



Centre for  
International Cooperation  
and Security

## **Assessing and reviewing the impact of small arms projects of arms availability and poverty: a case study of the Republic of Congo: UNDP/IOM Ex-Combatants Reintegration and Small Arms Collection project**

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## **The Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative**

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) has commissioned the Centre for International Cooperation and Security (CICS) at Bradford University to carry out research to assess and review the impact of small arms projects on arms availability and poverty. Although donors have been supporting a wide range of small arms reduction projects for several years, very few projects have been assessed for their impact on poverty reduction and development. At a recent workshop of development agencies, participants highlighted the need to conduct research and analysis to document the links between poverty and armed violence.<sup>1</sup> An assessment and review of the impact of recent small arms projects on reducing arms availability and use, and on poverty, was recommended, to identify areas of good practice that development agencies seeking to work on armed violence could draw upon. The “Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative” (AVPI), therefore, aimed to fill that gap.

This report on the Republic of Congo is part of this initiative. (All documents and reports from the AVPI can be found at [www.bradford.ac.uk/cics](http://www.bradford.ac.uk/cics).)

The authors would like to thank the people and organisations in the Republic of Congo who gave us their time, their opinions and their help, most particularly the current and former staff of UNDP and IOM. Most of them are listed in Annex 3. We are also grateful to Kate Joseph and Maximo Halty of the UNDP Small Arms and Demobilisation Unit in Geneva for their comments and their help, and to Adriaan Verheul of the World Bank in Washington D.C. (USA) for his comments. Finally, we are indebted in many ways to our colleagues in the Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative. However, the authors are responsible for the contents of this report. The analysis and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views or policy of DFID or the UK government.

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<sup>1</sup> Wilton Park Workshop, DFID, 2003.

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## Acronyms

AC	<i>Action Communautaire</i> ('Community Action', a UNDP development project)
CDEP	Conseils en développement et études de projets
CFA	African Financial Community
DDR	Demobilisation, disarmament, reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HC	<i>Haut commissariat pour la démobilisation et la réinsertion des ex-combattants</i> (High Commission for the Demobilisation and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants)
HDI	Human Development Index
IDA	International Development Assistance
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
OAU	Organisation of African Unity, now the African Union
PM&E	Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RoC	Republic of Congo
SAS	Small Arms Survey
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank

## **Executive summary**

The UNDP-IOM Reintegration and Small Arms Collection project in the Republic of Congo was timely, well targeted and effectively executed. The project successfully aimed to contribute to the stabilisation of a country under fragile conditions of post-conflict peace.

It became a focal point for many ex-combatants looking for a way to disarm safely (i.e. without fear of retribution), and/or in search of wider opportunities beyond the violence and insecurity of the militia life. The ex-combatants were offered the opportunity to set up their own businesses. In most cases, this clearly helped to reduce the poverty of these individuals and their dependants, even if poverty reduction was not an explicit goal of the project.

More to the point, the project's beneficiaries did not return to a life of violence. This was a highly satisfactory outcome, precisely what the project aimed to achieve, but it was not entirely due to the project. Even without any assistance, some of the ex-combatants concerned would have turned their backs on the militias, either temporarily or permanently. However, it seems safe to say that the project successfully demonstrated, encouraged and facilitated the transition from militia life to peaceful pursuits. By doing so, it must have increased the number of fighters leaving the militias and reduced the number of those that after some time reverted to a life of violence.

The impact of the project is multi-layered. First, it fundamentally affected the lives of the beneficiaries, their families and their associates. Second, it improved (or even saved) the lives of people who without the project might have fallen victim to acts of violence committed by the target group of the project. Third, it seems to have engendered a general feeling of increased safety and security that benefited the population and the country at large. In all these ways, it undoubtedly had an enabling effect on development, even if its direct impact on specific development indicators is in many cases hard to assess.

Because of developments beyond its control, the project fell short of realising its full potential in terms of disarmament and reintegration. In July 2001, the World Bank gave the Republic of Congo a US\$5 million IDA credit for the reintegration (but not the disarmament) of ex-combatants. As was to be expected, this thwarted the UNDP-IOM project, and brought disarmament to a halt. A government official told us: "We don't do disarmament, because the World Bank does not pay for it." There is reason to believe that the government has used World Bank assistance to capitalise on the continuing tension in the Pool region, rather than to resolve it.

The project's contribution to the reduction of armed violence is difficult to measure. The number of arms collected (one of the project's targets) tells us very little about the risk of armed violence, as we do not know whether these weapons would have been used aggressively, whether the number of families with access to arms has been reduced, and how many weapons remain in circulation. Many ex-combatants appear to have surrendered only the one weapon required for participation in the project. They may have retained others in the expectation that they will need them some day.

However, more often, we believe, they have kept the weaponry in the hope of being able to trade it for cash or other benefits.

The rate of success of the micro-projects for income generation established as a part of this project is high. However, it probably cannot be sustained, which is very unfortunate in the context of poverty reduction. One would have wished that the project had provided better training, monitoring, and follow-up support, including a micro-credit scheme. Such a scheme was planned, but it failed. Also, it would have been useful to analyse why specific enterprises work, while others fail.

We believe that this approach, providing income generation opportunities to ex-combatants, can potentially contribute much more to the reduction of poverty in the broadest sense of the word than it did in this project. One way to make a greater impact would be to pay greater attention to training and follow-up, as mentioned above. Another is to be more alert to the effect of empowering young violence-prone men on their families and associates and to minimise the abuse of power. For instance, we found that in collective micro-projects, the ex-combatants who had set up the project and assumed the role of manager had effectively expropriated their partners, former comrades-in-arms, and reduced them to workers.

The project was highly innovative and responsive in terms of setting up an informal, decentralised process of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration, without camps, peacekeepers or coercion. It achieved this by giving privileged access to project benefits to ex-combatants who turned in at least one weapon. Thanks to this simple device, with low overhead, the cost of getting an individual into economic activity, and collecting and destroying that individual's weapon was less than US\$500 per person. This is a small amount of money if we consider the contribution of the project to security, and potentially, sustainable poverty reduction.

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Aims of report**

This report is the third of several case studies being undertaken to examine the links between small arms related violence and poverty through the lens of a donor-funded project.

### **1.2 Overall study objective**

- Primary: To conduct a series of project reviews to assess the impact of armed violence reduction measures on poverty.
- Secondary: To review projects against their stated aims and objectives.

### **1.3 Focus of assessment and analysis**

- Understanding the context of armed violence and poverty in the Republic of Congo
- Reviewing the UNDP ‘Ex-combatants reintegration and small arms collection’ project
- Assessing the impact of the project on poverty reduction (intended or otherwise)
- Identifying indicators for measuring change with such projects
- Making observations for future consideration of such projects in terms of combining small arms reduction with development objectives

### **1.4 Methodology**

The report is based on an eight-day field visit during which two consultants (one poverty specialist and one small arms specialist) were supported by UNDP in Brazzaville. Their field research consisted of:

- Review of documentation, both project specific as well as more general information related to the country context—i.e. the political, economic and social situation in the Republic of Congo
- Interviews with key project stakeholders from UNDP, IOM, other donor agencies and the relevant government officials
- Visits to project supported micro-enterprises to review the situation with primary project beneficiaries
- Visit to one of the areas of the parallel UNDP programme ‘Action Communautaire’ to discuss complementarities between the two programmes

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank the people and organisations in the Republic of Congo who gave us their time, their opinions and their help, most particularly the current and former staff of UNDP and IOM. Most of them are listed in Annex 3. We are also grateful to Kate Joseph and Maximo Halty of the UNDP Small Arms and Demobilisation Unit in Geneva for their comments and their help, and to Adriaan Verheul of the World Bank in Washington D.C. (USA) for his comments. Finally, we

are indebted in many ways to our colleagues in the Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative. However, no one but the authors is responsible for the contents of this report.

## **2. Context**

### **2.1 Country poverty profile**

2.1.1 The Republic of Congo (hereafter Congo) has a population of 3.2 million. Two-thirds of the population are classified as urban, and the vast majority of them live in the country's two main southern cities of Brazzaville and Pointe Noire. Indeed, 80% of the population as a whole lives in the South. The overall population structure is skewed, with an estimated 45% of the population under 15 years old. Life expectancy at birth is 52 years.

2.1.2 GDP per capita fell throughout the 1990s, and in 2001 was US\$630 (from US\$1100 in 1990). According to the Global Report on Human Development of 2000, Congo ranks 139<sup>th</sup> among the 174 countries on the HDI index, though it is still above average in sub-Saharan Africa terms (0.507 Congo HDI as opposed to 0.464 for sub-Saharan Africa). HIV/AIDs prevalence was 8% in 1996, and the current estimated prevalence is 10-12%, with adolescents and young adults most affected (UNICEF 2003).

2.1.3 The Human Development Report of 2002 states that almost 50% of the population live below the poverty line, a figure reiterated by the Interim PRSP document of February 2004 (though a figure of 70% is also widely cited). However, data on poverty is piecemeal and insufficient, and as part of the move from the interim document towards a full PRSP, a quantitative and qualitative poverty survey will be carried out to contribute to the establishment of the country's first full poverty profile (supported by UNDP). Annex 1 presents the overall picture in terms of national progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

2.1.4 In terms of the macro-economic picture, forecasts from the EIU in January 2004 were tentatively positive. Oil accounts for over one third of GDP, but the decline in output and the misappropriation of revenues limit the contribution of the oil sector to development. Recovery in other sectors, which will have a greater impact on poverty, is expected to gather pace in 2004, based on the expansion of private and public activity, including the restoration of basic public services and improved access to rural areas.

2.1.5 The economy suffers from severe structural problems. With oil being the main foreign currency earner, few efforts have been made to diversify the economy and political instability has militated against an investment-friendly climate. Corruption further stifles any prospect of real economic development. Political patronage is used extensively by the government, resulting in an over-staffed, costly and inefficient state bureaucracy. In the 1970s and early 1980s, anyone with a post-secondary diploma could expect to land a government job. By the 1990s there were at least 80,000 civil servants, not including the army.

2.1.6 A third of the 2003 budget was spent on servicing Congo's enormous external debt. The World Bank put it at US\$5152 million (for 2002), 193% of GDP. In addition to the effects of poor governance and the bloated public sector, the foreign debt was exacerbated by the 1994 devaluation of the CFA franc and the economic disruption caused by the civil war. The external donor community is pushing for fundamental governance-related reform such as financial transparency, macroeconomic stability and government commitment to policies with the greatest impact on poverty reduction. Relations between the IMF and the Congolese government continue to be tense. A key IMF condition for progress towards the resumption of lending relations through a poverty reduction and growth facility (PRGF) is that the Congolese authorities redirect more public spending towards basic social services – health, education, agriculture and infrastructure – within the framework of the interim PRSP discussed in July 2003 with donors in Paris.

