



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2018/023

Audit of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

There was a need to develop a resource mobilization strategy for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme, enhance the DDR communication strategy, improve management of pre-DDR and community violence reduction projects, and strengthen the capacity of national DDR institutions

29 March 2018

Assignment No. AP2017/637/02

Audit of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

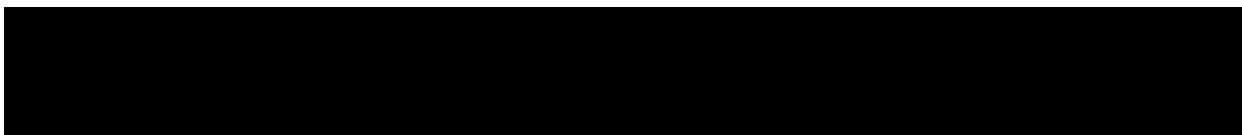
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of management of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the implementation of the DDR programme in MINUSCA. The audit covered the period from July 2015 to September 2017 and included a review of higher and medium risk areas in the DDR programme, including: risk assessment and strategic planning; organizational structure and staffing; pre-DDR and community violence reduction (CVR) operations management; coordination mechanisms; and capacity-building of national institutions.

MINUSCA supported the Government of the Central African Republic in developing the national DDR strategy and programme documents, and implemented pre-DDR and CVR projects as a stop-gap stabilization measure to engage combatants to reduce violence and get progressively prepared for the national DDR programme. However, MINUSCA needed to develop a resource mobilization strategy for the DDR programme, enhance the DDR communication strategy, improve management of pre-DDR and CVR projects, and strengthen the capacity of national DDR institutions.

OIOS made eight recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, MINUSCA needed to:

- Establish a common resource mobilization strategy to secure needed additional funding;
- Enhance coordination with the Strategic Communication and Public Information Section to ensure a comprehensive DDR communication strategy is developed and implemented;
- Reorganize staffing resources to ensure monitoring and evaluation of pre-DDR and CVR operations;
- Establish control mechanisms to enforce the eligibility criteria for registering ex-combatants;
- Develop project management tools for DDR and CVR programmes;

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- Establish coordination mechanisms with national DDR institutions to ensure national ownership of pre-DDR and CVR projects; and
 - Strengthen support to national DDR institutions through effective capacity-building.

MINUSCA accepted the recommendations and has initiated action to implement them.

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
I. BACKGROUND	1
II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY	1-2
III. AUDIT RESULTS	2-12
A. Risk assessment and strategic planning	2-5
B. Organizational structure and staffing	5-6
C. Pre-DDR and community violence reduction operations management	6-10
D. Coordination mechanisms	10-11
E. Capacity-building of national institutions	11-12
IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	12
ANNEX I Status of audit recommendations	
APPENDIX I Management response	

Audit of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of management of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).
2. Security Council resolutions 2217 (2015) and 2301 (2016) requested MINUSCA to support the Central African Republic Transitional Government and subsequent elected authorities to: develop and implement a revised strategy and an inclusive and progressive programme for DDR; develop and implement community violence reduction (CVR) programmes for members of armed groups not eligible to participate in the national DDR programme; and undertake an inclusive dialogue on community security and local development with members of armed groups and other national stakeholders, with a view to addressing the root causes of conflict. The MINUSCA DDR Section is responsible for implementing these aspects of the MINUSCA mandate.
3. The DDR Section is based in Bangui and has eight field offices. The Section is headed by a Chief at the D-1 level who reports to the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Political and Protection. A team of 32 staff members, comprising 22 international staff, 5 United Nations Volunteers and 5 national staff, support the Chief of Section. The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) supports the Section in managing surrendered weapons and ammunition.
4. Pending the commencement of the national DDR programme, MINUSCA initiated pre-DDR operations in Bangui and the sectors in June and November 2015 respectively, to initiate the assembly, disarmament, identification, registration and sensitization of combatants while providing them with basic financial and food support for their living. As of 30 September 2017, some 4,456 ex-combatants were registered, including 663 women. In addition, some 163 automatic weapons, 1,804 traditional weapons, 219 grenades, 82 rockets and explosives and nearly 9,705 pieces of ammunition were collected.
5. MINUSCA DDR Section's operational budgets for fiscal years 2015/16 and 2016/17 were \$5.9 million and \$11.4 million, respectively. In addition, MINUSCA estimated a budget of \$42.6 million to implement the DDR programme over three years, which had been almost fully pledged with only a balance of \$3.1 million outstanding.
6. Comments provided by MINUSCA are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

7. The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the implementation of the DDR programme in MINUSCA.
8. This audit was included in the 2017 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the strategic, operational and reputational risks if MINUSCA did not achieve its DDR mandate.
9. OIOS conducted this audit from October 2017 to January 2018. The audit covered the period from July 2015 to September 2017. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and

medium risk areas in the DDR programme, which included: risk assessment and strategic planning; organizational structure and staffing; pre-DDR and CVR operations management; coordination mechanisms; and capacity-building of national institutions.

