Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Program

Social and Environmental Management Arrangements

The second stage of the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Program (RDRP) aims at demobilizing a large number of ex-combatants from the Rwanda Patriotic Army and armed groups and at supporting their reintegration into civilian life. To enhance the chances of success, the RDRP needs to properly address a range of social and environmental aspects. The objective of this analysis is to identify important social and environmental dimensions, summarize the social and environmental management arrangements under the Program, outline targeted monitoring and evaluation activities, and propose institutional capacity building activities.

1. Social and Environmental Dimensions

1.1 Successful long-term reintegration of ex-combatants can make a major contribution to conflict resolution and the restoration of social capital, while failure to achieve reintegration can lead to crime and insecurity and even increase the risk of resumed conflict. Reintegration takes place at the community level, and the perceptions, attitudes and organizational capacity of communities to receive and support ex-combatants become a major factor for determining the success or failure of a demobilization and reintegration program.

1.2 Ex-combatants may face profound social reintegration problems. There may be a generalized fear that ex-combatants are merely conveyers of violence, crime and sexually transmitted diseases. Communities may then resent support provided to what is perceived as an overly privileged group. Ex-combatants may be discriminated against on the basis of previous military affiliation. Their personal security may be at risk especially when they committed atrocities in the communities to which they return.

1.3 Female ex-combatants who have become accustomed to a more independent way of life in the military, may struggle to adapt to expectations of traditional communities. Female partners of ex-combatants and their children who migrate to communities of other ethnic, linguistic and/or cultural backgrounds may be rejected. Last but not least, the years of development children lose to soldiering profoundly affect their future identity.

1.4 Ex-combatants may also exert pressure on the natural resource base especially in communities with high population densities. Community members may be involuntarily displaced or ex-combatants involuntarily resettled to communities other than of their choice. Traditional tenure arrangements may bar female ex-combatants from access to land. Ex-combatants may start income-generating activities that, if uncontrolled, may lead to overgrazing, deforestation or improper waste management.

2. Social and Environmental Management Arrangements

2.1 Building on lessons from reintegration programs for displaced persons and ex-combatants in Rwanda and elsewhere, the Program contains a number of specific elements to
identify social and environmental risks and devise appropriate mitigation measures. The procedures and measures will be spelt out in detail in the Program implementation manual.

2.2 *Access to land.* Ex-combatants will be free to settle in the community of their choice. Their access to land would be facilitated with the same community-based procedures used for others who need land. Specifically, any Rwandese in search of land for housing or agricultural production would normally contact his/her local administration, which would allot an available piece of public land for use if possible. In the event that no public land were available, the local administration consults with relevant community members to determine whether they would agree to cede part of their land to the newcomer(s) on a voluntary basis. (The Program will not bear the costs of land acquisition.) No citizen would be compelled to cede any of his/her land. There would thus be no involuntary displacement of civilians as a result of ex-combatants settling in a community.

2.3 *Social reintegration.* The objective of social reintegration assistance would be to promote reconciliation between ex-combatants and civilians in communities of settlement. Social reintegration may be especially difficult in the context of Rwanda, as many ex-combatants lost their families during the genocide and/or came from neighboring countries and have no 'home' to which they can return, while others have committed acts of violence in their communities. The participation of communities in the RDRP, especially through the Community Development Committees (CDCs) and Politico-Administrative Committees (Comités politico-administratifs; CPAs), is considered critical for successful reintegration. Specific activities to be carried out by the RDRC under this component would include:

(i) assessments of community perceptions of ex-combatants and ex-combatants' perceptions of communities;

(ii) expansion of current national and community reconciliation activities;

(iii) information and sensitization of ex-combatants and communities through outreach activities, including training of counselors and sensitization efforts (national awareness campaign, presentation of the RDRP, discussion of ex-combatants and community rights and obligations, regular field visits by Program staff for sensitization and problem solving, etc.); and

(iv) specialized counseling (e.g., family, HIV/AIDS, and gender).