## **2.2 The 1990s to the present: transition and civil war**

2.2.1 1991 marked the end of a Marxist-Leninist regime in Congo, with a transition to multi-party democracy. In the presidential elections of August 1992 the previous incumbent Sassou-Nguesso conceded defeat, to make way for Pascal Lissouba.

2.2.2 From the beginning, President Lissouba's tenure was fraught with conflict. Disagreements about the formation of government and contested legislative elections led to his dissolution of the National Assembly in 1992, and a move for fresh elections in May 1993. However, the results of those elections were also disputed, resulting in violent conflict between government and opposition supporters in June and November. In February 1994, the decisions of an international board of arbiters (OAU, France and Gabon) were accepted by all parties, and the risk of large-scale insurrection subsided. However the seeds of a militia culture had been sown. Armed gangs financed and manipulated by political factions engaged in partisan violence.

2.2.3 The fragile democratic progress was derailed again in 1997. As the scheduled presidential elections approached, tensions between the Lissouba and Sassou camps mounted. On June 5<sup>th</sup>, Lissouba's government forces surrounded Sassou's compound in Brazzaville, and Sassou ordered his militia to resist. The ensuing 4-month conflict damaged or destroyed much of Brazzaville. In early October, Angolan troops invaded Congo in support of Sassou, and by the middle of the month, the Lissouba government had fallen, with Lissouba and other leaders fleeing into exile. Sassou declared himself President, and set up a National Transition Council as the legislature. A return to democracy was envisaged after a flexible transition period of three years.

2.2.4 Conflict continued. In December 1998, rebels launched an offensive against Brazzaville, resulting in the flight of 200,000 people. In early 1999 fighting broke out in the southern provinces, and almost a third of all Congolese were displaced by the conflict; many internally but tens of thousands crossing the borders into neighbouring DRC and Gabon. Private militias continued to play a key role, with thousands of youth recruited into their ranks. Sassou controlled the Cobra militia, Lissouba the Cocoye group and the former Prime Minister Kolelas the Ninja militia.

2.2.5 In November 1999, an Amnesty for the three warring militias (i.e. Cobra, Cocoye, Ninja) was announced by President Sassou's administration, followed by an

Amnesty Law and a Ceasefire Accord in December 1999. The December Accord, mediated by President Omar Bongo of Gabon, called for follow up, inclusive political negotiations between the government and the opposition. A follow-up committee (*Comité de Suivi*) was immediately established in January 2000 to demobilise the estimated 22,640 ex-combatants and to collect some of the 71,500 weapons in circulation (Demetriou et al., 2002). The Accords included key provisions for the demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants and the restructuring and reform of the Congolese military. Although some disarmament and reintegration activities were carried out in the interim, to date comprehensive DDR has not taken place.

### 2.3 Initiatives to promote disarmament and reintegration

2.3.1 The situation stabilised between January 2000 and early 2002, with a new constitution approved by referendum in January 2002. Three inter-related initiatives were launched in the attempt to provide the immediate pre-conditions for lasting peace. It is very important to note that they began operating **without** an overall national framework for Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) for the Republic of Congo:

- The *Comité de Suivi* sought to identify, disarm and demobilise ex-combatants, which was not successful,
- At the request of the government, UNDP (with IOM as the implementing partner) launched a project to disarm and reintegrate ex-combatants through weapons collection, training and the establishment of micro-projects between July 2000 and December 2002
- Following the negotiation of a debt relief programme with the World Bank, a US\$5 million IDA credit was provided to the newly formed *Haut Commissariat pour la démobilisation et la réinsertion des ex-combattants* (HC hereafter) on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2001

2.3.2 Despite these initiatives, the national peace process has been marred by continued military activity in the southern region of Pool. The situation rapidly deteriorated in March 2002, following the abrupt termination of negotiations between the High Commissioner of the HC and the leader of the Ninja militia, popularly called Pastor Ntoumi. In what was perceived as tantamount to a declaration of war, the High Commissioner broke off official negotiations and the army and air force proceeded to increase military pressure on the region with bombardments in April 2002. The UNDP-IOM project was unable to pursue planned disarmament and reintegration activities in Pool (which had been directly requested from the government for the area), and the government reduced the access of humanitarian agencies to the region. Several well-informed sources (that for obvious reasons cannot be quoted) independently told us that the army, with the support of the HC, had deliberately provoked violence in the Pool region because they believed they would benefit from a return to armed conflict.

2.3.3 Armed violence spread to Brazzaville, and the period June-December 2002 was marred by an unknown number of deaths and a further flux of internal displacement. In 2000 it was estimated that some 810,000 people had been displaced by the series of conflicts, primarily in Brazzaville and the four southern regions of Pool, Lekoumou, Bouenza and Niari. Numbers of people who fled the fighting that

ended in March 2003 have varied, and there are currently no commonly accepted working figures available. In June 2003, UNOCHA reported that between 80,000 and 150,000 from the Pool region were displaced. It is not known how many of these IDPs have returned, though in Kindimba in Pool local authorities estimated the pre-war population to be 17,000, and the current number to be 3,600 (NRC, 2004).

2.3.4 The peace accord of March 2003 between the government and Pastor Ntoumi set out the terms for the restoration of stability in Pool: DDR of Ntoumi's Ninja, the free circulation of persons and goods in Pool, the restoration of state authority, and the designation of a Ninja representative to the HC. The peace is being sustained, but it remains fragile. Ntoumi and many of his militia members are still in Pool beyond the control of state authority, and the DDR process managed by the HC is limited by seeming lack of political will. An HC official told us, "We don't do disarmament, because the World Bank does not pay for it." It is true that in its post-conflict reconstruction and recovery activities, the World Bank does not fund disarmament activities, only demobilisation and reintegration. However, the government could fund the critical disarmament element of DDR. In the event, it does not.

## **2.4 Root causes of war addressed?**

2.4.1 It is widely accepted that the conflicts of the past decade in Congo were effectively struggles for control over the country's rich oil resources by rival factions within the country's elite. Regional and ethnic tensions contributed to the conflict, and in many ways, the legacy of war is still clearly reflected in the current political structure and lack of political pluralism.

2.4.2 Sassou and his allies dominate the political scene in Congo, with the Parti Congolais du Travail (PCT) and its allies holding 70% of the seats in parliament. The opposition is effectively marginalised from both government and parliament. This is not the broad-based, inclusive administration that many hoped would heal the wounds caused by the conflict. Hard-line supporters of the president, a northerner, hold key portfolios. Southerners, though much more numerous, are kept out of influential positions, and opposition voices are rarely heard. Civil society is weak, though its organisations are growing in number and effectiveness. Outside the thinly populated northern areas of the country, which are the regime's power base and where only 20% of the population live, the situation has largely been accepted as the price of peace. Opposition and civil society activists are focussing on the government's poor human rights record and lack of public accountability, rather than openly questioning its legitimacy. The marginalisation of the southern section of the country still needs to be systematically addressed.

## **3. Ex-combatants reintegration and SALW collection project**

### **3.1 The project framework**

3.1.1 Following the December 1999 Accord, UNDP was requested by the Government of Congo to assist in the process of restoring peace to the country, in the provision of immediate support for disarmament and reintegration of the ex-militia members. Thousands of ex-combatants were leaving the forests and pouring into the major towns, many of them still armed and still responsive to their militia

commanders. UNDP designed the “Ex-combatants reintegration and small arms collection” project in response. It is of great importance to note that this was explicitly presented as an immediate emergency measure, not a development programme. Its goal under its initial timeframe of 18 months and budget of US\$4 million was to:

“Assist ex-militia members with their own efforts to reintegrate into civilian life, restore peace and rebuild a normal life that is both economically and socially sustainable”

The two specific objectives of the project were as follows:

- To generate confidence building and the socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants in order to consolidate peace
- To encourage ex-combatants and others to turn in their weapons in order to improve security and stability in the country

3.1.2 In effect, the project was primarily concerned with diverting the most dangerous elements of the militias into other activities, to move them away from a culture of arms and into post-conflict, sustainable pursuits. The thinking of the project was that if militia members who were likely to re-engage in armed violence, or to incite others to engage in such violence, were diverted to more peaceful pursuits, the peace would be more likely to hold. Therefore the primary motivation for the project was sustaining the peace, or upholding the ‘primacy of peace’.

3.1.3 In its initial phase, the project was heavily criticised by other donors in Congo for deliberately ‘rewarding’ perpetrators of violence. UNDP countered this criticism through the linkage of the project with other initiatives in its portfolio, primarily the Community Action for Reintegration and Recovery project, now named Community Action for Post-Conflict Recovery (*Action Communautaire*), which looked at rehabilitation and the restoration of community infrastructure from the community perspective, without making distinctions between ex-militia members and the communities to which they were returning. The conceptual link between the two projects was clear; one an immediate post-conflict, emergency measure dealing with ex-militia members, the other a broader, longer-term project with a goal of “assisting communities victimised by war with their own efforts to reintegrate households, restore peace and return to normal and durable conditions”. While the disarmament and reintegration project ended in December 2002, the latter project is ongoing.

## **3.2 Analysing the project against its own objectives**

3.2.1 The project has been reviewed and evaluated from various perspectives several times, and the following sections 3.2.2 – 3.4.14 draw heavily on these previous studies to summarise the previous findings on achievements and failings of the initiative. The current review was not another evaluation of the project, but rather drew together elements of previous studies, and then looked at the project from a developmental (and poverty specific) perspective.

