glossary on Migration* refers to the term "spontaneous return" (IOM, 2019a); however, return connotes both the disengagement and disassociation of an individual from a violent extremist group. It is valid to use the term spontaneous return but should not be substituted for spontaneous disengagement, which refers only to the behavioural and not social and psychological change.

Disassociation	Disassociation, meaning disconnecting or separating, refers to a process of severing formal, social and psychological ties with an armed group. It is an intentional broken affiliation from the group. Governments and supporting agencies can facilitate disassociation during detention and transition processes through efforts to rehabilitate former affiliates, making available alternatives to association with the group upon release and building their resilience. This process of disassociation is both an individual disassociation from an armed group, as well as an individual disassociation from the group in the perception of the community.
Disengagement	In traditional DDR, disengagement is a voluntary process by which one or more individuals cease to be involved in armed forces or other armed groups, implicating a change in behaviour that may or may not be accompanied by a corresponding change in ideology. In the context of violent extremism, disengagement may however be involuntary but is not a passive condition.
Ex-/Former associate	This refers to a person who was previously associated with an armed group. The determination of association and ex-association is contingent on a screening process. The screening process and labelling of an ex-associate establishes eligibility for rehabilitation and reintegration in a non-prison, non-prison custodial or prison setting. Though IOM engages with individuals who are ex-associates, the determination of ex-association is not necessarily a legal status, as it is determined by the State.
Ex-/Former combatant	This refers to a person who has assumed any of the responsibilities or carried out any of the activities mentioned in the definition of "combatant" and has laid down or surrendered one's arms with a view to entering a DDR process, effectively becoming demobilized. Former combatant status may be certified through a demobilization process by a recognized authority. Spontaneously disengaged individuals such as deserters may also be considered ex-combatants if proof of non-combatant status over a period of time can be given.
Foreign terrorist fighters	Foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) are individuals who travel to a State other than their States of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts or the providing or receiving of terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflict (United Nations, 2014).
Foreign terrorist fighters and their families	The label of foreign terrorist fighters and their families is controversial, as the term "family" may be differently defined in various cultures. Moreover, the term "foreign" may not necessarily apply, especially in cases of children born to FTFs in the so-called caliphate who are effectively stateless. This term, however, refers to an important group of individuals who have familial ties to FTFs and have resided, travelled with and/or been intimately connected to an FTF but have not been directly implicated in the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in terrorist acts.

Insurgency	Insurgency is a group of individuals who use violence to contest the sovereignty or call for the overthrow of an established government or regime, or in rebellion of an authority to enact change or transformation. Their tactics include terrorism, among other methods, such as coup d'état, guerrilla and riots. There is an important distinction between insurgency and terrorism, as insurgency is more widely accepted by the public and aims to instigate political change. This is in contrast to terrorism, which is often led by a few extremists and acts to create terror and fear.
Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards	The Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) were formulated in 2006 through the joint efforts of 22 United Nations entities, which together form the Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration to improve the effectiveness of DDR programmes worldwide by bringing together policies and lessons learned and making them widely available to DDR practitioners. The IDDRS was updated in 2019. The IDDRS have warned about the lack of clarity of DDR standards, as well as the contested and inconsistent way in which DDR is implemented. IOM has built upon IDDRS and made efforts to provide conceptual frameworks and concrete tools for better facilitation of DDR and disengagement, disassociation, reintegration and reconciliation.
Non-State armed groups	No universal definition exists for Non-State armed groups (NSAGs), and this term is often used interchangeably with "armed non-State actors" (ANSAs). The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) provides a working definition of NSAGs "as groups that: have the potential to employ arms in the use of force to achieve political, ideological or economic objectives; are not within the formal military structures of States, State-alliances or intergovernmental organizations; and are not under the control of the State(s) in which they operate" (UN OCHA, 2006:6).
Preventing violent extremism	Preventing violent extremism (PVE) identifies and addresses context-specific drivers, vulnerabilities and risk factors for radicalization, as well as individual incentives for joining violent extremist groups. In contrast to counter-terrorism and CVE, PVE moves away from a securitized approach and exclusively engages with individuals not yet implicated in or affiliated with violent extremism.
Profiling	As distinctive from screening, profiling refers to recording and analysing information on a participant's backgrounds, competencies, needs and expectations to develop individualized strategies for achieving reintegration. Profiling also generates inputs to design and adjusts programme-wide implementation based on participant typologies and subgroups.

