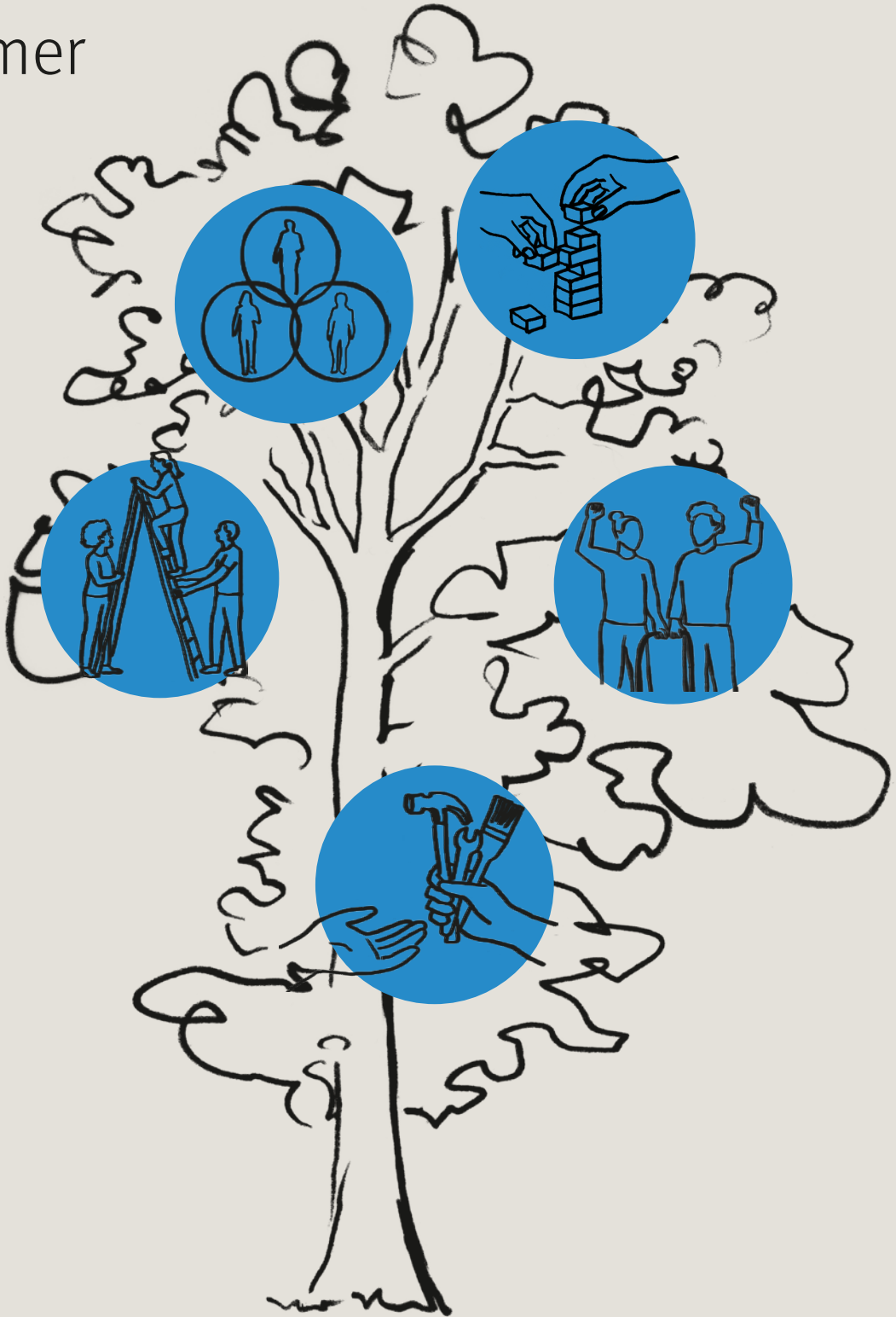
Berghof Foundation

POLITICS BEYOND THE PARTY

Informal Pathways for Ex-Combatants' Political Transformation

A Primer



About this Primer

This Primer provides guidance to DDR practitioners, mediators, and peacebuilding actors on how to support informal political transformation – through the collective engagement of ex-combatants in civil society organisations, veterans' associations, and social movements as nonviolent alternatives to formal politics.