3.2.2 Under the first reintegration objective the expected and actual results are listed below, with the actual results in italics;

- ❑ 4,700 ex-combatants supported and operational  
*7,250 ex-combatants received reintegration assistance through 2,270 micro-projects*
- ❑ Reduction of violence, in particular armed robbery  
*No evidence provided on reduction of violence or its causal link with the project*
- ❑ Ex-militia re-incorporation into the National Army  
*No evidence provided by the project, though Government of Congo sources say 2,500 ex-militia have been integrated into the armed forces in 2001*
- ❑ Social cohesion restored  
*No evidence provided on cases of violence*

3.2.3 Under the second objective on disarmament, the expected and actual results are listed below:

- ❑ 5,000 light weapons collected and destroyed  
*More than 11,000 pieces of weaponry collected and destroyed, among them 3,081 small arms and light weapons and 8,000 explosives and grenades*
- ❑ Reduction in the number of light weapons in circulation  
*Considerable evidence provided regarding weapons in circulation by the Small Arms Survey, which carried out a study on the project, with many inputs from IOM and UNDP. The SAS estimated an overall of 41,000 weapons in circulation by the end of the project*
- ❑ Lower crime rate related to firearms violence  
*No evidence could be obtained from Army or Police sources*

3.2.4 In mid-2001, UNDP extended the project until the end of 2002, with new targets and an increased budget of US\$8.4m. Both strategic objectives remained the same, but the intermediate results changed. However, the required funds could not be raised:

<b>Intermediate Result</b>	<b>Actual Result</b>
1. a) 15,000 ex-combatants plan and initiate an income-generating activity and benefit from economic support, advice and monitoring	<i>8,019 ex-combatants disarmed and benefiting from social &amp; economic reintegration</i>
2. a) Reduced robbery and crime among ex-combatants	<i>No supporting evidence</i>
3. a) Remaining militia members disarm, and groups dissolve	<i>No supporting evidence</i>
Reduction in the number of ex-combatants seeking integration in the armed forces	<i>Military sources indicate that 2,500 ex-militia members were incorporated into the Armed Forces in 2001, and at least 400 ex-militia fighters in 2002</i>

a) Ex-combatants are perceived as useful members of their communities	<i>Based on social and economic reinsertion indicators from two project commissioned evaluations, reintegration of ex-militia covered 96% of project beneficiaries, and 66% of the micro-enterprises were successful. However these CDEP evaluations have been questioned by subsequent studies in terms of measuring the success of reintegration.</i>
a) Communities with a high return rate of ex-combatants receive reintegration assistance	<i>Criteria used have been essentially based on presence of ex-combatants, not whether they constituted a high return rate</i>
6. a) Awareness campaign on human rights, HIV-AIDs prevention and STDs	<i>Not carried out</i>
7. a) 20,000 small arms collected and destroyed	<i>No additional funding was received, thus total for weapons collection was 11,140 arms and pieces of explosive ordnance at end of 2002</i>
8. a) Lower crime rate due to reduced firearm use	<i>No supporting evidence</i>

Sources: Muggah et al., 2003; Bugnion, 2003

3.2.5 In the following sections we look at elements of the project, broadly divided into disarmament and reintegration. Previous evaluation and review findings are interwoven with our own comments.

### **3.3 Disarmament: Tangible achievements and opportunities lost**

3.3.1 Between July and December 2002, weapons were gathered primarily from Brazzaville, Cuvette, Plateaux and Pool (10,604 weapons), Niari (192 weapons), Bouenza and Lekoumou (244 weapons) and Kouilou (100 weapons). In all 11,140 weapons of various types were collected and destroyed, with destruction ceremonies (*Flammes de la Paix*) taking place in Brazzaville and Dolisie. The public nature of these destruction ceremonies were important, representing a transparent approach to weapons destruction, and sending an important message that these weapons will not be redistributed.

3.3.2 The UN institutional base offered a unique platform for the project; it seems to have been widely regarded as a neutral player in the peace process, and well positioned to deal with the sensitivities of disarmament. Government was strongly associated with one of the militia groups and could not play this role. This association and partiality has filtered through to public perception of the government's High Commission for the Reintegration of Ex-Combatants (HC). The 2003 project

evaluation questioned Brazzaville residents about their perceptions of the both the UNDP project and the HC role, and “a significant number of respondents mentioned that the HC process could not successfully ‘disarm’ or ‘reintegrate’ genuine ex-combatants because it did not carry an impartial mandate”<sup>2</sup>.

3.3.3 Under the terms of the project, weapons were voluntarily provided to UNDP-IOM on the condition that they would allow potential ex-combatants participants to be prioritised for reintegration assistance. Handing in a single weapon qualified an ex-combatant to take part in the programme.

3.3.4 A project officer told us that ex-combatants were told that they were expected to hand in a weapon with full ammunition magazines, but this does not seem to have been clearly spelled out. The project also encouraged ex-combatants to hand in more than the one weapon required for participation, and some did, but it provided no incentive for handing in more than the one weapon.

3.3.5 This seems a missed opportunity. If the project had offered small additional rewards to ex-combatants handing in additional weaponry, it would have collected more. Perhaps it would also have cleared out the stash of weaponry we saw in one of the poorer quarters of Brazzaville. An ex-combatant took us into his bedroom and showed us about 10 rifles, 20 hand-grenades (their fuses removed, he said), along with some ammunition and a plastic toy his son had outgrown, all hidden under the marital bed. His wife had at first objected to sleeping above this arsenal, he told us, but he had been able to reassure her. We asked whether he was keeping the weaponry for future use. He said, no. Indeed, covered with rust and dust, it did not seem to be in working condition. The man said he was hoping he would one day be able to make some money out of it, or at least trade it for something useful. “Is there not going to be another weapons collection project?” he asked.

3.3.6 A more sophisticated system of incentives for weapons collection could also have encouraged possessors to hand over items that are considered particularly dangerous for political stability (assault rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, etc.), criminal violence (e.g. pistols) or public safety (e.g. unexploded ordnance). To be sure, there are risks and disadvantages to offering attractive rewards for the surrender of weaponry. It can stimulate the importation and stealing of items to be handed in. It can also discourage people (like the ex-combatant with the arms cache under his bed) from handing in illegal weaponry for nothing. Besides, the rewards can be used in ways that are inconsistent with the goals of the weapons collection programme. The most obvious example is surrendering a gun and using the reward to obtain a more powerful weapon.

3.3.7 Finally, the mere act of rewarding people who hand in illegally held weapons is bad public relations. It suggests that illegal weapons are valuable assets. It can also convey the impression that the authorities are more interested in accommodating the people who hold such weaponry than in helping law-abiding citizens and the victims of gun violence. Bearing all these drawbacks and pitfalls in mind, we think the project could and should have made a more deliberate effort to extract a large amount of dangerous weaponry from society.

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<sup>2</sup> Muggah et al., 2003

3.3.8 In terms of the number of arms collected, the project met its initial target, but it failed to reach the enhanced target for disarmament. This was not due to any shortcomings of the project itself, but rather to the environment in which it was operating. The creation in mid-2001 of the national High Commission for the Reintegration of Ex-Combatants, established to spend a World Bank credit of US\$ 5 million, caused considerable confusion at a critical point in the disarmament process. It resulted in the failure to extend the UNDP project at a key stage in its development, particularly in regard to the stabilisation of the Pool region. The broader donor community believed that the HC activities would duplicate the UNDP project, which was partly true, and decided that the former took priority, which in our opinion was a mistake. They decided not to continue funding the latter.

3.3.9 In fact, the HC project launched by the World Bank credit only duplicated the reintegration component of the IOM-UNDP project, not the removal and destruction of weapons. World Bank policy does not allow the funding of disarmament. This led to a situation in which neither the HC nor the UNDP project were funding disarmament. Indeed, they turned away ex-combatants who wanted to disarm.

3.3.10 The 2003 multi-donor evaluation attempted to fill some of the gaps in terms of understanding the impact of disarmament and reintegration on security, which the project had not measured. The project had listed “decreased robbery and crime among ex-combatants” and, more generally, “lower crime rate” as intermediate project impacts, but no data were provided to indicate to what extent these results were attained.

3.3.11 The same evaluation study also looked at other measures for assessing change in the security situation, namely the impact of small arms on public health, the extent of armed violence in schools, and public perceptions of security. It is important to note that the 2003 multi-donor evaluation was analysing the impact of all disarmament and reintegration activity, and not the UNDP project alone. Unfortunately, this makes it even more difficult to establish causality. If B follows A, that does not prove it was caused by A, even if that was the desired effect. A different factor may be responsible. The attribution of outcomes to activities becomes almost impossible if we are dealing with several of each. However, there were some interesting findings, which are summarised below in relation to all three categories of measurement.

3.3.12 The public health study found that while the number of victims of armed violence decreased between 1998 and 2002, there was a gradual increase in reported firearm injuries as a proportion of all reported injuries. In that period, weapons-related injuries were geographically concentrated in the northern neighbourhoods of Brazzaville, precisely the areas with high concentrations of allegedly disarmed and reintegrated ex-combatants, especially former Cobras. The stated causes of firearm-related injuries were varied, ranging from armed aggression (32%) and armed robbery (30%) to simple theft (10%). In terms of demographic profile, firearm injuries were especially prevalent among young men, with 70% of all cases involving males aged 11-30. Furthermore, at least 15% of all reported firearm injuries involved children under 11. Finally, in terms of immediate financial costs of treatment, the firearm related injuries in Brazzaville totalled US\$1.4 million in the period 1998-2002. This

figure does not include the longer-term costs of rehabilitation, and loss of productivity.

3.3.13 Given the age profile of ex-combatants in Congo, and the vulnerability of children and young adults to violence more generally, the 2003 evaluation decided that the education sector warranted attention in terms of the impact of disarmament. The school study revealed information about the dynamics of armed violence at universities and secondary schools, the impacts of armed violence on the quantity and quality of teaching, and the growing influence of gangs in the education sector.

3.3.14 The survey revealed that the use of firearms and *armes blanches* (machetes, knives etc) was noted in more than 50% of the reported cases of violence in Brazzaville schools. Over 60% of the surveyed schools reported a problem of organised youth violence. In terms of impact on the quality of teaching, when asked about their own safety, most teachers expressed anxiety in relation to their own personal safety. Finally, on the presence of ex-combatants in the education sector, former fighters were believed to be enrolled in at least 54% of the schools surveyed. The average number was approximately 5 per school (average school size 2,100). It is important to stress that in most cases the armed violence did not come from pupils who had been combatants, but from elements outside the school.

3.3.15 A victimisation survey was carried out in Brazzaville, to measure public perceptions of safety and sources of insecurity. Of the household respondents, more than 70% indicated some awareness of ex-combatants in their neighbourhood. Interestingly, most households perceived a relatively low number of violent acts associated with ex-combatants; their primary concerns related to the army, the police and what they referred to as 'bandits'.<sup>3</sup> Some 42% of households attributed their lingering insecurity to the presence of ex-combatants. By contrast, the military were identified as a security hazard by 77% of the household respondents and the police by 70%. It is striking how many inhabitants of the capital see the uniformed government forces that are supposed to provide security as a threat. For their part, ex-combatants surveyed in Brazzaville claimed that bandits were their primary source of insecurity (80%), followed by other 'militia' members.

### **3.4 Reintegration: Tangible achievements and opportunities lost**

3.4.1 Reintegration activity took place primarily through the provision of training and micro-projects<sup>4</sup> to groups and individuals. The reintegration component had 4 principal objectives, (the latter two were only marginally addressed within the project and are not considered below):

- 1) To create micro-enterprises to generate revenue
- 2) To provide ex-combatants with marketable skills through training
- 3) To provide ex-combatants with paid employment
- 4) To consolidate micro-enterprises with micro-credits

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<sup>3</sup> There may be a problem with terminology and classification here

<sup>4</sup> The term is used to cover both micro-enterprises and the placement of people in jobs

### ***Micro-project success rates***

3.4.2 At the end of the project, 8019 ex-combatants had benefited from reintegration assistance, and over 2610 micro-projects were financed. 1849 ex-combatants had been provided with formal training. In quantitative terms, linked to the original project targets for numbers of ex-combatants affected, the project was successful (and bearing in mind that the amended second target of 20,000 ex-combatants could not be achieved due to lack of funding).