10. The audit methodology included interviews of key personnel, review of relevant documentation, analytical review of data, sample testing of controls and physical observation.

11. The audit was conducted in accordance with the standards for the professional practice of internal auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors.

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Risk assessment and strategic planning

The Mission engaged relevant Government authorities in supporting the national DDR process

12. Security Council resolutions 2217 (2015) and 2301 (2016) mandated MINUSCA to support the Central African Republic Transitional Government and subsequent elected authorities in: developing and implementing a revised strategy, and an inclusive and progressive programme for DDR; developing and implementing CVR projects for members of armed groups not eligible for participation in the national DDR programme; and undertaking an inclusive dialogue on community security and local development with members of armed groups and other national stakeholders, including representatives of local communities, with a view to addressing the root causes of conflict.

13. The Bangui Forum national dialogue/consultations, which constituted the legal basis to commence discussions and which took place in May 2015 with the support of MINUSCA, resulted in the signing of an agreement between the Government and 9 of the 10 armed groups on the principles of DDR and integration of former combatants into the country's uniformed security and defence forces. After the election of the new president in 2016 and establishment of the national DDR infrastructure, MINUSCA was instrumental in supporting dialogue and discussions on DDR issues during monthly meetings of the DDR "Comité Consultatif et de Suivi" referred to in this report as the DDR Consultative and Follow-up Committee, which was the consensual and participatory body of the DDR process established by the Government of the Central African Republic.

14. However, most of the planned activities and expected outputs of the DDR Section during fiscal years 2015/16 and 2016/17 aimed at implementing the national DDR programme could not be achieved due to the absence of a comprehensive political agreement between the Government and armed groups, a precondition to implementing the DDR programme. For example, while the DDR strategy document was adopted in November 2016, the DDR programme document setting out the programme objectives and institutional framework for its implementation had not been adopted and endorsed as of the audit date. This was because some armed groups have made the settling of their grievances a precondition for their adoption of, and engaging in the national DDR process. In 2017, the Government indicated that political issues remained, and accepted the offer of the initiative of the African Union for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic to support a dialogue that would permit frank exchanges to resolve outstanding issues in the country.

15. In the absence of an agreed national DDR programme, planned critical DDR processes such as the establishment of the United Nations DDR Steering Committee and the development of a Mission DDR support plan could not be pursued. Also, the outputs defined in the 2016/17 budget to disarm 5,000 combatants and to implement reinsertion projects for 2,000 ex-combatants could not be accomplished.

Consequently, pending the commencement of a national DDR programme, MINUSCA focused its efforts during fiscal year 2016/17 on activities such as cash-for-work and income-generating activities in 8 of 16 priority locations identified as high-risk areas for the protection of civilians that contributed to the strategic objective of the Mission to reduce the presence of, and threat posed by, armed groups and continued to contribute to laying the foundations for a national DDR programme. As the situation is outside the control of MINUSCA and recognizing its interim efforts, OIOS is not making a recommendation in this regard.

Need to develop and implement a resource mobilization strategy for DDR and related operations

16. The DPKO Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (DPKO IDDR standards) require a common DDR resource mobilization strategy involving all participating stakeholders within an integrated framework to prevent duplication of efforts and ensure coordination with donors and national authorities. Also, the MINUSCA DDR Section's implementation strategy for the Bangui Forum DDR Agreement, prepared in May 2015, provided for developing and implementing a resource mobilization strategy in support of the national DDR programme.

17. In March 2016, the MINUSCA DDR Section established the International Partners Group (GPI), which included United Nations agencies and other international stakeholders, that was to meet monthly to share information on DDR and CVR initiatives. In addition, the activities related to the National Plan of Recovery and Consolidation of Peace (RCPCA) and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) partnerships also assisted in coordinating with partners.

18. For CVR projects, MINUSCA was operating in 2 of the 16 priority locations to engage combatants to reduce violence and to become progressively prepared for the national DDR programme. These two locations had been identified due to a high concentration of armed groups, increasing security risks to the local population. In view of its expected financial support for the African Union Initiative and considering that MINUSCA intends to extend its CVR activities to the remaining 14 priority locations, additional funds would be required. However, a common resource mobilization strategy involving all participating stakeholders within the DDR framework had not been developed to secure needed additional funding.

19. The above resulted as MINUSCA did not take appropriate actions to ensure that a common resource mobilization strategy involving all participating stakeholders was developed to secure needed additional funding and prevent duplication. MINUSCA could have used the GPI forum, RCPCA and UNDAF partnerships toward this end. In addition, a review of all 21 minutes of the GPI meetings held from April 2016 to November 2017 indicated very little discussion on the mobilization of resources. Nonetheless, in 2 of the 21 meetings, certain donors indicated their willingness to support some of the DDR-related activities. The lack of a resource mobilization strategy could result in: ad hoc fundraising at critical periods; ex-combatants reengaging in violent and criminal activities; and failure to expand the Mission's DDR-related activities to the remaining 14 of the 16 priority locations.