It argues that ex-combatants can play an active and constructive role in shaping post-war governance, reconciliation, and social change through diverse forms of political engagement, including those that may sit outside traditional political spaces, such as bottom-up, community-based forms of political participation. Such engagement can strengthen inclusion, accountability, and resilience by transforming wartime leadership and solidarity networks into vehicles for peaceful civic action, while remaining mindful of the risks that such networks, if left untransformed, may reproduce patterns of exclusion, coercion, or unaccountable power from the wartime period.

The Primer highlights why informal political arenas matter for sustainable peace: they often provide the first and most accessible spaces for marginalised or rank-and-file fighters – especially women and youth – to exercise voice, leadership, and agency when formal political institutions remain closed or exclusive, or when the trust with them is broken. By recognising and supporting these nonviolent forms of organising, DDR and peacebuilding practitioners can help former combatants pursue their change agendas peacefully, address grievances without violence, and rebuild trust with wider society.

Drawing on comparative experiences from Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, the Primer offers practical guidance on when and how to promote informal political reintegration across different phases of DDR and peace processes.

Design & Illustration: AMBERPRESS, Katja Koeberlin, Gosia Warrink

Published by

Berghof Foundation

UN

Supported by

Federal Foreign Office

© 2025. All rights reserved.

Introduction

For many ex-combatants, the signing of a peace agreement marks not the end of struggle, but a shift from violent to peaceful methods of pursuing justice, rights, and recognition.

While some former fighters enter formal politics, research shows that only a small fraction successfully integrate into existing political parties or establish new party structures through the process of rebel-to-party transformation. Most remain, by choice or circumstance, outside these elite-dominated channels and instead exercise political agency through civic associations, veterans' networks, and social movements (Giezendanner & Ingelaere 2021). These informal arenas often offer more accessible and empowering spaces for leadership than formal party politics, particularly for women, youth, and rank-and-file combatants.

Supporting such collective, nonviolent re-mobilisation helps consolidate peace and prevent relapse into violence. Academic research confirms that broader political openness and civic participation significantly reduce the risk of renewed conflict (Galindo-Silva 2019). When political systems provide different avenues for expression and influence, whether through parties, associations, or movements, grievances are more likely to be addressed through dialogue rather than force.

Traditional DDR programmes often focus on economic reintegration and individual demilitarisation. Yet sustainable peace depends equally on political transformation that allows former fighters to become legitimate, peaceful actors in civic life, and if they wish, continue to pursue their struggle through nonviolent means.

Key Concepts

Political transformation: The process through which former combatants acquire opportunities and capacities to participate meaningfully in governance and political decision-making.

Collective reintegration: The re-entry of ex-combatants into society through organised groups pursuing common socio-economic or political objectives.

Informal politics: Collective civic action by individuals or groups outside state or party structures aimed at influencing governance, norms, or policy through nonviolent means.

WHO?

This Primer is intended for **DDR practitioners, mediators, and peacebuilding professionals** who design, facilitate, or accompany processes of political transformation. It is equally relevant for ex-combatant associations and their civil society partners seeking to transform wartime structures into peaceful collective action. Understanding the complementary roles of all involved actors is essential for creating enabling conditions for informal political participation.

Informal political integration involves multiple layers of actors whose collaboration determines whether ex-combatants can (re-)enter civic life peacefully and productively. These can be grouped into three main categories:

Ex-combatants and their collective organisations

Former fighters are the primary agents of informal political transformation. Many organise themselves in associations, cooperatives, or social movements to gain a voice, solidarity, and purpose. These entities allow them to pursue social and political objectives through peaceful means.

Examples include:

- **Veterans' associations** that combine mutual aid with advocacy for recognition.
- **Grassroots cooperatives** linking livelihoods with civic participation.
- **Peace-focused collectives** where former fighters transform their wartime networks into mediation or community dialogue structures
- **Cross-community initiatives** where ex-fighters from opposing sides jointly promote nonviolent 'resistance', social activism and reconciliation.