3.4.3 The project commissioned two reviews of the reintegration component during the project life span (CDEP, 2001 and 2002), which concluded in 2002 that the success rate of the micro-enterprises was 66%, i.e. in August 2002 two thirds of the micro-enterprises were functional. It may be expected that this figure will have fallen since that time. Therefore it is not a measure of long-term or sustainable success, but only a snapshot at a particular moment. However, it is still a considerable achievement.

### ***Training: A contributory factor to micro-project success?***

3.4.4 The limitations of the training provided to the ex-combatants have been clearly delineated in the CDEP reviews. In summary, the training was limited in longevity (5 days maximum), lacked targeted content (mixing groups who were interested in different areas of micro-enterprise development, giving them all too little depth in their respective areas), only 1% of trainees received physical materials during training, and the timing was not systematically analysed in terms of greatest impact. After the first CDEP evaluation in 2001, which highlighted these problems, the project addressed as many of the issues as it could. However, the second CDEP study stated that the training appeared to be having little impact on the success rate of the micro-enterprises: in Brazzaville, where 60% of the study respondents had received training, and in Niari, where no-one had yet been trained, the failure rate of the projects was the same. The study recommended that basic management training was a critical need; most of the training to date had been in content related areas such as carpentry, agriculture and so on. Most important of all, the project was failing to provide the required monitoring and follow-up for individual enterprises.

### ***Broader issues related to the hybrid nature of the project***

3.4.5 Many of these training-related problems were symptomatic of broader issues relating to the 'hybrid' nature of the project. Despite the project being an 'emergency measure' and not a development intervention, it was in fact combining disarmament and development. The reintegration elements of the project were, by their very nature, concerned with complex social and economic processes. Micro-enterprise development and support requires intensive and sustained efforts if the individual enterprises are to have a lasting impact. If such support cannot be provided, as is to be expected in a short and highly focussed intervention such as this one, then it needs to be provided by linkages with other development projects, running in parallel and beyond.

3.4.6 This review found several interesting aspects of social development within the project, which could not be addressed in sufficient depth due to project constraints of finance, time and project focus. For example, the project, which initially encouraged group formation of micro-enterprises, highlighted an individual within each group enterprise, the person in charge or 'promoteur'.

3.4.7 The focus on this individual throughout the set-up process, including training, proved to be problematic. While understandable in terms of limiting the sheer volume of individual interaction with the project, it led to an unequal provision of information. The result was that many beneficiaries failed to understand the rights they were obtaining and the obligations they were assuming by joining the programme. Not only did the programme fail to empower these ex-combatants. It gave others who were more aggressive and savvy the opportunity to deprive them of their entitlements. We observed several such cases.

3.4.8 The 2002 CDEP study noted that only 46% of the beneficiaries were aware of the contract they had signed with the IOM, and recommended that “it should be obligatory for the contract between the programme and the beneficiary to be discussed, read and a copy given to the beneficiary” (emphasis in original).

3.4.9 The project’s failure to do this may not have had serious consequences in micro-projects assigned to a single ex-combatant, but it clearly gave the ‘promoteurs’ of collective micro-projects the opportunity to usurp the rights of their partners, an opportunity that many successfully seized. Too little time and attention were given to these critical aspects of information sharing and dissemination, and far too much focus given to the ‘promoteur’. Similarly, the programme focussed its training efforts on the ‘promoteurs’ in the expectation that they would pass the information on to others, especially their partners in the collective micro-projects. However, the ‘promoteurs’ may have decided it was not in their interest to share the information.

3.4.10 The project soon re-appraised and changed its initial focus on collective micro-projects. An internal appraisal at the end of 2000 indicated that the military structures of the militias were being replicated within the micro-enterprises, i.e. that groups of ex-combatants were coming together again in the same power structures with the same individuals that had formed sub-groups of the militias (IOM-UNDP, 2000).

3.4.11 As the project wished to disband militia groups and subgroups, it decided to limit the size of the micro-enterprises and to actively encourage individual micro-projects. At the end of the project, the average micro-enterprise comprised three people. The fear of reinforcing military command structures within enterprises was understandable. However, the formation of new groups for any type of activity will have its own power dynamics, for which mitigation strategies are required, if the less aggressive and influential members of the group are to be empowered. Therefore this is not a particular feature of ex-military groups (though it may be accentuated in this context), but a classic feature of group formation.

3.4.12 Mitigation strategies to counter such dynamics include substantial efforts to provide all members of the group with the same information, and ensure that they share a common understanding of roles and responsibilities. Training should include several members of a group, preferably all. In addition, follow up monitoring is required to check that a balance of power is being maintained within the group.

3.4.13 It appears that monitoring was a particular weakness of the project, which the 2002 CDEP review called “slow, inconsistent and ineffective”. We visited several micro-enterprises in the Brazzaville area in April 2004. Of the three functional group

projects, two had been obviously and visibly dominated by the 'promoteur'. One was a private health clinic, providing basic services in a poor quarter, whose 'promoteur' acted as both Manager and Owner of the business, at the expense of his fellow ex-combatants, who had been reduced to the status of salaried employees. In another, a fish farm, the 'promoteur' had absconded out of the country with the enterprise's money, leaving his co-beneficiaries (sons and other relatives) with nothing.

### ***Measuring the success of micro-projects in terms of reintegration***

3.4.14 The project envisaged micro-projects as an entry point or vehicle for reintegration. However the relationship between taking up a job or establishing a business on the one hand, and the much broader objective of social and economic reintegration is not simple or linear.

3.4.15 Even though their micro-projects may have failed, if the ex-combatants concerned do not return to militia life, do not engage in armed violence, and actively participate in social and economic life, then their reintegration must be considered a success. This seems usually to have been the case.

3.4.16 The Subur evaluation of 2003 concluded that the project never determined real indicators of success for reintegration. For example, at what point is an ex-combatant considered to be reintegrated, and how would that be measured? The CDEP evaluations of 2001 and 2002 determined, and used, their own set of indicators for reintegration, which were interesting in their own right and are discussed below, but which bore no resemblance to the project document, except on the economic side.

3.4.17 It is unfortunate that successive project reviews and evaluations measured reintegration in various ways. However, they do provide useful indications of the contribution of the project to reintegration. The CDEP evaluations created 12 parameters to measure reintegration: three for reintegration into the family, seven for social reintegration and two for economic reintegration. In terms of familial and social reintegration, the survey found that 81% of project beneficiaries assist their families, 70% occupy a position of responsibility in their family or society, and 63% send their children to school. Economic measures related directly to micro-enterprise success or failure, and to the percentage of micro-enterprises that had created jobs for other people besides the beneficiary or beneficiaries. That figure was 35%. Beneficiaries were questioned to gauge the extent of reintegration through these 'proxy measures'. In 2002 the survey team found that 75% of the project beneficiaries had successfully reintegrated.

3.4.18 Of course, it is hard to say how much of this success can be attributed to the programme. This is particularly difficult when it comes to familial and social reintegration. To isolate the specific impact of the programme one would need to compare the success of the programme's beneficiaries with the fortunes of a 'control group' that is similar in most ways, but did not benefit from the programme.

3.4.19 The joint donor evaluation of 2003 used a different approach to measuring the success of reintegration from the one adopted by CDEP. It simply posed direct questions regarding reintegration to ex-combatants, their families and their neighbours. This approach was interesting in that it revealed very different answers from the ex-combatants and their communities. The former considered themselves

75% socially reintegrated and 50% economically reintegrated. However, their communities regarded them as 25% socially reintegrated and only 13% economically reintegrated.

### **Conclusions on reintegration**

3.4.20 The project's attempts to promote reintegration were effective if one focuses narrowly on the short-term success rate of micro-projects. We do not have data on the success rate of the micro-projects in the longer term, but we suspect that it has sharply declined. To some extent, this could have been avoided by better training during the start-up phase, and much better follow-up at later stages.

3.4.21 The project had planned to provide micro-projects with low-interest credits for investment and growth, but this scheme never took off. A good opportunity to prolong the success of micro-projects was lost. During our visits to several micro-enterprises, we found that most of them were in dire need of credit for capital investment and expansion. An urban photocopying micro-enterprise needed spare parts, and a shop selling fish and meat needed generators and refrigerators.

3.4.22 Finally, we had the opportunity to look at ongoing work under the parallel UNDP project 'Action Communautaire' (AC), which ran parallel to the Reintegration and Disarmament project, and has continued beyond the latter's life span. Initially, the mere existence of the AC project, then called 'Appui Communautaire', served to counter the reproach that the Reintegration and Disarmament project was benefiting people who had led a life of violence, instead of helping their victims. The AC target group was much broader. It continues to work with entire communities, not just returning ex-combatants.

3.4.23 Although the potential crossover and synergy between the two projects was logical conceptually, it was not clear to us how much the Reintegration and Disarmament project was able to capitalise on the early work of AC. For instance, to what extent did the Reintegration and Disarmament Project direct ex-combatants who did not qualify for their programme to the projects of the AC, such as the Highly Labour Intensive Activities for the reconstruction of bridges and the repair of roads? Several hundred ex-combatants have so far indeed participated in such work, but we were not able to find out to what extent this was the result of deliberate co-operation between the two related programmes. That would have made perfect sense in our opinion, but we are not sure it happened. Even today, after the Reintegration and Disarmament Project has come to an end, it would make sense to link the reconstruction and recovery work of AC with efforts to disarm and reintegrate ex-combatants.

3.4.24 There is much to be said for such linkages between programmes. To explain this, we need to give some thought to the difficulty of tackling the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants in a single programme. The main problem is the fundamental difference between disarmament and demobilization on the one hand and reintegration on the other. DD&R programmes respond to this difficulty in various ways. Often, they focus narrowly on what is most urgent, namely disarming and disbanding the fighting forces, but fail to seriously tackle the task of reintegrating the ex-combatants into society, which in the long run may be even more important. We believe this is short-sighted. Other programmes, like the IOM-UNDP

effort under review here, do make a serious attempt to disarm and reintegrate<sup>5</sup> the ex-combatants in a single multifaceted and multidisciplinary project. In our opinion, this response seems more appropriate, but complicated.

3.4.25 In the RoC, we saw the beginnings of a third road that might be more effective. What follows now is not a description of the approach taken by UNDP and IOM in that country, but an approach that could build on ideas they developed and practical solutions that they devised.

3.4.26 This approach, which we believe has not yet been tried, would consist of tackling disarmament and demobilisation in one project (Track One), and reintegration in another (Track Two), but closely linking and co-ordinating the two efforts. In DD&R, the most immediate and urgent challenge is to separate the combatants from their commanders and their weaponry. Then they are discharged, given some reintegration assistance, and expected to go home. All this needs to be done soon after the armed conflict, and completed within a matter of months, preferably under military or police supervision to ensure safety and security. If successful, Track One will turn combatants into ex-combatants, but it will not integrate them into society. The most difficult challenge still lies ahead.