(1) MINUSCA should take action in conjunction with international partners to develop and implement a common resource mobilization strategy to secure needed additional funding, prevent duplication of efforts and ensure coordination with donors and national authorities.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 1 and stated that although a joint framework for resource mobilization was set up in 2016, it had not yet produced the expected results. Therefore, in addition to amounts already mobilized, the DDR Section had initiated the development of a national CVR strategy to be shared with all international and national DDR partners. This would serve as a resource mobilization tool to attract new donors and prevent duplication. The RCPCA served as the official joint framework for resource mobilization, which MINUSCA would continue to actively

support. Recommendation 1 remains open pending receipt of a copy of the CVR strategy that had been shared with all DDR partners, including the mobilization of resources.

Need for a comprehensive and effective communication strategy for DDR-related activities

20. The DPKO IDDR standards require MINUSCA to develop and implement a communication strategy, including dedicated radio programmes in coordination with counterparts at the national level to raise awareness among DDR participants and beneficiaries on the DDR process, and encourage eligible people to participate in the programme. In addition, the DPKO/DFS policy on reinsertion programmes requires MINUSCA to undertake significant and adequate media coverage, to manage expectations and foster the population's confidence in the DDR programme.

21. In March 2016, the DDR Section drafted a communication strategy in collaboration with counterparts at the country level. The strategy included: the objectives of the sensitization campaigns; determination and segmentation of target groups; communication approaches for the different target groups; channels and communication media; behavioural objectives; key messages to be communicated; expected results; and collaboration and coordination framework. However, the following deficiencies were noted:

- The local context was not adequately factored in as the communication strategy did not identify: key communicators in the society such as religious leaders, armed group commanders, and politicians to gain their support and use them to channel DDR-related messages; and gender and cultural perspectives of women, the disabled and rape victims;
- The behavioural objectives did not include behavioural changes related to: local and international donors' support and contribution to the DDR programme; realistic expectations of the DDR programme; repatriation of foreign combatants; and reasonable expectations by communities on what reintegration would bring; and
- The strategy did not include an implementation plan with partners' roles and responsibilities, activities, timeline and budget considerations.

22. The above resulted because the DDR Section did not involve the Strategic Communications and Public Information (SCPI) Section in developing a comprehensive communication strategy, including: an implementation plan and key performance indicators to monitor the effectiveness of its sensitization campaigns; and coordinated mechanisms to ensure that the SCPI and DDR Sections jointly reviewed the whole pre-DDR and CVR programmes to determine ways in which the SCPI could adequately support DDR-related activities in a structured way. The absence of a comprehensive strategy and time-bound implementation plan resulted in ad hoc and sometimes ineffective sensitization campaigns and limited awareness on the DDR process among DDR participants and beneficiaries including but not limited to the deficiencies noted below:

- Sensitization materials were not pre-tested on local audiences through focus groups and questionnaires to ensure the appropriateness of DDR-related messages and media;
- Formal weekly sensitization campaigns in field locations were mostly focused on ex-combatants or community leaders that were involved in pre-DDR activities rather than also sensitizing other key stakeholders such as local communities and armed groups hesitant to join pre-DDR operations. Although the Outreach Unit of the SCPI Section had been promoting DDR activities during SCPI-organized events or providing technical support for pre-DDR activities in the field, the SCPI had not provided adequate support to the DDR Section in promoting pre-DDR

operations. The Chief Outreach Unit of the SCPI Section indicated that their Section did not have a clear picture of the changes that pre-DDR operations were supposed to achieve and the communications barriers the SCPI Section needed to overcome to ensure successful pre-DDR operations. In addition, because of the lack of visibility in pre-DDR and CVR operations, the SCPI Section did not include DDR-related communication activities in its 2017/18 work plan; and

- Interviews by DDR officers in the field to gauge the effectiveness of sensitization activities were conducted mostly with beneficiaries of pre-DDR operations. The views of other key stakeholders of the DDR process, such as local community members, were not captured.

(2) The MINUSCA Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) Section should enhance coordination with the Strategic Communication and Public Information (SCPI) Section to ensure a comprehensive DDR communication strategy including an implementation plan and key performance indicators is developed and implemented, and adequate sensitization campaigns are carried out to support DDR-related activities.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 2 and stated that in addition to communications on DDR initiated by the Government, a communication cell within the DDR Section had been established. This cell had produced DDR/CVR products in close collaboration with the SCPI Section. The strategy would be revised and updated as the Mission mandate evolves. Recommendation 2 remains open pending receipt of an updated and approved communication strategy including an implementation plan and key performance indicators and evidence of adequate sensitization campaigns.

B. Organizational structure and staffing

Need to reorganize staffing resources to ensure monitoring and evaluation of ongoing pre-DDR and CVR projects was performed

23. The DPKO IDDR standards require MINUSCA to establish monitoring mechanisms to track progress, manage and improve ongoing DDR programmes and related operations.