Recognising these ex-combatant-led initiatives as **legitimate civic actors** is a first step toward

Table 1: Forms of collective organising beyond party politics

Type of Organisation	Core Functions	Common Activities
Veterans' associations	Mutual support, advocacy, and recognition	Benefit campaigns, memorial events, policy petitions
Civil society organisations (CSOs)	Service delivery, advocacy, and bridge-building between citizens and state institutions	Community development projects, policy dialogue, civic education, legal aid
Peace and reconciliation committees	Joint community structures that include ex-combatants and civilians to mediate conflicts and foster coexistence	Local mediation, dialogue facilitation, community service, trauma-healing and reconciliation events
Cultural or artistic initiatives	Narrative change and symbolic repair	Theatre, murals, oral history, joint commemorations
Social movements	Advocacy for rights or reform	Marches and protests, public campaigns, media engagement, nonviolent activism

The above types are not mutually exclusive. Often organisations or movements may contain characteristics or pursue activities from several of these categories simultaneously.

inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding.

Societal actors and allies

For informal political reintegration to succeed, ex-combatants must connect with the wider social fabric. Collaboration with diverse civil society actors helps rebuild trust, dismantle stigma, and ensure that collective activism contributes to public good rather than polarisation.

Key societal allies include:

- **Local civil society organisations (CSOs)** and NGOs providing training, dialogue spaces, and legal advice.
- **Faith-based groups, trade unions, women's and youth movements**, which can absorb ex-combatants into broader coalitions for reform or reconciliation.
- **Community leaders and local authorities**, who mediate relations between veterans and civilians and promote social acceptance.
- **Cultural and artistic initiatives**, offering shared platforms for storytelling, memorialisation, and joint activism.

Such partnerships foster horizontal integration by rebuilding trust and cooperation across conflict lines.

Support actors

Finally, DDR practitioners, peacebuilding agencies, and donors have a responsibility to design policies and programmes that enable rather than control these informal political dynamics. Their role is to accompany and safeguard the process, not to prescribe its direction.

These actors include:

- **National DDR commissions and relevant ministries**, responsible for registration, funding, and protection of civic initiatives.
- **UN and regional organisations**, which provide technical and financial support to community-based reintegration and community violence reduction programmes.
- **International NGOs and donor agencies**, which can support capacity-building in nonviolent organising, civic education, and gender inclusion.

By engaging these three categories of actors in complementary roles — **ex-combatants as agents, societal actors as allies, and DDR practitioners as enablers** — DDR programmes can create the conditions for a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable civic sphere after war. DDR programmes and practitioners can also draw on a wider global network of experts and connect ex-combatants to peers who may have gone through or are going through a similar transformation.

Box 1: Veterans' associations and informal political engagement in Mozambique

Following the 1992 peace accord, former RENAMO combatants in Mozambique organised themselves into informal *associações de desmobilizados* (demobilised veterans' associations). Operating largely outside formal DDR frameworks, these networks offered mutual support, mediated between ex-combatants and local authorities, and collectively advocated for recognition and benefits. Although often unregistered and poorly resourced, they provided a channel for political expression and community involvement that helped prevent remobilisation and social marginalisation. This example illustrates that even without formal structures or external funding, veterans' associations can play a stabilising political role by transforming wartime solidarity into civic activism and dialogue with the state (Wiegink 2019).

WHEN?

This section is addressed primarily to DDR practitioners, mediators, and peacebuilding actors who design or accompany peace processes and reintegration programmes. It outlines when and how support for informal political engagement can be most effectively introduced – from the early stages of negotiation through demobilisation and long-term peacebuilding.

Supporting informal political reintegration is not a one-off activity. It can and should be integrated before, during, and after formal DDR phases, adapting to the political and social dynamics of each context.