3.4.27 In the new approach we are describing, Track Two would be a separate undertaking, but co-ordinated with Track One. Its function for Track One would be to take over the ex-combatants and involve them in activities that will enable them to go back to their homes, families and livelihoods, or establish new ones. However, as an independent project its own goal would be much broader: to help war-affected communities with recovery and reconstruction. Part of this effort would be training and helping young people, some of them ex-combatants, to play a productive role in this recovery and reconstruction, and by doing so, help them to reintegrate. Its emphasis would be on helping the communities that have suffered from armed violence and insecurity, rather than providing special assistance to the ex-combatants who were in some cases responsible for these acts of violence.

3.4.28 Track Two is fundamentally different from Track One. It has an entirely different, though related, objective. It operates on a much longer time scale. If it is to be successful, it will be more costly. It also requires different skills and facilities. The messages it conveys to the population are different, too. Finally, the stakeholders involved are not the same. Military and police officers will not have a major role to play here, but rather community leaders, development agencies, civil society groups, engineers, teachers, doctors and ministers. The success of the undertaking may strongly depend on the involvement of women, including wives, mothers and victims of ex-combatants.

3.4.29 UNDP has for several years now been combining efforts to improve security with efforts to promote development. Increasingly, it has engaged in hybrid projects that use development initiatives (e.g. public works and micro-enterprise schemes) to support security objectives like the collection of weapons or the reintegration of ex-

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<sup>5</sup> Demobilisation was not an objective of the IOM-UNDP programme because that would have required disbanding the militias in an organised fashion, which was not possible. However, the programme actually was instrumental in demobilising thousands of militia members in the sense that they were induced to leave militia life and take up peaceful civilian pursuits

combatants. It may want to consider the approach we have just described, which regards disarmament and development projects as separate and autonomous, but coordinated and mutually dependent efforts.

3.4.30 The UNDP is a logical institutional home for such interaction between projects, particularly as it is the leading UN body for the implementation of small arms reduction and control projects. In Congo, when the Reintegration and Disarmament project was thwarted by politics and insufficient funds, at least there was an ongoing project (*Action Communautaire*) dealing with recovery and reconstruction, and offering some opportunities to ex-combatants, which could in some ways continue the work of the project that was cut short.

## **4. The impact of the project on poverty reduction**

### **4.1 Summary**

4.1.1 Much of the discussion above relates implicitly to aspects of poverty; safety and security under the disarmament section, and reintegration in general. The project did not explicitly address poverty, but as has been shown above, many of its impacts, both intended and unintended, offer valuable pointers regarding the relationship between DDR-type interventions and poverty reduction. The following section will take a closer look at poverty, initially in terms of the target group, as this was a deliberately and highly focused intervention, and then drawing out lessons more broadly, in terms of the Millennium Development Goals.

### **4.2 The target group**

4.2.1 In terms of target group selection, the project clearly focussed on what it saw as the most dangerous elements of the militia groups (Ninja, Cocoye and Cobra). The most dangerous were judged to be the able-bodied youth elements (predominantly male) posing a particular risk to the peace process. They were leaders within their militia units, who were identified by the project in consultation with militia group leaders and others. We repeatedly questioned ex-project staff about how the definition of “dangerous” was applied to beneficiary selection; this element of the project has not been fully tested and measured. Given the time and resources to address this, it would be ideal to make the ex-combatant identification link with a community-based system of participatory monitoring and evaluation, to ensure that the right people were being targeted and accessed.

4.2.2 It is difficult to assess what the target group would look like in terms of poverty profiling, as there is so little data on poverty for the Congo in general, or in terms of militia members in particular. It is therefore impossible to comment in depth on how poor the target group were in relation to the militia membership in general, or indeed to Congo as a whole. The project database however does provide some clues to such an exercise. Data was collected on age, schooling, experience and access to employment opportunities post-war. The profile of the beneficiaries was as follows: the majority were between 25 and 35 and most had received secondary schooling level. For most, their years in the militia were their only professional experience. All project beneficiaries had to prove that they did not have access to any other employment opportunities in order to qualify. In summary, they were largely educated young men with little prospect of employment.

4.2.3 It is therefore difficult to state exactly what kind of direct poverty impact the project had, and continues to have, as data collection has been limited in terms of measuring change in livelihoods, and in terms of the short timeframe in which it was collected. However, it seems safe to say that the livelihoods of a significant proportion of the 8019 direct beneficiaries were significantly affected by the project, both economically and socially. The CDEP evaluation of 2002 stated that of the successful micro-enterprises, some 35% were employing additional staff. Therefore the project effects were not just on the direct beneficiaries, but also on members of their social networks (families and beyond), through both employment creation, and through the shared benefits of enterprise profits.

4.2.4 Even bearing in mind the limitations of the training provided, the skill enhancement of the target group would have also had a direct poverty impact, giving the beneficiaries access to other opportunities and ideas beyond the life of the gun in the militias. In addition, the point raised in section 3.4.15 above is important; it is critical to look at the interface between micro-enterprise success or failure and reintegration success or failure, as there is not necessarily a simple correlation between the two.

4.2.5 The project aimed to increase security and stability for Congolese society as a whole; therefore the wider project “beneficiary group” was a societal one. This is at the heart of the project purpose and is essentially about providing the pre-conditions for development (and ideally poverty-focused development). From the range of project reviews highlighted in the previous sections of the report, it appears that the project made some contribution in this area. Perhaps its greatest contribution was in the very visible nature of the intervention, proving at a critical moment in the peace process that it was possible to disarm ex-combatants and publicly destroy their weapons, and offer them an alternative means of livelihood. This high profile “demonstration effect” is difficult to measure, but seems to be one of the most obvious areas of success.

### **4.3 The project and the Millennium Development Goals**

4.3.1 As can be seen in table 3.4 presented below; the project did not explicitly address any of the MDGs. The point of the table is not to judge the project in these terms, but merely to highlight areas of interest and potential opportunity. Within the project, there were plans to address HIV/AIDs to some extent through training and sensitisation, which did not materialise. Linkages with the broader *Action Communautaire* project resulted in some coverage of health and education issues.

4.3.2 The table highlights the key point that a focussed intervention such as this one should ideally be followed by wider, longer term, sectorally focussed projects for everyone; moving away from the ex-combatant focus into the realm of development for entire communities. This would lift the pressure on the project, for example in terms of dealing with micro-enterprise issues in more depth. It could be linked to a broader income generation and micro-credit initiative, which could provide the requisite, specific skills to ensure that the success of the micro-enterprises is sustained and supported.

4.3.3 Therefore it seems clear that a reintegration and disarmament project can start the process of economic reintegration, but link to other processes that will see it

through. The elements of social reintegration need to be carefully considered within a reintegration and disarmament project in terms of power dynamics (such as within micro-enterprises), and more broadly in terms of interaction with communities to whom the ex-combatants are returning. This latter point is related to a whole range of issues regarding disarmament, disease, and the rebuilding of social capital. Taking these in turn; awareness raising activity can focus on the dangers of keeping weapons within communities, and be targeted to different interest groups; the ex-combatants themselves, wives and families who live with the dangers of holding weapons in the home, and children in schools. In terms of disease, and HIV/AIDs in particular, similarly a range of target groups need to be addressed in different ways. Ex-combatants should be able to access advice and information, as should their communities. Social capital involves a multiplicity of different issues that no single project can address alone, let alone a rapid and focused disarmament and reintegration initiative.

<b>4.3.4 Looking at the project through the lens of the MDGs</b>		
	Stated in project documents.	Reviewer observations and deductions
Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	No	The project probably made small direct contributions to reducing poverty in various ways: employment generation within and beyond primary beneficiary group the reintegration of other ex-militia members in rehabilitation, reconstruction and training programmes through 'Action Communautaire' (AC) initiatives the settling of IDPs through the project's stabilisation effect.
Achieve universal primary education	No	Indirectly the project benefited primary education through the associated AC programme, which has reconstructed schools.
Promote gender equality and empower women	No	A missed opportunity here in terms of encouraging disarmament through specifically targeting women, to encourage family members to disarm.
Reduce child mortality	No	Indirectly the project benefited health infrastructure through the associated AC programme, which has reconstructed clinics.
Improve maternal health	No	As above.
Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	Yes	The project attempted to address HIV/AIDS issues in its second phase, but failed to carry out the plans, though it recognised that dealing with HIV/AIDS and other STDs is a critical element of demobilisation and reintegration, both for ex-combatants and the communities to which they return.
Ensure environmental sustainability	No	Possible contribution to reduction in poaching.
Develop a global partnership for development	No	Indirect effects include the wide-ranging and intensive project fund raising highlighting the problems of the RoC within the international community. This project (and the associated AC) enhanced the co-operation between development agencies in the RoC.

## 5. Identifying indicators for measuring change

### 5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A detailed breakdown of indicators used for the project, and the review comments and suggestions are included in Annex 4. In summary, the indicators used for the project were limited in scope, and were not systematically monitored and measured, either on a regular basis, or by external reviews and evaluations. Ultimately, the key measurements for this project (as with many others of its type) repeatedly return to the quantitative: number of small weapons collected and number of beneficiaries receiving assistance, and micro-enterprises established and successful. The qualitative indicators are limited, making it difficult to capture and reflect the key elements of project process, and many of its actual impacts. There has been an attempt to capture much of the rich detail of the project within Annex 4.

### 5.2 Key issues

5.2.1 In terms of over-arching issues regarding indicator development for this kind of initiative there are three points to highlight:

- a) Most important of all in terms of project design, including the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, is *who decides what will signify a successful project*. In ideal conditions, when there is time and money to do so, a participatory M&E structure will be put in place. This is of particular importance when the project is involved with community dynamics around aspects of reintegration. The communities should be defining indicators that will really show whether reintegration is taking place, and in this particular instance, whether the targeting of dangerous ex-combatants has been effective, or whether others have captured the project processes.
- b) It is fundamental to try and measure the project impact on the differences between ‘feeling safe’ and ‘being safe’. This would capture the reality and the perception (which are often very different); and capturing both is critical with a project such as this, which has at its heart the primacy of peace and the maintenance of security. Capturing the ‘feeling safe’ element in some ways is more important than capturing the ‘being safe’. Great caution is required when making inferences about the impact of weapons collection on the actual risk of armed violence. It is often unclear exactly how the removal of a few thousand weapons and pieces of unexploded ordnance is expected to reduce the deliberate misuse of arms, especially as people who give up weapons voluntarily must generally be assumed to be of good will. While there in principle are good indicators for the incidence of deliberate gun violence (e.g. hospital gunshot casualty statistics), the more fundamental question is whether any change in such variables can be attributed to weapons collection. In terms of capturing the elements of “feeling safe” gender differences are particularly important and instructive. Potential indicators are women’s willingness to travel or go out at night. In summary, it seems more likely that voluntary weapons collection programmes make people feel safer than that they actually increase people’s safety.
- c) If the primary contributions of such disarmament and reintegration projects are about safety and security and the resulting environment in which development can take place, then economic indicators which measure confidence (locally,

regionally, and internationally) in terms of trade are important. Depending on the scale of the project and the order of magnitude of its likely impact, encapsulating elements of trade and mobility is at the heart of showing whether there is a return to pre-conflict normality. This is an area in which the baseline information of activity immediately post-conflict could be compared to pre-conflict times.