Radicalization	Radicalization is a process by which individuals or groups are introduced and become increasingly committed to radical, but not necessarily violent, views. Radicalism refers to extreme views and aspirations of sweeping political change but does not necessarily implicate violence; it could infer a means for achieving drastic change, non-violently and even democratically. Radicalization may be improperly conflated with violent extremism; it is preferable to use the phrase "violent radicalization" when referring to a process where individuals come to embrace beliefs and behaviour that justify violent means for achieving societal change. IOM does not focus on the "deradicalization" of political or ideological beliefs; its concern is on the cognitive change from the promotion and use of violence.
Reconciliation	Reconciliation is a process whereby conflict parties and victims address their fractured relationships. Given the diversity of definitions, reconciliation is best understood as a continuum from "thin" reconciliation, or coexistence without violence to thick reconciliation, where solid, positive relationships are restored or built on the basis of truth, reparations, forgiveness and healing.[25]
Recruitment	Recruitment includes compulsory, forced and voluntary engagement, and subsequent participation, involvement or affiliation with any kind of regular or irregular armed force, armed group or sanctioned violent extremist group.
Reinsertion	Traditionally associated with DDR contexts, reinsertion is short-term material and financial assistance offered to ex-combatants during the transitional period of demobilization but prior to the longer-term process of reintegration. It helps cover the basic and immediate needs of ex-combatants and their families for up to one year and can include transitional safety allowances, food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short-term education, training, employment and tools. Reinsertion differs from transitional rehabilitation, as it is concerned in equipping the individual, while transitional rehabilitation is largely concerned in the transformation of the individual and the environment to overcome the drivers of and vulnerabilities to violent extremism.

[25] Deep reconciliation may be untenable during and in the immediate aftermath of violence, and in such cases, it is appropriate for the international community to support thin reconciliation as a first step in a long and homegrown process. Reconciliation and reintegration are closely linked. On one hand, social reintegration depends on community willingness to coexist peacefully with ex-combatants and associates and give them space to build productive and law-abiding livelihoods. On the other, re-entry of ex-combatants and associates into communities supports reconciliation by starting dialogue, challenging victim and perpetrator stereotypes, helping victims get answers that facilitate closure and gradually (re)building trust.

Reintegration	Reintegration essentially includes social, psychosocial, political and economic process, as defined in the *Glossary on Migration* (IOM, 2019a:174), with an open time frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country and a national responsibility, and often necessitates long-term external assistance. In traditional DDR, reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status, gain sustainable employment and income and are socially and politically reintegrated. In the context of reintegration of former associates of violent extremism, there is a need to consider aspects such as political participation as well. The expectation of reintegration is to transform, but it is contingent on changes in context that present drivers of and vulnerabilities to violent extremism.
Risk assessment	This is an evaluation of the extent to which individuals represent a danger to themselves and others. In custodial settings, this assessment is a step in the intake process to inform decisions on security classification and separation from other detainees. Risk assessments may consider, among other factors, the severity of the crime, whether a detainee surrendered or was captured, criminal history, ideological commitment to violent extremism, and drug and alcohol use. Risk assessments are reapplied during detention and towards the end of custody as an input for release and parole planning.
Sanctioned group	This is a political and contentious issue for the United Nations and, by extension, IOM. The term can be used to refer to different levels of sanctions by the United Nations and Member States for individuals, States and entities that have not complied with the objectives established by the United Nations Security Council. For IOM, this may be complicated when a group is sanctioned by a Member State, or their country, but not by the United Nations. This has implications on the involvement and programming of IOM. For IOM's purposes, sanctioned groups refer to groups, entities and individuals affiliated to Al-Qaeda and ISIL as terrorist and individuals are listed by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) under the 1267 regime (United Nations, 2019). However, working in specific countries may necessitate navigating other sanctioned regimes, avoiding material support restrictions and other issues.
Screening	In the context of violent extremism, screening is a process of examining, investigating and establishing the nature of the relationship of an individual to a sanctioned violent extremist group. It is a methodical examination of individual backgrounds and characteristics to inform subsequent actions with respect to the treatment and handling of the individual. Screening has legal, operational and risk dimensions. Screening is the first step for determining the legal status of an individual based on culpability and security risks of an individual. However, according to the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the screening assessment is insufficient for prosecution, as it is inadmissible in court. The definition of screening is complex as screening encompasses risk assessments. Screening is distinctive from profiling, registering and vetting. IOM does not engage in screening, but when appropriate, it may provide guidance to governments on the purpose and importance of screening.

Terrorism	There is no agreed-upon definition for terrorism; however, numerous United Nations resolutions (such as A/RES/49/60 and S/RES/1566) have outlined terrorist acts (United Nations, 1995 and 2004). United Nations Security Council resolution 1566 states that terrorist acts are "criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act". The term can also be found in UNSCR 1373 (2001) and 2178 (United Nations, 2014).
Transitional rehabilitation	This literally means to make able again, an interim phase that may be voluntary, to prepare individuals for their return to the communities. In contexts of violent extremist groups, rehabilitation refers broadly to efforts towards the restoration of affective, pragmatic and ideological bonds. Activities may include psychosocial therapies, civic engagement, religious support, education and job training undertaken during detention and transition processes and aiming to improve reintegration outcomes and lower recidivism rates. Broadly speaking, transitional rehabilitation seeks to address pragmatic needs and transform affective and ideological bonds to the community.
Violent extremism	Violent extremism "is a violent type of mobilization that aims to elevate the status of one group, while excluding or dominating its 'others' based on markers, such as gender, religion, culture and ethnicity. In doing so, violent extremist organisations destroy existing political and cultural institutions, and supplant them with alternative governance structures that work according to the principles of a totalitarian and intolerant ideology" (Bak et al., 2019). Violent extremism is driven by sentiments of superiority and efforts of exclusion.

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International Organization for Migration (IOM)
17 route des Morillons, P.O. Box 17, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 717 9111 • Fax: +41 22 798 6150 • Email: hq@iom.int • Website: www.iom.int