Table 2: Opportunities for supporting civic and political engagement throughout DDR phases

Stage	Opportunities for engagement
During peace negotiations	Acknowledge and legitimise collective civic organising in peace accords (e.g., right to association, veteran participation in national dialogue). Identify potential civil society allies with credibility among combatants.
During Demobilisation and reinsertion	Provide information on the legal framework for association, peaceful assembly, and civic participation. Encourage formation of inclusive veterans' associations representing diverse ranks, genders, and regions.
During Reintegration	Offer capacity-building for ex-combatant-led groups: governance, advocacy, financial management, and nonviolent mobilisation. Connect them with local peace committees or CSOs, locally and globally as relevant. Support their reframing of objectives and vision in nonviolent terms. Promote veteran cooperatives as the implementing partners of reinsertion and reintegration projects.
Post-DDR or in the absence of DDR	Support ex-combatant civic engagement in reconciliation initiatives, Transitional Justice processes, and community development programmes. Integrate their organisations into broader peace infrastructure mechanisms. Note: Ideally, such activities should begin during DDR implementation and be sustained as part of long-term peace-building and governance frameworks.

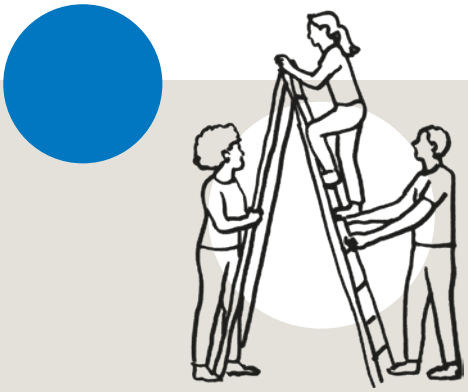
HOW?

Recognise and protect informal political engagement

To support meaningful and lasting political transformation in post-conflict settings, DDR practitioners must move beyond token inclusion and adopt strategic, gender-responsive approaches.

DDR practitioners and international peacebuilding actors should acknowledge that informal political organising is a legitimate form of political integration. While DDR processes often focus on dismantling command structures, collective organising among ex-combatants can serve positive civic and peacebuilding purposes when rooted in nonviolence and inclusivity.

Practitioners should therefore work with national and local authorities to create an enabling legal and security environment for such engagement. This includes supporting the registration and recognition of ex-combatant associations, cooperatives, or social movements, and ensuring that the legal framework upholds the rights of association, expression, and peaceful assembly for all citizens. Security guarantees should be provided for ex-combatants who take part in public activism or community organising, as they may face stigmatisation or intimidation because of their wartime identity. Establishing safe and legitimate spaces for nonviolent collective action helps prevent the criminalisation of civic activism and encourages the peaceful exercise of political rights as an integral part of sustainable reintegration.



Box 2: Enabling ex-combatants' collective organising in Northern Ireland

Following the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, the reintegration of political prisoners — in the absence of official registers of ex-combatants — became a key dimension of Northern Ireland's peace process. Rather than discouraging collective organisation, the British and Irish governments and the European Union recognised the constructive potential of ex-prisoner engagement and, through the EU PEACE Programmes and national charitable frameworks, provided funding channels for reintegration and community work.

This enabling environment allowed former republican and loyalist prisoners to form registered associations such as *Coiste na n-Iarchimí* and EPIC (Ex-Prisoners Interpretative Centre). These organisations offered education, counselling, and community development programmes, and became active partners in local reconciliation and youth outreach. By publicly committing to nonviolence and civic participation, they transformed wartime networks into credible community actors, helping to bridge divides between ex-combatants, victims, and local authorities.

This experience illustrates that when peacebuilding frameworks safeguard freedom of association and provide institutional recognition and security guarantees, former combatants can re-enter civic life as advocates for reconciliation and social cohesion (McEvoy & Shirlow 2008).

Box 3: Building capacities for civic mobilisation in the Philippines

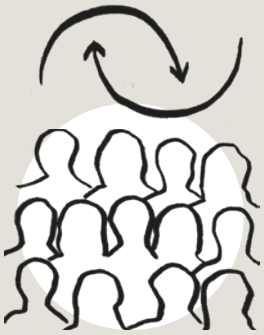
In the Bangsamoro region of the Philippines, the School for Peace and Democracy (SPD) was launched in March 2020 as part of the normalisation process under the peace agreement between the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The SPD promotes civic education, democratic participation, and inclusive governance in the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Through a series of training workshops, the programme engages MILF members, women, youth, and community leaders to build skills in leadership, governance, peacebuilding, and community development. Its participatory curriculum, rooted in local culture and Islamic principles of moral governance, fosters dialogue between ex-combatants and civilians and helps translate wartime organisational experience into constructive civic engagement (Dudouet & Mubashir 2025)