- d) It is important to measure the extent of arms destruction within a project, understanding that public destruction ceremonies have an impact on the communities as audiences; contributing to the transparency of disarmament processes, confidence in the agencies carrying out these processes, and knowing that those weapons will not go back into circulation to contribute to levels of violence.
- e) It is necessary to measure qualitative linkages between such a project and other broader development initiatives in the deliberate attempt to show the limitations and boundaries of the small arms reduction initiative, and link this into other processes.

## 6. Analysing the project against DAC criteria

	<b>In relation to the project's own goals</b>	<b>In relation to poverty reduction</b>
Relevance	Highly relevant immediately post conflict activity, as prioritised by the Government of Congo's Comité de Suivi.	The project was not explicitly set within a poverty–reduction context; nor was its target group selected by this criterion. However, in its contribution to the maintenance of stability (a pre-condition for much of the required national development, and related poverty reduction), it is deemed successful.
Sustainability	Project not ambitious in terms of sustainability; it aimed to reduce potential for return to widespread violence, and was regarded as an emergency intervention.	Elements of project activity surprisingly sustainable in terms of the micro-enterprise component, both considering individual enterprise survival rate (66% in 2002), and in terms of the model of reintegration developed, elements of which continue to be implemented by the High Commission for the Reintegration of Ex-combatants (HC). However, the micro-enterprise work could have been better supported and structured in terms of sustainability and poverty reduction, from several perspectives, including a stronger focus on empowerment within the enterprise groups, stronger basic monitoring and support for the emergent groups including more effective training, and in the longer term, taking forward the micro-credit element, to ensure that the more successful of the enterprises could access credit for further expansion (and potential increase in job creation). Linkages with the AC programme of UNDP continue to address some of the broader reintegration issues particularly because of the AC general community focus, rather than explicit ex-combatant focus of the project. The sustainability of disarmament is extremely difficult to measure, particularly when the project ended prematurely and there were many more ex-combatants registered to disarm, some of who are clearly still waiting for a similar intervention.
Impact	Immediate impact high in countering the potential threat of the most dangerous ex-combatants.	Direct poverty impact limited; project not aiming at this goal. Some small-scale impact in terms of job creation through enterprises, and increasingly overt linkages with AC programme.
Effectiveness	The project was extremely effective in terms of its own aims in the first phase, resulting in a significant increase in target numbers of ex-combatants and arms. These latter targets could not be met due to funding shortfalls and political dynamics regarding the setting up of the new government body, the HC.	The project revealed some surprising results in terms of potential areas upon which to expand in longer-term poverty reduction initiatives. Lessons can be drawn out about micro-enterprise development (which could be overtly poverty focused in another intervention), and about activities to tackle disarmament in a more community-focused way; such as looking at leverage through traditional authorities and women's groups.

## 7. Conclusions

7.1 Is the Republic of Congo still living in a period of post-conflict transition, and therefore urgently in need of peace-building, or has it passed that stage, and should the focus now be on development efforts? Well-informed sources in Brazzaville gave us conflicting answers to this question. It is hard to decide which answer is correct, first because reliable information is difficult to obtain and interpret, and second because the way people answer the question depends not only on their understanding of the situation, but also on their interests. Depending on the kind of venture for which they hope to attract attention and funding, they will be tempted to stress the importance of either peace-building or development.

7.2 Probably, there is a legitimate need for both. The threat of a return to armed violence is not negligible. Masses of frustrated young people with little to lose are easily manipulated by political factions competing for access to the country's oil riches. Responsible political leadership, power-sharing, disbanding the militias, reforming the army and removing of the tools of violence from society can all contribute to stability and confidence. These will in turn enable poverty reduction through the growth of jobs, investment, trade and production. In large parts of the country, mainstream development work can be undertaken. In several places, it is already underway. Of course, increased opportunities for income generation, social development and political participation are likely to favour stability and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

7.3 We believe that there is still a need, and an opportunity, to reduce the risk and incidence of armed violence in society, to reduce the likelihood of slipping back into militia warfare and to combat banditry. This will, we are convinced, benefit poverty reduction in various ways, which are in some cases difficult to predict.

7.4 In a post-conflict situation, the most obvious and pressing need is to restore the country to normality in terms of infrastructure, services and mobility of people and goods. Security and stability are prerequisites, helping to provide the 'enabling environment' for development and poverty reduction. The project under review here helped to enhance and maintain the reduction of tension following the signing of the Peace Accords in Congo in 1999.

7.5 The project should be considered a success as a rapid response to a dangerous and fragile security situation. It was well targeted to impact heavily on those most likely to commit or instigate violence, and therefore a contributory factor to maintaining the peace. Due to developments beyond its control, it could not extend its impact as planned in terms of scale of disarmament and reintegration activity.

7.6 It became a focal point for many ex-combatants looking for a way to disarm safely (i.e. without fear of retribution), and/or in search of wider opportunities beyond the violence and insecurity of the militia life. The project offered ex-combatants the opportunity to set up their own businesses, which clearly helped to reduce their poverty and that of their dependants. It seems safe to say that a significant percentage of the project beneficiaries were successfully diverted away from violence. The impact of the project therefore is multi-layered: affecting the lives of the beneficiaries fundamentally, enhancing or even saving the lives of people who might have fallen

victim to acts of violence committed by fighters or ex-fighters, and in general contributing to a general feeling of increased safety and security.

7.7 The project's contribution to the reduction of armed violence is difficult to measure. Its targets relate to numbers of weapons collected, which give no real indication of its contribution to reducing armed violence, partly due to the sheer quantity of estimated weapons in circulation in Congo, but also due to the fact that many ex-combatants appear to have given in a single weapon, and stored others for later use as a tool of violence or as merchandise. The correlation of armed violence with weapons collection is difficult to draw with any accuracy. Although attempts were made to look at gunshot wound statistics and police records, neither of the two attempts enable us to confidently say that the project helped to reduce the incidence of armed violence. What seems to be more important is the effect that the project had on diverting youths away from the life of the gun, offering them an alternative livelihood. Direct beneficiaries numbered in their thousands, but the impact of this in terms of demonstrating to others that there were viable alternatives may have been much greater.

7.8 Though the reintegration activity was limited in its approach and imperfect in its execution, the success rate of the micro-enterprises was surprising. This is important both in terms of the individuals directly benefiting (and their wider networks of dependants), and in terms of demonstrating growth and opportunity post conflict. Thus the direct economic poverty reduction element was limited in scope, and most beneficiaries did not belong to the poorest segments of society, but the broader impact of the work was positive. Linkages of the project with the *Action Communautaire* programme were well conceived in terms of addressing the needs of both ex-combatants and the victims of the war on a community level.

7.9 The overall picture is therefore a mixed and interesting one which does not radiate success through a poverty reduction lens, but which nevertheless has important lessons to draw upon.

### ***Issues and opportunities***

7.10 A key issue defined by the reviewers was the nature of a 'hybrid' small arms project, which touches on long term development issues in insufficient depth, under the immediate and very clear pressure to achieve specific disarmament and limited reintegration objectives. This conflation of very complex processes in a very short timeframe was dealt with to some degree by the structural linkages between the project and the UNDP AC programme; a sensible and practical alliance of parallel and complementary activities. However, the marrying of very different objectives in such a project leaves many questions unanswered and processes unfinished. The surprising success of the micro-enterprise element of reintegration could not be properly supported and followed through, which is very unfortunate in the context of poverty reduction, particularly in terms of analysing why specific enterprises had worked, and others failed. There appear to be considerable opportunities in terms of taking this type of work forward, making it more poverty-centric in both design and implementation, and supporting it on a scale that could have considerable impact on the unemployed youth of Congo.

7.11 In terms of opportunities, the project was highly innovative and responsive in terms of setting up an informal, decentralised disarmament process (there were no camps, no peacekeepers, and no coercion to disarm) through the application of a simple mechanism of giving priority access to the project benefits to those who turned in weapons. Through a very simple process, with a low overhead, the cost of getting an individual into economic activity, and collecting and destroying that individual's weapon was less than US\$500 per person. This equates to a small amount of money for a high impact in terms of security, and potentially, sustainable poverty reduction.

### ***Lessons learned***

- In some post-conflict conditions, it is possible and maybe necessary to consider an approach to DD&R that does not rely on peacekeepers, camps and coercion, which is the more conventional approach.
- In such a decentralized approach, the role of community organizations, civil society and development and relief agencies, often underrated in DD&R projects, becomes even more important.
- Such an approach is potentially less costly than the conventional one.
- It may not be most effective to carry out disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in a single hybrid project, as the first two elements have requirements that are very different from the third.
- Instead, consider the possibility of having separate, but connected efforts. It may be more effective to keep SALW interventions highly focussed, with the explicit aim of linking them to other initiatives, like reintegration, which deal with the longer-term development issues.
- Even with focussed SALW interventions, development expertise should be sought at the design stage to inform SALW experts about potential impacts of specific activities, or suggest key linkage points as outlined above.
- By the same token, the evaluation of SALW projects should include development expertise, even if the project has been highly focused and specialised. As in the design stage, this will offer a different perspective.
- The definition of 'reintegration' in such programmes needs to be very carefully considered, balancing a focus on the individual ex-combatant with the needs of the communities to which he/she returns, and carefully considering psycho-social dimensions. When reintegration focuses on a single area of activity such as micro-enterprise development, other processes need to be considered and covered, possibly by other programmes. How far SALW interventions should go in terms of reintegration links to the first bullet point mentioned above. Perhaps immediate diversionary activity (as micro-enterprise was envisaged for this project) should be considered as pilot work, to be followed up and supported by longer term interventions.

- The institutional home of SALW projects is critical. In this instance, UNDP/IOM seemed to play a very valuable neutral role in a highly charged political environment, particularly when considering that government forces were connected to one of the three main warring militia groups. UNDP could therefore 'broker' disarmament activity in a way that probably few other agencies could.