24. Monitoring of pre-DDR and CVR projects was done through daily and weekly reports submitted by DDR personnel in field locations where pre-DDR and CVR operations were conducted. The reports contained statistics on the number of ex-combatants registered in the field locations and pre-DDR and CVR activities conducted during the period. However, there were no procedures in place to obtain, review, collate, organize and analyse data for all projects. Periodic internal assessments of the implementation and progress of pre-DDR and CVR projects were not conducted, and expected accomplishments, including indicators of achievement were not developed to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of pre-DDR and CVR projects.

25. The above resulted as MINUSCA did not prioritize staffing resources for monitoring and evaluating pre-DDR and CVR operations and had not established a monitoring and evaluation unit. OIOS noted that even though the DDR Section had one P-3 Monitoring and Evaluation Officer's post in its 2015/16 budget, there was no dedicated staff to oversee the monitoring and evaluation of pre-DDR and CVR projects. The post was instead used to recruit a DDR staff in the field to implement pre-DDR and CVR operations and the DDR Section did not make alternative arrangements for the monitoring and evaluations of these activities to track their progress and make necessary adjustments for improvement. As a result, MINUSCA could not adequately monitor the implementation of pre-DDR and CVR projects and evaluate their

effectiveness. Also, due to lack of dedicated resources, a monitoring and evaluation strategy was not developed.

(3) The MINUSCA Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) Section should reorganize its staffing resources to ensure monitoring and evaluation of ongoing pre-DDR and community violence reduction operations is performed to track progress and make necessary adjustments for improvement.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 3 and stated that the DDR Section had staffing constraints and, in anticipation of the planned downsizing in MINUSCA, the Mission had proposed the abolition of seven posts. Redeployment of staff was envisaged in accordance with the Mission's strategy and priority objectives, and the issue of monitoring and evaluation would also be considered. Recommendation 3 remains open pending receipt of evidence that monitoring and evaluation activities are conducted to track progress and make necessary adjustment to operations.

C. Pre-DDR and CVR operations management

There was a need to strengthen the verification and screening of pre-DDR operations' participants

26. The DPKO IDDR standards require MINUSCA to establish a screening or verification process for DDR/pre-DDR operations to ensure that only those who met previously agreed eligibility criteria are registered in the programmes and receive assistance. The screening process should be designed to prevent combatants from “double-dipping” by registering more than once to gain more benefits, and should make it difficult for commanders to exploit the process by including their friends and families.

27. Following the signing of the Bangui Forum Agreement in May 2015, MINUSCA initiated pre-DDR operations in June 2015 as a stop-gap stabilization measure and preparatory phase in advance of the national DDR programme, with the purpose of meeting the immediate needs of the combatants. Eligibility criteria based on MINUSCA pre-DDR standard operating procedures included: surrendering a manufactured/automatic weapon; being recognized by members of the local committee; and being on pre-established lists certified by the relevant armed group commanders. A review of supporting records of registered participants and discussions with DDR personnel in Bangui and in four field locations visited out of eight locations where pre-DDR operations were undertaken indicated the following:

- There were no consistent criteria regarding the number and type of ammunition required to qualify for participation in the programme. As a result, it was left to DDR Officers in the field to decide. Although the Section indicated that progressive imposition of criteria was being employed to encourage more people into the programme, as the Section progresses into full DDR operations, consistent criteria would be required;
- Of the 4,456 participants registered as of 30 September 2017, only 271 surrendered a weapon. In addition, of the 271 surrendered weapons, 232 (86 per cent) were artisanal/traditional/hunting weapons and only 39 (14 per cent) were manufactured/automatic weapons;
- Pre-established lists of registered combatants certified by relevant armed group commanders could not be provided in two (Bambari and Bria) of the five locations visited out of eight locations where pre-DDR operations were undertaken; and

- The DDR registration database did not have monitoring and evaluation capabilities to track and monitor support provided to each ex-combatant. DDR staff in the field recorded the support provided to armed groups in Excel spreadsheets whose formats varied/differed from one field location to another. The DDR database manager indicated that a consultant from United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) had been contracted to develop the monitoring and evaluation capabilities of the database but did not know when it would be completed.

28. The above resulted because MINUSCA did not develop and implement adequate and consistent control mechanisms to enforce the eligibility criteria for registering combatants to pre-DDR/CVR operations, including developing and disseminating clear criteria to DDR field personnel on the number of ammunition required to register combatants. MINUSCA started pre-DDR operations in Bangui and the sectors in June and November 2015 respectively, while pre-DDR standard operating procedures necessary for guiding the actions of the Mission personnel involved in managing and conducting such operations were developed in September 2016. As a result, fewer manufactured weapons were collected from participants, and the risk of entry of non-combatants, petty criminals or civilians in possession of illicit weapons into the programme under false pretenses was increased.