Building capacities for social movement organising

DDR support should not only encourage participation in civil society but also equip ex-combatants with tools to organise collectively and act nonviolently. Structured training in social-movement building can help former fighters translate their wartime solidarity into constructive civic engagement. Practical workshops may include modules on soft skills like storytelling and nonviolent communication tools, as well as campaign planning, coalition-building, nonviolent tactics, and strategic communication, combining conceptual input with participatory exercises and peer learning. Such capacity-building fosters confidence, leadership, and democratic skills, while promoting horizontal, inclusive decision-making. By developing these competencies, DDR programmes enable ex-combatants to transform their mobilising experience into peaceful activism that advances social justice and accountability rather than renewed confrontation.

Foster partnerships with civil society and local authorities

Encouraging joint projects between veterans and community organisations helps to rebuild trust, address stigma, and demonstrate that former fighters can contribute positively to society. Partnerships with local government and civic leaders provide ex-combatants with opportunities to serve as bridge-builders rather than outsiders.



Box 4: Local peace committees in Nepal

Following the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accord, Local Peace Committees (LPCs) were established in all 75 districts under the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, with support from UNDP and international donors. Their membership included representatives of political parties, civil society, women's groups, and former Maoist combatants. These committees served as local mechanisms for dialogue, mediation, and reconciliation, helping to resolve disputes over land, property, and displacement, and to facilitate the reintegration of ex-combatants and returnees into their communities. They also monitored local tensions and supported civic education on peace and democracy, thereby linking national-level peacebuilding with grassroots reconciliation (Dudouet & Mubashir 2025).

Provide flexible funding and mentorship

Ex-combatant associations and civic initiatives often face major barriers to accessing formal funding streams due to weak administrative capacity, lack of legal status, former incarceration, or mistrust from donors. To support their informal political engagement, DDR practitioners and donors should therefore prioritise small, flexible, and low-bureaucracy funding mechanisms that allow for experimentation, rapid implementation, and adaptation to local realities.

The most effective funding formats include:

- **Micro-grants or seed funds** (typically 1,000-10,000 USD) for initiatives such as establishing an association, hosting a dialogue event, producing community media, or launching a small awareness campaign.

- **Mini-grant windows within DDR programmes**, accessible to registered or pre-registered veterans' associations, cooperatives, or women's groups, with simple application and reporting requirements.

- **Pooled community funds** managed jointly by ex-combatants and local civil society partners to support joint projects (e.g., local mediation efforts, civic education workshops, or cultural activities).

- **Core support for organisational development**, including office equipment, communication tools, legal registration fees, and transport for outreach activities — often overlooked but essential for sustainability.

However, funding informal social movements remains a persistent challenge. Many ex-combatant-led movements or advocacy networks operate without legal registration or fixed structures, which makes them ineligible for most donor mechanisms. Practitioners can address this gap by channelling support through trusted intermediary organisations, such as local NGOs or umbrella networks, which can legally manage funds while preserving the autonomy and grassroots nature of the movement. Partnerships of this kind help balance accountability requirements with the need

to sustain bottom-up activism.

Flexible funding schemes should always be guided by "do no harm" and political impartiality, ensuring that resources empower peaceful civic engagement rather than partisan or clientelist politics. When designed inclusively, with transparent criteria, gender balance, and opportunities for joint initiatives with civilian groups, these funds can help transform ex-combatant activism into a durable driver of democratic participation and reconciliation.

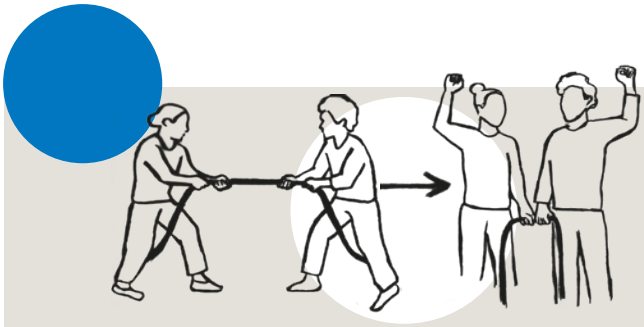
Alongside financial assistance, mentorship and accompaniment are crucial. Experienced civic actors, NGOs, or local government staff can provide coaching on project design, budgeting, transparency, and communication with stakeholders. Such mentorship not only strengthens accountability but also builds confidence and legitimacy for ex-combatant organisations engaging in public life.