## Annex 1

### MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS – REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Republic of Congo Country Profile				
Click on the indicator to view a definition	1990	1995	2001	2002
<b>1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</b>	<i>2015 target = halve 1990 \$1 a day poverty and malnutrition rates</i>			
<a href="#">Population below \$1 a day (%)</a>	..	..	..	..
<a href="#">Poverty gap at \$1 a day (%)</a>	..	..	..	..
<a href="#">Percentage share of income or consumption held by poorest 20%</a>	..	..	..	..
<a href="#">Prevalence of child malnutrition (% of children under 5)</a>	..	..	..	..
<a href="#">Population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (%)</a>	37.0	..	32.0	..
<b>2 Achieve universal primary education</b>	<i>2015 target = net enrollment to 100</i>			
<a href="#">Net primary enrolment ratio (% of relevant age group)</a>	..	..	..	..
<a href="#">Percentage of cohort reaching grade 5 (%)</a>	62.3	55.1	..	..
<a href="#">Youth literacy rate (% ages 15-24)</a>	92.5	95.6	97.6	97.8
<b>3 Promote gender equality</b>	<i>2005 target = education ratio to 100</i>			
<a href="#">Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education (%)</a>	87.5	86.7	89.1	..
<a href="#">Ratio of young literate females to males (% ages 15-24)</a>	95.2	97.6	98.7	98.8
<a href="#">Share of women employed in the non-agricultural sector (%)</a>	..	..	..	..
<a href="#">Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (%)</a>	14.0	2.0	12.0	12.0
<b>4 Reduce child mortality</b>	<i>2015 target = reduce 1990 under 5 mortality by two-thirds</i>			
<a href="#">Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000)</a>	110.0	108.0	108.0	..
<a href="#">Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)</a>	83.0	81.0	81.0	75.0

<a href="#">Immunization, measles (% of children under 12 months)</a>	75.0	38.0	35.0	..
<b>5 Improve maternal health</b>				
<a href="#">Maternal mortality ratio (modelled estimate, per 100,000 live births)</a>	..	1,100.0	..	..
<a href="#">Births attended by skilled health staff (% of total)</a>	..	..	..	..
<b>6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</b>				
<a href="#">Prevalence of HIV, female (% ages 15-24)</a>	..	..	7.8	..
<a href="#">Contraceptive prevalence rate (% of women ages 15-49)</a>	..	..	..	..
<a href="#">Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS</a>	..	..	78,000.0	..
<a href="#">Incidence of tuberculosis (per 100,000 people)</a>	..	..	338.2	..
<a href="#">Tuberculosis cases detected under DOTS (%)</a>	..	79.0	97.0	..
<b>7 Ensure environmental sustainability</b>				
<a href="#">Forest area (% of total land area)</a>	65.1	..	64.6	..
<a href="#">Nationally protected areas (% of total land area)</a>	..	4.5	4.5	5.0
<a href="#">GDP per unit of energy use (PPP \$ per kg oil equivalent)</a>	1.7	2.7	3.3	..
<a href="#">CO2 emissions (metric tons per capita)</a>	0.9	0.7	0.8	..
<a href="#">Access to an improved water source (% of population)</a>	..	..	51.0	..
<a href="#">Access to improved sanitation (% of population)</a>	..	..	14.0	..
<a href="#">Access to secure tenure (% of population)</a>	..	..	..	..
<b>8 Develop a Global Partnership for Development</b>				
<a href="#">Youth unemployment rate (% of total labour force ages 15-24)</a>	..	..	..	..
<a href="#">Fixed line and mobile telephones (per 1,000 people)</a>	..	8.6	55.3	..
<a href="#">Personal computers (per 1,000 people)</a>	..	..	3.9	..
<b>General indicators</b>				
<a href="#">Population</a>	2.2 million	2.6 million	3.1 million	3.2 million

2015 target = reduce 1990 maternal mortality by three-fourths

2015 target = halt, and begin to reverse, AIDS, etc.

2015 target = various (see notes)

2015 target = various (see notes)

<u>Gross national income (\$)</u>	2.2 billion	1.7 billion	2.0 billion	2.2 billion
<u>GNI per capita (\$)</u>	980.0	630.0	650.0	700.0
<u>Adult literacy rate (% of people ages 15 and over)</u>	67.1	74.4	81.8	82.8
<u>Total fertility rate (births per woman)</u>	6.3	6.3	5.9	5.8
<u>Life expectancy at birth (years)</u>	51.2	51.0	51.5	51.6
<u>Aid (% of GNI)</u>	9.4	7.3	3.8	..
<u>External debt (% of GNI)</u>	212.9	349.9	230.1	..
<u>Investment (% of GDP)</u>	15.9	36.6	26.8	26.3
<u>Trade (% of GDP)</u>	99.5	128.3	132.7	126.8

**Source:** *World Development Indicators database, April 2002*

**Note:** In some cases the data are for earlier or later years than those stated.

**Goal 1 targets:** Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

**Goal 2 target:** Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

**Goal 3 target:** Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015.

**Goal 4 target:** Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.

**Goal 5 target:** Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.

**Goal 6 targets:** Have halted by 2015, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS. Have halted by 2015, and begun to reverse, the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

**Goal 7 targets:** Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources. Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water. By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

**Goal 8 targets:** Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. Address the

**Special Needs of the Least Developed Countries. Address the Special Needs of landlocked countries and small island developing states. Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term. In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth. In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries. In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.**

Source: [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

## Annex 2: Documentation reviewed

### Documentation related specifically to the project

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Demetriou et al., 2002. Spyros Demetriou, Robert Muggah and Ian Biddle. *Small Arms Availability, Trade and Impacts in the Republic of Congo*. Geneva, Small Arms Survey, April. Special Report.

IOM-UNDP, 2000. *Programme de réinsertion des ex-combattants et de ramassage des armes légères, Rapport à la Division d'Urgence du PNUD, Bilan 2000/Perspectives 2001*. Brazzaville

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UNDP, 2002. *Guerres, et Après? Rapport National sur le Développement Humain 2002, République du Congo*. Brazzaville, January

UNICEF, 2003. UNICEF. *Programme de Coopération 2004-08, Plan Cadre des Opérations*. Brazzaville, November

United Nations, 2002. *Plan 2003-04 Forward... Republic of Congo*. Brazzaville

*The World Bank, 1996. The World Bank. Congo Poverty Assessment. December*

### Annex 3: List of persons met in Congo

Name and Title	Organisation
Aurélien Agboninci, Resident Representative	UNDP
Jacques Bandelier, Deputy Resident Representative	UNDP
Hilly-Anne Fumey, Project Manager, Action Communautaire	UNDP
Gilbert Mbougou, Assistant aux Opérations	IOM
Dominique Kenga, Chargé de Projets, Action Communautaire, Brazzaville	UNDP
Makiti Fernand, Chauffeur, Action Communautaire, Antenne de Dolisie	UNDP
Michel Mitsingou, ex IOM Projet, Antenne de Dolisie	Ex UNDP
Emmanuel Akouelakoum	Commissariat General du Comité de Suivi
Commissaire Ngouari	Commissariat General du Comité de Suivi
Joseph Mbossa, Directeur du Cabinet	Haut Commissariat a la Réinsertion des Ex-Combattants
Marius Biyekele, Administrateur de la Rehabilitation Psychosociale	UNICEF
Dr A Latifou Salami, Coordonnateur des Programmes	UNICEF
M. Moitaya	Ministère des Affaires Sociales
Amadou Ouattara, Representant	FAO
B. J. Moyo	FAO
General Mokoki	Gendarmerie Nationale
Clémentine Malanda Goma, Administrateur en chef des SAF	Secrétaire General, Ministère de l'Administration du Territoire et de la Décentralisation, Departement du Niari
Arild Birkenes, Information Officer	IDP Project, Norwegian Refugee Council
Paul Foreman, Chef de Mission	Artsen zonder Grenzen (Médecins sans Frontières, the Netherlands)
Karl Rawert, Premier Secrétaire	EU Delegation
Axel Piers, Expert à la Coopération	EU Delegation
Willy Marcus, Charge d'Affaires	Belgian Embassy
Gaetano La Piana, Ambassador	Italian Embassy
Colonel Jean-Bruno Vautrety, Attache de Defense	French Embassy
Etienne de Souza, Premier Secrétaire	French Embassy
Clarisse	CDEP sarl

**Annex 4: FINDINGS and AREAS OF INVESTIGATION FOR INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT**

(Disaggregate all findings by sex. Disaggregate by age where appropriate)	FINDINGS	Indicators stated either explicitly or implicitly and comment on usability	Draw out possible indicators from your analysis of the project.
Small Arms and Light Weapons	Numbers collected From late 2000 until late 2002, 3,106 small arms and light weapons, 8,034 pieces of unexploded ordnance and 67 544 rounds of ammunition.	The original target for weapons collection was 5,000. The figure was later raised to 20,000. The project documents focus entirely on firearms and do not mention ammunition and explosives. All these items can be important to target, but they represent different kinds of hazards. Indicators need to be more specific about the items to be removed.	The removal and destruction of unexploded ordnance was not originally envisaged. Its removal is less important to reducing the fighting capacity of militias than small arms and their ammunition, but very important to the prevention of safety risks.
		The project only accepted operational weapons. No further information on usability.  “Fewer and fewer sounds of gunshot heard in urban hot spots and former combat areas.” There is evidence to suggest that this objective was attained.	

Extent of reduction of arms	According to a report on the ROC by the Small Arms Survey, the three militias targeted by the project in 1999 held 69,000 small arms. Of these, some 3,100 or 4% to 5% were collected. While the SAS estimate is rough, it seems clear that only a very small part of the weaponry was removed.	The original document gives as an indicator a reduction of the number of SALW in circulation and held by unauthorized persons. This goal was probably attained.  A later document of the project gives as an indicator: "Number of unauthorized small arms in the hands of private citizens is significantly reduced (more than 50% in the programme areas)." This was almost certainly not attained.	In our opinion, the extent of the reduction is more significant than the absolute number collected. However, much more important than these is the impact of weapons collection on public security, both in terms of actual risks and in terms of perceived risks (see below).
Enforcement of regulation	No	None	The enforcement of laws and other regulations on the private possession of weaponry is extremely important to the prevention of proliferation and abuse. It was not considered in this project. Weapons control is very weak in ROC.
Trade in arms, cross border security	No	None	The SAS report (which was a product of the project) on the ROC mentions various flows of SALW into the country, especially from the DRC.
Other	All collected items were destroyed	None	Unlike many other weapons collection projects, this one destroyed all the arms and explosives it collected. This is not only important because it prevents the items from ever being used in anger, or causing accidental damage. It is also a clear signal to the people who hand in weapons that they have no reason to fear the arms will be used against them. Finally, it is a powerful symbol of peace building.
Security & governance			

Increasing levels of trust in state security systems (police, army, government)	None	None	None	Highly desirable, but extremely difficult to attain at the moment in the ROC
Reduction in human rights abuses: i) by state institutions ii) by other actors	None	None	None “At the end of the project, reports of rape, theft and murder have decreased by half compared with the year 2000.” While no data are available, it is virtually certain that this was not attained.	It is not entirely clear why collecting weapons from private persons should lead to a decline in violations of human rights by state authorities. As to other actors, it would be highly desirable to ascertain whether weapons removal changes the incidence and the nature of domestic violence.
Extent to which institutions (civil and/or state) respond to human rights abuses: i) Within communities ii) Other (e.g. legislative response, judicial response)	None	None	None	No
Extent to which alternative dispute/conflict resolution mechanisms successfully embraced by target group	None	None	None	No
Extent to which project has contributed to cultural change in arms possession	None	None	None	This is an important indicator to be measured by polls and surveys.