(4) MINUSCA should: (a) develop and implement adequate control mechanisms to enforce the eligibility criteria for registering ex-combatants, including developing criteria on the number of ammunition required to register a combatant; and (b) expedite the development of monitoring and evaluation features in the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Section's database.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 4 and stated that eligibility requirements would be determined by the national DDR programme and CVR strategy, which would then be enforced. A new module was being developed in the existing database for capturing, monitoring and evaluation data. Recommendation 4 remains open pending receipt of a copy of the national CVR strategy providing streamlined eligibility criteria for registering ex-combatants.

Need to improve management of pre-DDR and CVR projects

29. Project management best practices, as adopted in other peacekeeping missions, provide for: planning project activities by setting specific and measurable objectives, output indicators, and clearly defined project requirements; and implementing and monitoring activities to ensure that the projects are successfully implemented.

30. Interviews with key Mission personnel and reviews of relevant documentation for pre-DDR activities implemented in eight priority locations in the sectors, including Bambari, Berberati, Birao, Bossangoa, Bouar, Bria, Kaga Bandoro and Ndele, and CVR projects implemented in Bangui and Paoua during the audit period indicated the following:

- MINUSCA signed a memorandum of understanding with UNOPS as an implementing partner for its pre-DDR operation. However, there were no criteria set across all eight priority locations for the identification, approval and rejection of individual projects. Further, a governance structure for project management based on best practices had not been established for the implementation of pre-DDR and CVR projects. For example, even though pre-DDR project proposals were approved by the local committees based on communities' interests, the Mission did not set up a project management team and a project appraisal committee to further review the project proposals to ensure they were in line with the Mission's strategic objectives; and

- Even though pre-DDR projects have had a positive impact on ex-combatants such as basic financial and food support received for their living through cash-for-work and income-generating activities performed, the impact on local communities was limited mostly to eligible ex-combatants working on pre-DDR in 8 of the 16 priority locations. In addition, CVR projects expected to cater to non-eligible ex-combatants and other vulnerable community members and youth at risk, had not been implemented in 14 of the 16 identified priority locations.

31. The above resulted because the Mission had not: developed an action plan to formally roll out the project management principles learned through the Prince2 project management training attended by 10 DDR Section personnel in November 2015 for an estimated cost of \$45,000; and developed adequate guidelines, including standard operating procedures on the governance and management of pre-DDR and CVR projects. As a result, MINUSCA was unable to effectively monitor, evaluate and control its pre-DDR and CVR projects and determine their actual costs, as noted below:

- Although a total expenditure of \$17.3 million was incurred during fiscal years 2015/16 and 2016/17, the actual costs of individual pre-DDR project and CVR activity implemented were not known as there was no system to capture the detailed information; and
- Cash-for-work activities were implemented without prior consideration of the long-term benefits or sustainability of the modality. Because of the large amount of funding required and the lack of sustainability, MINUSCA had to discontinue cash-for-work activities in June 2017 and engage in income-generating activities. The number of new registrations of ex-combatants into the pre-DDR operations dropped significantly in 2017, as it was no longer attractive. For example, 155 ex-combatants were registered in 2017 compared to 2,253 in 2016, and 2,048 in 2015. MINUSCA runs a risk that the gains of the past would be eroded in the absence of sustained progress.

(5) MINUSCA should develop project management tools and comprehensive standard operating procedures for the governance and management of pre-disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and community violence reduction programmes to ensure their effective implementation.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 5 and stated that the launch of the pre-DDR programme was in reaction to the urgency of responding to the needs of combatants after the signing of the DDR agreement in May 2015. Because of its groundbreaking, urgent and temporary nature, there were no standard operating procedures before pre-DDR started. With the expansion of CVR and upcoming implementation of DDR activities, comprehensive standard operating procedures would be developed. Recommendation 5 remains open pending receipt of copies of the national DDR plan and the CVR strategy incorporating project management tools and standard operating procedures.

Mid-term review recommendations on pre-DDR activities had not been implemented

32. The DPKO/DFS IDDR Standards require MINUSCA to conduct a review of DDR related operations and programmes at mid-term to assess effectiveness and make necessary changes for improvement.

33. In May 2016, MINUSCA hired a team of three consultants to conduct a mid-term review of pre-DDR activities in four field locations, i.e., Bangui, Bouar, Bria and Kaga Bandoro, in view of the possible extension of such activities to other locations where there was a willingness and commitment from combatants to engage in those activities, reduce violence and get progressively prepared for the national DDR programme.

34. The review team made 11 recommendations to the DDR Section to improve the implementation of pre-DDR operations, including: providing resources to expand pre-DDR activities to all 16 locations; developing a pre-DDR and CVR strategy document including a theory of change, a results framework, and starting more systematic tracking of progress against indicators; and ensuring CVR projects were available in all locations where pre-DDR activities are implemented, in order to absorb the non-eligible combatants and to mitigate feelings of jealousy and resentment in the community.