Leverage collective organising for psychosocial healing

Beyond its political and social functions, collective organising can play a crucial role in psychosocial recovery. For many ex-combatants, the process of demobilisation entails loss of identity, community, and purpose. Group-based civic engagement – whether through veterans' associations, cultural initiatives, or peace committees – provides continuity, belonging, and recognition, helping former fighters to redefine themselves as citizens rather than soldiers.

Engaging in shared, nonviolent activities can restore dignity and counter feelings of marginalisation or guilt. Collective projects that serve the wider community – such as rebuilding schools, environmental clean-ups, or youth mentorship – also generate new social bonds and public trust, turning once-feared individuals into visible contributors to peace.

These participatory forms of organising should be accompanied by trauma-informed facilitation, peer support, and reflective dialogue to ensure that activism promotes healing rather than re-traumatisation. By combining social purpose with emotional repair, collective action becomes both a tool for reintegration and a pathway to reconciliation.



Box 5: Combatants for Peace – Joint nonviolent activism in Israel and Palestine

Combatants for Peace (CfP) was founded in 2006 by Israeli soldiers and Palestinian fighters who renounced violence and refused to see one another as enemies. The movement organises joint marches, educational theatre performances, and public dialogues to promote coexistence and shared humanity.

CfP's members use creative nonviolent protest and symbolic public actions to challenge occupation, militarisation, and cycles of victimhood. Their collaboration has inspired global recognition as a model of "joint resistance" without arms, demonstrating that even former enemies can work together to transform deeply rooted political conflicts through peaceful civic engagement. Through their activities, CfP members model reconciliation in practice while advocating for accountability and human rights. The movement also runs youth education and memorial projects that foster empathy and understanding across divided communities and holds an annual joint Israeli-Palestinian memorial day and Nakba ceremony, exemplifying the power of collective grief and memory (Combatants for Peace 2024).

This example demonstrates that collective activism by ex-combatants from opposing sides can become a powerful engine of reconciliation, redefining courage as the willingness to resist injustice together through nonviolent means.

Promote gender and intersectional inclusion

Women, youth, and other marginalised members of armed movements are often excluded from both veterans' structures and formal politics. Despite their participation and leadership during conflict, they frequently face patriarchal barriers, stigmatisation, or tokenistic representation after peace agreements. DDR and reintegration processes therefore need to move beyond numerical gender quotas to address deeper structural inequalities and intersectional forms of exclusion — including those based on age, disability, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

Because access to political parties and formal institutions is often limited or highly competitive, informal spaces, such as women's associations, cooperatives, cultural collectives, and social movements, can become more effective and empowering entry points for influence and leadership. These spaces allow former combatants to define agendas, exercise agency, and build solidarity with broader civil society actors on their own terms.

In Mindanao (Philippines), the League of Moro Women Organisation, Inc. (LMWOI), founded by former members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's women's auxiliary brigade in 2020, has become a key platform for civic leadership. The association supports women's livelihoods, promotes peace education, and facilitates dialogue between ex-combatants, communities, and local authorities. Its members are influencing local governance and policy reforms in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region, demonstrating how informal, women-led networks can achieve sustained political impact even without formal party representation.

While informal political spaces can offer vital opportunities for agency and leadership – particularly where formal institutions remain exclusionary – it is important that these do not become substitutes for genuine political inclusion. Efforts to strengthen women's and youth participation in informal networks should therefore be linked to strategies for transforming the formal political arena itself, ensuring access to parties, electoral processes, and public administration. Otherwise, informal empowerment risks reproducing the very exclusions it seeks to overcome.

Support cross-learning and networks

Peer exchange between former combatants from different regions can foster mutual learning, solidarity, and confidence. Exchanges allow participants to compare transformation strategies, discuss common challenges, and co-develop solutions grounded in lived experience rather than external expertise.