<p>Security (feeling safe and being safe)</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Feeling safe: Nothing Being safe:                  “At the end of the project, reports of rape, theft and murder have decreased by half compared with the year 2000.” While no data are available, it is virtually certain that this was not attained.                  “Reduction of banditry and other forms of criminal extortion.” The project may have achieved something in this regard, but no data are available.                  “Reduction in the number of violent crimes committed with SALW”. The project may have achieved something in this regard, but no data are available.                  “Fewer and fewer sounds of gunshot heard in urban hot spots and former combat areas.” There is evidence to suggest that this objective was attained.                  “Fewer and fewer reports of crimes committed with firearms made to police and gendarmerie stations.” No data. Project may have made a contribution here.</p>	<p>Feeling safe: Polls are the obvious way to seek information on changes in perceptions of insecurity. Here gender differences are particularly important and instructive. Potential indicators are women’s willingness to travel or go out at night.                  Being safe: Great caution is required when making inferences about the impact of weapons collection on the actual risk of armed violence. It is often unclear exactly how the removal of a few thousand weapons and pieces on unexploded ordnance is expected to reduce the deliberate misuse of arms, especially as people who give up weapons voluntarily must generally be assumed to be of good will. While it is not difficult to find good indicators for the incidence of deliberate gun violence (e.g. hospital gunshot casualty statistics), the more fundamental question is whether any change in such variables can be attributed to weapons collection.                  It seems more likely that voluntary weapons collection programmes make people feel safer than that they actually increase people’s safety.</p>
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Socio-economic				
Investment strategies / economic decision making of government in project area	None	None	None	None
Investment strategies / economic decision making of private sector in area	None	None	None	None
Investment strategies / economic decision making for family livelihoods strategies in area	Project focused increasingly overtly on individual livelihood strategies (rather than group or family) through creation of micro-enterprises. The project will certainly have affected family livelihood strategies, though no data on this is available.	Not measured	Not measured	Surveying families on the diversity of, and changes in, economic activity, such as innovation in the range of crop species grown, and the longevity of the harvesting cycle.
Ability to freely undertake livelihood activities	Militia activity severely restricted movement of goods and people, particularly banditry on roads.	None	None	Measuring changing incidence of banditry on key routes.
Access to markets/trade	War activity destroyed physical infrastructure such as roads and railway.	None	None	Changing speed and predictability of transport.
Ability to move around freely (mobility of all community members)	None	Not measured	Not measured	This is a good indicator for measuring perceptions of safety.

<p>Social capital (developing networks, collective action and institutional linkages and trust of others)</p>	<p>In some ways the project actively discouraged the revitalisation of social capital in terms of trying to prevent the recreation of military power structures within individual micro-enterprises: the breaking of lines of command and military dependence was regarded as paramount in the context.</p> <p>While this is understandable and legitimate, it probably had some shortcomings. It made economies of scale difficult to attain, as collective micro projects were limited to a maximum of five members. Besides, networking between enterprises was not encouraged. Finally, in terms of reintegration back into communities, the project did very little in terms of the recipient communities.</p>	<p>In the revised version of the logframe, “50% of community leaders and non-combatants view ex-combatants as useful members of communities”. It is unclear whether internal project monitoring ever measured this indicator.</p>	<p>An evaluation carried out on the micro-enterprise element of the project proposed, and used, a series of indicators to measure whether reintegration had taken place successfully, including a number related to social capital, such as marriage, networks (social, sport and church related), some of which could be useful in attempting to gauge the extent of reintegration and (re-)emergence of social capital, depending upon the cultural context.</p>
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<p>Extent to which project empowers the poor</p>	<p>The project was not poverty-focused, but it is possible to make a comment on the empowerment element of the activity. Within the micro-enterprises it is clear that power dynamics emerged, most pronounced in terms of the dominance of the project “promoter” or leader for group enterprises. The project saw these dynamics in terms of the threat of militia group re-emergence and increasingly focused on individuals as a result. However, an element of power dynamics is present in all group formation, and this could have been countered by a much stronger focus on the empowerment of all group members, rather than the reliance on a single promoter to share information freely with others in the group.</p>	<p>Not measured.</p>	<p>It would be necessary to look at indicators of awareness and understanding of the rights of the individual within a group enterprise, and measure the incidence of asserting those rights.</p>
<p>Impact of violent conflict on education (including access to relevant infrastructure) and ways project addresses this</p>	<p>Significant impact in terms of infrastructural damage. Project addressed partially through inclusion of ex-combatants in parallel AC programme high labour intensive community reconstruction activity, including schools.</p>	<p>Not measured</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Impact of violent conflict on health, including HIV/AIDS and ways project addresses this (including access to relevant infrastructure)</p>	<p>Again, significant impact in terms of infrastructure, both in terms of health clinics and in terms of increased journey times to clinics due to road quality and accessibility (banditry related). Project addressed partially as above in relation to AC activity. HIV/AIDS not addressed separately, though this was intended.</p>	<p>Not measured, though there was an indicator in later project documents, “all registered ex-combatants have received at least one day training on human rights and one day training on AIDS/STD prevention”.</p>	<p>Incidence of HIV/AIDS among sample of ex-combatants should be possible to measure, especially if part of standard health check during demobilisation. Similarly, incidence of HIV/AIDS, or other STDs could be measured around militia camps/bases. Merely calculating the proportion of ex-combatants have received a short training does not begin to address the HIV/AIDS issue.</p>

<p>Impact of violent conflict on child mortality and ways project addresses this</p>	<p>Not addressed by the project. Incidence of the phenomenon of child soldiers seemingly relatively low in comparison with other West African conflict zones.</p>	<p>Not measured.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Impact of violent conflict on the environment and ways project addresses this</p>	<p>Not addressed by the project, and difficult to address in such a short time span.</p>	<p>Not measured.</p>	<p>It may be possible to look at the incidence of poaching using SALW, as opposed to more traditional hunting methods.</p>
<p>Process (Design) Extent to which primary target group have been involved throughout the project (design, implementation, evaluation).</p>	<p>No involvement of primary target group in design (though this would have been extremely difficult to achieve and should not be considered a negative feature of the project). Implementation and evaluation were not particularly participatory; more could have been done to develop a participatory M&amp;E system (PM&amp;E) for the project, focused on reintegration.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Measuring the degree to which reintegration is being achieved depends to a large extent on well-developed PM&amp;E, in which the target groups define and design indicators for re-integration. A project evaluation carried out in 2001 (updated 2002) attempted to gauge the impact of the micro-enterprise work, but using externally imposed criteria.</p>
<p>Extent and depth to which formal and non-formal authorities have been identified and consulted in the design and implementation</p>	<p>Implementation issue for the project, which in this case relates to understanding the interaction between militias and traditional authorities; this is unclear from project documentation.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Could again be part of PM&amp;E design process to set indicators.</p>

<p>Differentiation between men, women, children in definition of needs and roles and the extent to which these are addressed</p>	<p>No gender differentiation although primary target group 98% male. Age differentiation considered throughout the project in terms of maintaining clarity of target group and gauging extent of threat posed. More could have been done in terms of gendered understanding and approaches in terms of aspects of reintegration, and possibly encouraging disarmament through targeting men and women separately in awareness raising.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Measure gender and age sensitivity through assessment of range and type of differentiated activities; survey of interest groups by category to illicit whether interests fully reflected.</p>
<p>Degree for establishment of partnership / coordination between stakeholders and initiatives</p>	<p>High degree of co-ordination between donors and Comite de Suivi</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Degree to which project activity subsumed into governmental/other stakeholder activity in the longer term – key element of measuring sustainability. Are there clear pathways mapping out how activity will be sustained beyond the life of the project? By whom?</p>
<p>Extent to which target group was selected on basis of clear and transparent criteria agreed by all affected parties</p>	<p>Target group very clear and transparent criteria, with seeming high degree of consensus about importance of the project. However, considerable resistance from the donor community, and Congolese society in general, that the target group was explicitly ex-combatant and not youth in general.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Clear criteria set out, and fulfilled?</p>
<p>Extent to which project design reflects developmental and political framework</p>	<p>Project designed as an emergency measure; in some ways well placed within emerging political framework of fragile peace: developmental priorities simply to prevent re-emergence of violence and start reconstruction in the immediate post conflict phase.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Survey range of stakeholders from range of perspectives regarding relevance of project in national context</p>

<p>Extent to which project is addressing root causes of violence</p>	<p>Project did not address core aspects of poor governance and related political factionalism and agitation. However, it did address the important issue of lack of opportunity for disaffected youth.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Care with this issue required; perhaps root causes addressed indirectly or in other ways. More relevant to assess whether project contributing to a framework which addresses root causes.</p>
<p>Extent to which context of security/insecurity is defined by the target group and addressed by the project.</p>	<p>Lack of definition by the target group of the context, but again for logical reason, not a weakness of the project. Element of the insecurity context effectively targeted by the project, see section above.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Again care with this; understanding may vary at different levels and choice of response to understanding also important.</p>
<p><b>Linkages</b> To what extent has the project linked into and utilised broader development programmes &amp; institutions (government and or donor)</p>	<p>Project set within clear priorities of the Comite de Suivi, and then made way for the Haut Commissariat, HC (both government bodies).</p> <p>The project linked increasingly with a parallel UNDP programme, Action Communautaire, which has multi-donor funding sources and which attempts to address the elements of post conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation on a much broader scale. AC also addresses the entire community issues rather than focusing on ex-combatants; a deliberate attempt to approach reintegration in a broader way.</p>	<p>The second phase logframe included indicators which were explicitly linked to the AC programme which would not necessarily be achieved by the project itself: a) "Income generating activities provided for at least 2,000 non ex-combatant youths in areas with high density of ex-combatants". This has almost certainly not been achieved. b) "Community development projects undertaken (according to community's identified needs) in at least 15 communes where ex-combatants are returning". This has probably been achieved, considering ongoing AC activity, though this achievement goes way beyond the timescale of the project being considered here.</p>	<p>Degree of co-operation between institutions and programmes should be measured through qualitative assessment of relationships through surveys, looking at issues such as mechanisms for interaction prioritised and jointly decided, not just qualitative reflection of number of meetings held between parties.</p>