35. MINUSCA DDR Section stated that no action plan was developed to implement the recommendations as the Section has no intention to extend the pre-DDR programme but to close it. However, the Section would draw appropriate lessons for the implementation of the DDR programme. Consequently, no recommendation has been made.

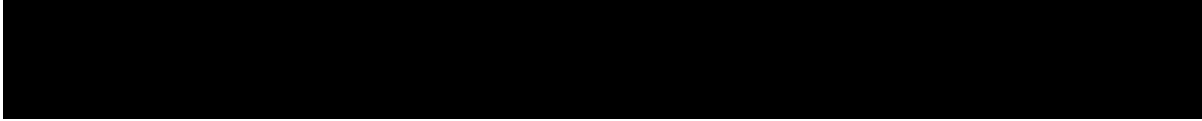
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D. Coordination mechanisms

There was a need for coordination with national institutions during the planning and implementation of pre-DDR/CVR projects

39. The DPKO/DFS IDDR Standards stipulate that DDR cannot be planned and implemented in isolation from key national and international actors and stakeholders.

40. In March 2016, the DDR Section established the GPI forum whereby monthly meetings were held with United Nations specialized agencies and funds and programmes, and other international bodies to discuss DDR-related activities. In addition, the DDR Section provided updates on DDR-related initiatives and activities during: weekly meetings with sections within the same pillar; meetings with the national DDR Counsellor; and monthly meetings of the DDR Consultative and Follow-up Committee involving the Government, armed groups and other national and international partners. Further, at the community level, local committees have been established in priority locations to identify and approve projects proposals, taking into account the needs and interests of the local communities as well as being involved in the implementation of pre-DDR and CVR projects at the local level.

41. However, national institutions, such as the “Unité d'Exécution du Programme National de DDR”, were not adequately engaged in the planning and implementation of pre-DDR and CVR projects to provide inputs into the process and select or tailor projects based on priorities set by national authorities. In addition, even though the Mission had been providing training to ex-combatants in various areas in its pre-DDR and CVR projects such as in agriculture and infrastructure, relevant line ministries were not consulted at the national level.

42. The above resulted because MINUSCA did not fully develop and implement coordination mechanisms to work with national institutions in implementing its pre-DDR and CVR projects. This has

resulted in weak national ownership of the pre-DDR and CVR projects and lack of sustainability in cash-for-work activities.

(7) MINUSCA should develop and implement coordination mechanisms with national institutions in the planning and implementation of pre-disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and community violence reduction projects to ensure their national ownership.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 7 and stated that given the Government's limited capacity and lack of financial resources, MINUSCA ensured that staff were embedded with the Unité d'Exécution du Programme National de DDR to provide continuous strategic and technical advice. MINUSCA would further ensure national ownership by coordinating with the Government on the national CVR strategy and on DDR for armed groups willing and committed to disarm and demobilize. Recommendation 7 remains open pending receipt of evidence of intensified advocacy, including the use of the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to coordinate and improve capacity of the national institutions.

E. Capacity-building of national institutions

There was a need to strengthen the capacity of national DDR institutions

43. The DPKO IDDR standards require MINUSCA to systematically develop and strengthen national capacity to ensure genuine national ownership of the DDR programmes. In addition, the DPKO/DFS policy of reinsertion programmes requires the Mission to give priority to national/local implementing partners to contribute to national/local capacity-building and reinforce national/local ownership.

44. MINUSCA assigned a DDR officer at the P-4 level to the national DDR institutions (initially the DDR High Commissioner and then later on “the Unité d'Exécution du Programme National de DDR” established in early 2017 by the Government) to enable the DDR Section to work closely with national DDR authorities. This was to assist in building their capacity through the provision of technical support and assistance in developing the national DDR strategy and programme document and in planning DDR-related activities such as the pilot DDR programme launched by the Government on 30 August 2017. However, the following deficiencies in building the capacity of national/local DDR authorities were noted:

- Even though the DDR Section had been building the capacity of ex-combatants and other local community members through its pre-DDR and CVR activities and training programmes, national DDR authorities had not been adequately involved in pre-DDR operations to building their capacity and for them to acquire the required expertise for the future national DDR programme. The chronic understaffing of the “Unité d'Exécution du Programme National de DDR” was cited as a reason for difficulties in building the Government's capacity; and
- Workshops or training sessions on DDR-related issues had not been conducted to build the capacity of national authorities. In 2015/16, the DDR Section requested \$13,995 to fund travel costs to the Democratic Republic of the Congo for one DDR staff and three national DDR personnel to get practical training from counterparts on how their national DDR authority was structured and how the national DDR programme was managed. However, this request was not approved by Mission Support, stating that this type of support was not within its budgetary authority.

45. The above resulted as MINUSCA had not: conducted a needs assessment of their capacity and formulated a capacity-building strategy to address the identified gaps; and allocated funds towards specific

capacity-building activities such as training and workshops to build the capacity of national DDR authorities. As a result, there was a lack of national ownership of the DDR strategy and programme documents during the conceptual phase as national authorities provided little or no input in their design.