For example, the Berghof Foundation has facilitated peer-learning between female ex-combatants from Aceh (Indonesia) and Mindanao (Philippines). Through workshops and joint field visits, women former fighters from the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) shared experiences on political participation, community engagement, and navigating patriarchal resistance (Lundström and Marhaban 2016). These peer-learning spaces helped participants to identify collective strategies for visibility and advocacy, while reinforcing their confidence as community leaders and peacebuilders. This example shows that facilitated peer exchange empowers ex-combatants to act as mentors and agents of change, spreading knowledge across contexts and strengthening networks of nonviolent political engagement.

Manage Risks and Perceptions

While the political engagement of ex-combatants can contribute to inclusion, accountability, and reconciliation, it also entails significant risks that must be recognised and managed from the outset.

- **Stigma and public perception:** In many contexts, ex-combatant associations face deep societal mistrust. Victims, communities, and political elites may perceive their mobilisation as a veiled attempt to reclaim power or perpetuate impunity. These perceptions can undermine confidence in the peace process, fuel polarisation, or trigger backlash against reintegration efforts. Transparent communication, inclusive dialogue, and victim-centred reconciliation measures are therefore essential to legitimise ex-combatant participation.

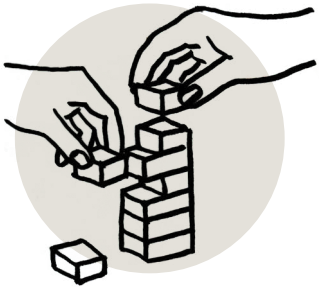
- **Risk of remilitarisation or capture:** Collective organising among former fighters can inadvertently reactivate wartime hierarchies, especially if ex-commanders retain control over resources or narratives of grievance. Without proper safeguards, associations risk becoming vehicles for political manipulation, criminal infiltration, or renewed coercion. Ensuring internal democracy, civilian oversight, and clear legal frameworks for their operation helps mitigate these dangers.

- **Accountability and vetting:** Linking reintegration and political transformation to transitional justice mechanisms is key to maintaining credibility. Clear vetting procedures, truth-telling processes, and compliance with human rights standards enable societies to distinguish between legitimate civic participation and impunity for past crimes.

- **Institutional and donor risk management:** For practitioners and donors, support to ex-combatant associations should be framed within broader peacebuilding and governance frameworks, accompanied by political risk assessments and community feedback loops. Funding should prioritise activities that demonstrably build bridges with other social groups and avoid re-entrenching wartime divides.

Checklist for practitioners

Recognise informal politics as legitimate reintegration: Acknowledge that collective organising by ex-combatants can contribute positively to peacebuilding when grounded in nonviolence and inclusivity. To support this, work with national and local authorities to ensure enabling legal and security frameworks that protect the rights of association, expression, and peaceful assembly.



Create enabling environments for collective organising: Facilitate registration and recognition of ex-combatant associations and cooperatives. Support capacity-building for civic and social-movement organising, including training on advocacy, coalition-building, nonviolent campaigning, and dialogue facilitation. Integrate modules on civic engagement and movement-building into DDR civic-education curricula.

Promote inclusive and intersectional participation: Ensure women, youth, and other marginalised members of armed groups are represented in veterans' structures and civic initiatives. Support women-led and grassroots associations as key actors in local leadership and peacebuilding. Address structural barriers that prevent access to formal politics by creating and resourcing informal avenues for influence and leadership.

Foster partnerships and community trust: Encourage joint projects between veterans, civil society organisations, and local authorities to rebuild trust and prevent stigmatisation. Involve ex-combatants in local peace councils or community reconciliation mechanisms. Promote collaborative approaches combining civic activism with service to communities.

Provide flexible funding and mentorship: Establish small-grant or seed-fund mechanisms to support ex-combatant-led civic projects, cooperatives, or cultural initiatives. Complement financial support with mentoring on project design, budgeting, and transparency. Use intermediary NGOs to channel resources to informal movements or unregistered groups while maintaining accountability. Apply "do no harm" principles to ensure funds empower nonviolent, non-partisan engagement.