2.4 *Gender.* Given experiences of other demobilization and reintegration programs, the RDRP would provide targeted support for the social and economic reintegration of female ex-combatants. Specific measures would include the following:

(i) Ensuring that the special needs (e.g., security, sanitation) of female ex-combatants are taken into account in the demobilization centers;

(ii) ensuring that all benefits for ex-combatants are equal for and equally accessible to men and women;

(iii) encouraging implementing partners to ensure that their reintegration support activities within the Vulnerability Support Window facilitate the participation of female ex-combatants;
(iv) encouraging female ex-combatants to participate in existing women’s associations;

(v) including partners of ex-combatants and women in communities of return in community-level counseling activities;

(vi) strengthening the gender awareness and capacity of RDRC staff and of those CDCs and CPAs to which a significant number of female ex-combatants will return; and

(vii) monitoring the impact of the Program on partners of ex-combatants and women in communities of return and bringing emerging problems to the attention of the relevant authorities.

2.5 Child ex-combatants. Child ex-combatants among armed groups will likely represent a significant target group for the second stage of the RDRP. Child ex-combatants would be identified during the verification screening in the demobilization centers and separated from adult ex-combatants as soon as possible. They would undergo specialized counseling in a separate site. Assistance to the reintegration of child ex-combatants would include family tracing and unification, trauma counseling and psycho-social care, and facilitation of access to education and recreation in communities of settlement. Children older than 15 years may have different needs and would receive appropriate support. Under the overall coordination of the RDRC, the Ministry of Local Government and Social Affairs (MINALOC) would be responsible for implementation in collaboration with experienced partners such as UNICEF.

2.6 Environmental classification. The Program is classified as environmental Category B, as it includes support to income-generating activities. However, the phased and widely dispersed reintegration of 45,000 ex-combatants into civilian life is expected to be environmentally neutral. Furthermore, the Program does not anticipate support to any major physical works and would only finance the rehabilitation of two demobilization centers and two medical rehabilitation centers.

2.7 Environmental screening. The RDRP would provide reintegration support to ex-combatants in the form of sub-projects, which would include agricultural and non-farm income-generating activities (IGAs), vocational and apprenticeship training, employment, tools, and education and scholarships. The cost per sub-project would be below US$350 per beneficiary. IGAs would be screened for environmental impact and monitored according to the procedures set up by the MINALOC for the Bank-financed Community Reintegration and Development Program (CRDP). The objective of environmental screening would, thus, be to minimize negative environmental impacts of the Program.

2.8 The following sub-project cycle has proven effective under the CRDP and similar interventions and would be applied to the RDRP IGA activities as well: (i) an ex-combatant prepares a sub-project proposal, with appropriate assistance by a CDC or sub-contracted NGO/association; (ii) the respective CDC appraises the proposal per CRDP criteria (including on social and environmental impact); and (iii) if approved, funds are transferred to the bank account of the ex-combatant. Provincial program offices and CDCs would supervise sub-project implementation.
2.9 The screening procedures are tailored to the small-scale nature of income-generating activities, examining the potential for impacts and identifying any mitigation measures. The focus of the screening would be on the following issues: water, health and sanitation, natural resource exploitation, erosion, pesticide use and any other safeguard related issue. The CDCs will consult the relevant line ministry representative (chargé de service for agriculture, environment, water and sanitation, health, education, social affairs) as needed. In accordance with CRDP guidelines, certain activities such as charcoal making will be rejected. The screening will also assess the potential environmental impact of the IGA on neighboring communities. In case of wider negative environmental impact, actions would be agreed upon with the relevant local administrations.

3. Social and Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation

3.1 A strong monitoring and evaluation system and close supervision will seek to ensure that the Program reaches the intended beneficiaries and has a generally positive impact on the receiving communities. The basic parameters and monitoring indicators for the environmental aspects of the Program are already in place through the CRDP. Whilst experience with such programs in other countries has informed the design of the social components of the RDRP, baseline data for the Program's social dimensions are yet to be collected.

3.2 Social assessment. Shortly after credit effectiveness and building on relevant preparatory activities (beneficiary assessment, preparation of sensitization program and of pre-demobilization orientation program), a social assessment will be undertaken and will include the following:

(i) a stakeholder analysis;
(ii) an institutional capacity diagnostic;
(iii) the development of a public consultation mechanism as part of the RDRP's sensitization program; and
(iv) the design of a participatory monitoring and evaluation framework.