(8) MINUSCA should conduct a needs assessment of the capacity of national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration authorities and allocate necessary resources to develop and implement a capacity-building programme to bridge the identified gaps.

MINUSCA accepted recommendation 8 and stated that in the context of budgetary constraints and following the 2019/19 budgetary proposal, the DDR Capacity-building Unit would be abolished. Nonetheless, the Mission would continue to seek extra-budgetary funding to engage consultants that could assist in building the capacity of the national DDR institutions. Recommendation 8 remains open pending receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has conducted a needs assessment and allocated necessary resources (extra-budgetary or otherwise) to implement the capacity-building programme to bridge identified gaps.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

46. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of MINUSCA for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

(Signed) Eleanor T. Burns
Director, Internal Audit Division
Office of Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
1	MINUSCA should take action in conjunction with international partners to develop and implement a common resource mobilization strategy to secure needed additional funding, prevent duplication of efforts and ensure coordination with donors and national authorities.	Important	O	Receipt of a copy of the CVR strategy that had been shared with all DDR partners, including the mobilization of resources.	31 July 2018
2	The MINUSCA Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) Section should enhance coordination with the Strategic Communication and Public Information (SCPI) Section to ensure a comprehensive DDR communication strategy including an implementation plan and key performance indicators is developed and implemented, and adequate sensitization campaigns are carried out to support DDR-related activities.	Important	O	Receipt of an updated and approved communication strategy including an implementation plan and key performance indicators and evidence of adequate sensitization campaigns.	30 September 2018
3	The MINUSCA Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) Section should reorganize its staffing resources to ensure monitoring and evaluation of ongoing pre-DDR and community violence reduction operations is performed to track progress and make necessary adjustments for improvement.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that monitoring and evaluation activities are conducted to track progress and make necessary adjustment to operations.	31 July 2018
4	MINUSCA should: (a) develop and implement adequate control mechanisms to enforce the eligibility criteria for registering ex-combatants, including developing criteria on the number of	Important	O	Receipt of a copy of the national CVR strategy providing streamlined eligibility criteria for registering ex-combatants.	31 July 2018

¹ Critical recommendations address critical and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided with regard to the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

² Important recommendations address important (but not critical or pervasive) deficiencies in governance, risk management or control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

³ C = closed, O = open

⁴ Date provided by MINUSCA in response to recommendations.

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Audit of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in the
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	C/ O ³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁴
	ammunition required to register a combatant; and (b) expedite the development of monitoring and evaluation features in the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Section's database.				
5	MINUSCA should develop project management tools and comprehensive standard operating procedures for the governance and management of pre-disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and community violence reduction programmes to ensure their effective implementation.	Important	O	Receipt of copies of the national DDR plan and the CVR strategy incorporating project management tools and standard operating procedures.	31 July 2018
7	MINUSCA should develop and implement coordination mechanisms with national institutions in the planning and implementation of pre-disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and community violence reduction projects to ensure their national ownership.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence of intensified advocacy, including the use of the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to coordinate and improve capacity of the national institutions.	31 July 2018
8	MINUSCA should conduct a needs assessment of the capacity of national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration authorities and allocate necessary resources to develop and implement a capacity-building programme to bridge the identified gaps.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that MINUSCA has conducted a needs assessment and allocated necessary resources (extra-budgetary or otherwise) to implement the capacity-building programme to bridge identified gaps.	31 July 2018

APPENDIX I

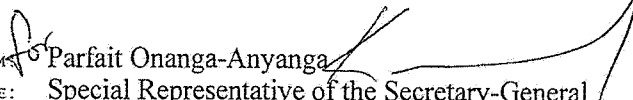
Management Response

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

TO: Mr. Arnold Valdez, OIC
A: Peacekeeping Audit Service
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

DATE: 27 March 2018

FROM:  Parfait Onanga-Anyanga
DE: Special Representative of the Secretary-General
and Head of MINUSCA

REFERENCE: IAD 18-637-02-04

SUBJECT: Draft report on an audit of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme
OBJET: in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central
African Republic (Assignment No. AP2017/637/02)

1. With reference to your memorandum of 14 March 2018, on the above-captioned subject matter, please find attached MINUSCA's response (Appendix 1) for your consideration.
2. I further confirm the factual accuracy of the report.