Link organising to psychosocial healing and reconciliation: Recognise collective activism as a form of psychosocial recovery that restores identity, belonging, and purpose. Combine civic projects with trauma-sensitive facilitation and peer-support methods. Encourage creative, cultural, and service-oriented initiatives that foster healing and rebuild public trust.

Encourage peer exchange and cross-learning: Facilitate national or regional peer-learning exchanges among ex-combatant organisations to share experiences and strategies. Support digital or in-person networks linking ex-combatant groups, civil society actors, and mediators.

Anticipate and manage risks of remilitarisation and mistrust: Recognise that collective mobilisation of ex-combatants can evoke fear, stigma, or perceptions of threat among victims and communities. Establish clear vetting mechanisms to prevent the reactivation of wartime hierarchies or the capture of reintegration processes by unaccountable networks. Balance support for ex-combatant participation with compliance with human rights and transitional justice commitments.

Monitor and evaluate broader outcomes: Track progress through qualitative indicators such as community trust, civic participation, and inclusion, not only economic outputs. Document lessons learned to inform future DDR programming and policy advocacy.

References and further reading

Combatants for Peace (2024). *Annual Report: Nonviolence as Shared Resistance*. *Combatants for Peace*.

Dudouet, V. & Mubashir, M. (2025). Embedding Peace: Key considerations for strengthening an infrastructure for building and sustaining positive peace (i4p). *UNDP* and Berghof Foundation.

Dudouet, V. & Cruz Almeida, C. (2022). *Political Engagement by Former Armed Groups Outside Party Politics*. *Folke Bernadotte Academy* / PAW / UNDPO DDR Section.

Galindo-Silva, Héctor (2019). Political Openness and Armed Conflict: Evidence from Local Councils in Colombia. *Journal of Public Economics*.

Giezendanner, E., & Ingelaere, B. (2021). How to Understand Ex-Combatants' Political Participation Against the Background of Rebel-to-Party Transformations? *University of Antwerp*

IDDRS Module 2.20 (2019). *The Politics of DDR*. *UN Department of Peace Operations*.

Lundström, S. & Marhaban, S. (2016). Challenges and Opportunities for Female Combatants' Post-War Community Leadership: Lessons Learnt from Aceh and Mindanao. *Berghof Foundation*.

McEvoy, K., & Shirlow, P. (2008). Beyond the Wire: Former Prisoners and Conflict Transformation in Northern Ireland. London: Pluto Press.

Wahidin, Azrini (2016). *Ex-Combatants, Gender and Peace in Northern Ireland: Women, Political Protest and the Prison Experience*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Wiegink, N. (2019). The Good, the Bad and the Awkward: The Making of War Veterans in Post–Civil War Mozambique. *Conflict and Society*.

This publication is part of a series of Primers offering brief insights and practical guidance on the political transformation of non-state armed groups as a core element of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), and as a contribution to sustainable peace. These Primers are produced in the context of a project that aims to operationalise Module 2.20 of the United Nations Integrated DDR Standards (IDDRS): "The Politics of DDR" (https://www.unddr.org/). It is based on the collaboration between the United Nations Department of Peace Operations DDR Section (UNDPO DDR) and the Berghof Foundation. Through first-hand experience and on-site support, the project generates and disseminates concrete guidance on planning, designing and implementing politically sensitive DDR processes. It further develops training resources for DDR practitioners and other stakeholders involved in peace processes and post-war peacebuilding, with a focus on practical support for political transformation.

Berghof Foundation
Operations gGmbH
Lindenstraße 34
10969 Berlin
Germany

www.berghof-foundation.org
info@berghof-foundation.org

@berghoffnd.bsky.social
@BerghofFnd
/BerghofFoundation
/berghof-foundation
@berghoffnd

Department of Peace Operation (DPO)
Office of the Rule of Law & Security Institutions (OROLSI)
Disarmament Demobilization & Reintegration Section (DDRS)
2 United Nations Plaza. DC02 – 13th Floor
10017 New York, USA

www.unddr.org

@orolsi.bsky.social
@UN_OROLSI
/OROLSI
/orolsi
@un_orolsi