3.3 The social assessment will help identify the social and cultural structure of incentives and constraints that guide and govern behavior with respect to building social cohesion and promoting sustainable use of natural resources. Furthermore, it will help determine relevant social indicators for participatory monitoring, including on social exclusion of returning ex-combatants.

3.4 Participatory monitoring. The institutional arrangements established under the CRDP for decentralized monitoring are working well and will be used for participatory social and environmental monitoring under the RDRP. Specifically, the CDCs and CPAs will monitor sub-projects and social and environmental indicators on an ongoing basis at the community level. The Provincial Program Offices will be responsible for technical and financial monitoring of reintegration activities at the provincial level, regularly reporting to the RDRC on the application of all relevant procedures and processes. At the central level, the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Environmental Protection (MINITERE) and
MINALOC will advise the RDRC on the substantive environmental and social aspects of the Program.

3.5 Information will be distributed horizontally (especially important for the beneficiaries and in general for sake of transparency) and vertically in the management structure of the Program. Information will be readily available for assembly and analysis into periodic monitoring and evaluation reports. Such a system requires cooperation from all levels: from the beneficiary all the way up to the RDRC. The Program's computerized Management Information System is built around these parameters.

3.6 Independent evaluations. A special Program element would be annual evaluations of environmental and social indicators as part of the annual Program evaluations undertaken by independent consultants. These evaluations would include a beneficiary assessment and a review of Program achievements. The issues to be addressed would include, among others: the procedures to access land; the occurrence of involuntary displacement or resettlement; the degree of community acceptance; the existence of discrimination on the basis of gender or previous military affiliation; the level of personal security of ex-combatants; the level of criminal activities undertaken by ex-combatants; and the impact on an ex-combatant’s family members. The evaluations would, thus, help identify social and environmental impact, determine the appropriateness of procedures and processes, and make recommendations for improvements where necessary.

3.7 The monitoring and evaluation system is designed such that the regular review of social and environmental aspects is part and parcel of Program implementation, and that mitigation measures would be initiated quickly as needed.

4. Institutional Capacity Building

4.1 Program benefits would be spread throughout the country. To facilitate rapid Program start-up while allowing time to build capacities in other parts of the country, reintegration activities under stage II would be prioritized by province according to the settlement patterns of ex-combatants and implementation capacities at the provincial and community levels, respectively. Special capacity-building efforts and training will be required at all levels of Program implementation.

4.2 The MINALOC has already developed a general environmental and social awareness and sensitization module and would take the lead in building capacities at the district, provincial and central levels. The NURC would be responsible for the development of reconciliation measures in the demobilization centers and communities of return. Capacity-building support for the NURC would enable it to provide this assistance at the local level.

4.3 Depending on the target group, training activities will include: sensitization workshops for ex-combatants and host communities, training of trainers in collaboration with local and/or international partners, NGOs and community associations, and technical training for line ministry staff and RDRC staff. Capacity building activities will be based on written materials and models prepared in the appropriate communication medium, corresponding to the themes in the various workshops (i.e., planning, leadership skills, project implementation, conflict resolution, roles and responsibilities, etc.).
4.4 The MINALOC will be responsible for providing and/or recruiting trainers. Trainers will use an experiential learning methodology that emphasizes a high level of participation and interaction. To the fullest extent possible, women trainers/facilitators will be identified to draw upon their local knowledge and experiences. To ensure continuity and conformity in the overall capacity building program, the core training staff will be engaged in the follow-up training activities.

4.5 At the community level, the focus would be on those CDCs and CPAs that are not yet benefiting from development projects. After an assessment of their implementation needs, and using the Program implementation manual and the training manual developed by the MINALOC for community development projects, key members of CDCs and CPAs would be familiarized with Program procedures and would receive required training. As necessary, relevant CDC members and partner agencies would also undergo training for supervising the IGA sub-component of the RDRP. Very few of the line ministry agents have environmental and social specialists. Therefore, the capacity building component will try to address the awareness issue through a targeted training module that addresses the technical areas of concern.

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