Regards,

Attachments: (1) Appendix 1 Management response
(2) RCPCA
(3) DDR communication strategy

cc: Mr. Kenneth Gluck, DSRSG-P
Ms. Vivian van de Perre, COS
Mr. Jean-Marc Tafani, D/DDR
Ms. Margherita Zuin, Senior DDR Officer
Mr. Laud Botchwey, Chief Resident Auditor for MINUSCA
Ms. Cynthia Avena-Castillo, Internal Audit Division, OIOS
Ms. Zeneda Feratllari, Audit Focal Point, MINUSCA

Management Response

**Audit of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in the
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
						<p>serve as a tool to increase coordination, avoid duplication, attract donors, and mobilize funds.</p> <p>It should also be noted that in addition to the RCPCA, MINUSCA has itself mobilized USD 30 million from the World Bank for the reintegration component of the national DDR programme, USD 3 million from the US Government, USD 3 million from the Government of Canada, EUR 250,000 from France, and USD 6 million from the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).</p>
2	<p>The MINUSCA Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) Section should enhance coordination with the Strategic Communication and Public Information (SCPI) Section to ensure a comprehensive DDR communication strategy including an implementation plan and key performance indicators is developed and implemented, and adequate sensitization campaigns are carried out to support DDR-related activities.</p>	Important	Yes	Chief, DDR	September 2018	<p>In addition to communications on DDR initiated by the Government, in line with the principle of national ownership, there is a Communications cell within the DDR Section comprised of two staff (1 IUNV and 1 NPO), which develops communications products, in close collaboration with the Strategic Communications and Public Information Section and the <i>Unité d'Exécution du Programme National DDR</i> (UEPNDDR). The DDR Communications Strategy, also applicable to CVR. The Strategy is a living document, and will be</p>

Management Response

**Audit of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in the
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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
						reviewed and updated as necessary in collaboration with the SCPI Section.
3	The MINUSCA Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) Section should reorganize its staffing resources to ensure monitoring and evaluation of ongoing DDR and community violence reduction operations is performed to track progress and make necessary adjustments for improvement.	Important	Yes	Chief, DDR	July 2018	The DDR Section has seven posts proposed for abolishment in the 2018-19 budget submission. A redeployment of DDR staff is envisaged in accordance with the Mission's geographic priorities. The issue of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and how to perform it with the decreased resources will be considered in light of the above. The SOP on M&E in DDR processes clearly states that dedicated resources for M&E are needed (namely three staff and a minimum of 3% of budget for running an M&E operation). MINUSCA does not have this type of resources.
4	MINUSCA should: (a) develop and implement adequate control mechanisms to enforce the eligibility criteria for registering ex-combatants; including developing criteria on the number of ammunition required to register a combatant and (b) expedite the development of monitoring and evaluation features in the DDR Section database	Important	Yes	Chief, DDR and Government of CAR Counterpart (UEPNDDRR)	July 2018 July 2018	Eligibility requirements will be determined by the national DDR programme and CVR strategy and enforced. A new module is being developed in the existing database for capturing monitoring and evaluation data and is in the final stages of development.
5	MINUSCA should develop project management tools and comprehensive standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the governance and management of pre-	Important	Yes	Chief, DDR and Government of CAR	July 2018	Conceived as an interim stabilization measure, MINUSCA pre-DDR represented the first time DDR-related programming has been

Management Response

Audit of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

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	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and community violence reduction programmes to ensure their effective implementation.			Counterpart (UEPNDDRR)		implemented in a UN peacekeeping mission in advance of a peace agreement. Because of its groundbreaking, urgent and temporary nature, there were no SOPs in existence before pre-DDR started. Despite this, pre-DDR standard operating procedures were developed to guide the initial steps of pre-DDR implementation. With the end of pre-DDR, recent expansion of CVR, and upcoming implementation of DDR activities with armed groups ready to disarm and demobilize, project management tools and comprehensive SOPs will be developed. To ensure continuity of policy documents, the SOP on CVR will be based on the CVR Strategy, currently under development.
1	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Management Response

**Audit of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in the
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
7	MINUSCA should develop and implement coordination mechanisms with national institutions in the planning and implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and community violence reduction programmes to ensure their national ownership.	Important	Yes	Chief, DDR and Government of CAR Counterpart (UEPNDDRR)		<p>Given the Government's limited capacity and financial resources to plan and implement DDR and CVR programmes, MINUSCA ensures coordination and national ownership, by embedding staff with the UEPNDDRR to provide continuous strategic and technical advice.</p> <p>MINUSCA also ensures national ownership through its provision of strategic, technical, and logistical support to monthly meetings of the <i>Comité Consultatif et de Suivi</i>, which serves as the sole forum for dialogue on DDR between the Government, armed groups, civil society, and the international community.</p> <p>The establishment of local committees, responsible for decision-making on CVR, ensures national ownership at the community level.</p>

Management Response

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Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation Date	Client comments
					July 2018	MINUSCA will further ensure national ownership by coordinating with the Government on the national CVR strategy, and on DDR for armed groups willing and committed to disarm and demobilize.
8	MINUSCA should conduct a needs assessment of the capacity of national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration authorities and allocate necessary resources to develop and implement a capacity-building programme to bridge the identified gaps.	Important	Yes	Chief, DDR	July 2018	In the context of budgetary constraints and following the 18/19 MINUSCA budget proposal, the DDR Capacity Building unit tasked with building the capacity of the national DDR institution will be abolished. The Mission will continue to seek extra-budgetary funding to engage consultants that can assist to build the capacity of the national DDR institution.