UNIVERSITY OF KENT

Achieving Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Groups

A dissertation submitted to the
School of Politics and International Relations

in candidacy for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy International Conflict Analysis

by

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Canterbury, Kent
December 2010

Abstract

Achieving rehabilitation and reintegration of children associated with armed groups (child soldiers) is a challenging task. However, the success of such efforts aids the children and the entire societies caught in the process. The aim of this thesis is to critically reflect on the implementation feasibility of guidelines recently developed by the UN and its affiliated programs and funds, and their ability to provide long-term solutions for rehabilitation and reintegration of children associated with armed groups. Building on Jareg's reintegration theory, the thesis claims that solutions toward rehabilitation and reintegration can be initiated through the application of international guidelines and recommendations designed to help programs strengthen relationships with the family and the community, provide education, health and gender initiatives as part of psychosocial healing.

To validate the claim, thesis sets up the analysis method by identifying five main documents (*Machel Report*, *Cape Town Principles*, *Paris Principles*, *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards* and *the Machel +10 Report*) which specifically provide guidance and recommendations to address rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers. By extracting and grouping their recommendations, the thesis develops a RR guidelines working list, which is applied in the individual and comparative analysis of the two case studies, *Give me a Chance (GMAC)* in northern Uganda and *Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale (CEPAC)* in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). With the help of the RR guidelines working list, thesis conducts validation of Jareg's reintegration theory. In addition, the comparative analysis leads to recognition of recommendations' specific strengths and weaknesses, confirming their applicability to assist rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers. It further confirms that the working list, if adjusted and further developed by international organs, has a great potential to contribute in a more systematic and structured approach to identifying the rehabilitation and reintegration needs that programs should consider when designing and implementing their activities. Finally, the thesis suggests that further research should be conducted to evaluate the working list's generalizebility.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank my advisor, Dr Andrea den Boer, and to Dr Anne Hammerstad for their constructive criticism, advice and assistance, as well as for their encouragement to help this work become what it is today.

I am grateful to the staff of the *Christian Relief Network* (CRN), *Give me a Chance* Uganda (GMAC) and *Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale* (CEPAC) for allowing me to observe and learn from their example and dedication to the rehabilitation and reintegration of children.

I would like to acknowledge and thank my father, Milorad Jevtic, for supporting me tirelessly, for encouraging and believing in me; as well as my colleagues, Mr Hermann Lampalzer, Dr Thorsten Trippel and Mr Peter Clayson for proofreading and critiquing the work.

Finally, and above all, I do not want to forget the children, youth and young adults who I met during the field studies. I thank them all for speaking to me and trusting me enough to share with me their stories, their fears and even more their hopes and desires. Without them, this work and its message would be impossible. Their strength and courage showed me that no matter how hard life might be, it is worth embracing.

Dedicated to my brother, my father, and my mother
and to all God's children who lost their innocence and life through war

Personal Foreword

This day was particularly hot, and one did not expect anything else from Atlanta's summer weather. My water bottle was empty, and while Mama B was busily explaining something to my friend, I slipped into her restaurant kitchen to fill it up for the road. A stranger I had not seen working for Mama B yet sat there, peeling potatoes. His arms were scarred and strong, his entire attention on the shapes the peeled skin formed. It did not take long for me to realize these scars were remnants of a war; far-far away in another life...these were marks only bullets and machetes could leave. I greeted him in English, which startled him, but then he smiled back at me. Row of sparkling white teeth stood in contrast to dark porcelain-like skin. I stood there for a second, silent. Slowly making my way to the sink I filled my bottle and then headed for the door. I stopped and realized that the stranger was cautiously following my every move with his eyes. Instead of exiting the room, I turned around and introduced myself, extending my hand to shake his. He smiled again and answered in French, gesturing that his hands were dirty but I replied that it did not matter. He reached out, and we shook our hands. I touched one of the scars on the back of his hand and asked: "Où?" "Congo," was the short, painful reply. He then gestured with his head towards me and repeated the question. "Yugoslavia," was my short reply. He nodded knowingly, and smiled sadly. With our hands clasped in a handshake, we suddenly left Atlanta and were back again in that other life. And I could see in his eyes he knew how horrible that life was.

His name was Rommel Goulou, and he was a teacher. He had escaped from the Democratic Republic of Congo because his life was in grave danger. He was the first person to ever share with me the fate of 'his' children in his country whom he tried to protect from forced recruitment and abduction. I always hoped that no other children had to suffer as the children in my land did during the many conflicts in the recent past. But Rommel opened my eyes to unimaginable child suffering. My life has not been same since. Because of a friendly handshake on a hot day in Atlanta I began learning about the fate of child soldiers in Africa.

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Acronyms

CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CEPAC	Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale
CRN	Christian Relief Network
CTO	Transit Orientation Center (in French Center Transit Orientation)
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
GMAC	Give Me a Chance
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IDDRS	Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labor Organization
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MDRP	Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program
MONUC	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OUA	Organisation de l'Unité Africaine
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RR	Rehabilitation and Reintegration
UN	United Nations
UN HCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UN SRSG CAAC	United Nations Special Representative of Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict
WHO	World Health Organization

Introduction

I. Introduction and Research Question

The concept of children participating in armed conflict dates back to antiquity.[1] However, until after the World War I, little attention was given to the consequences of children's involvement in conflicts.[2] It took yet another world war for the international community to determine that such involvement constituted a breach to human, and in particular to children's rights. Even still, since World War II, the reports presented at the UN continued to repeatedly confirm the breach of their rights as they testified of consistently high numbers of children and youth active participation in armed conflict in many areas of the world. While exact official statistics for individual rebel groups do not exist, Human Rights Watch estimated in 2008 that hundreds of thousands of children under the age of 18 actively served with armed groups around the globe.[3]

In some countries such as Colombia or Occupied Palestinian Territories, youth join voluntarily. Thousands of children are also recruited in many Asian countries, such as India, Bangladesh, and Thailand. But, child soldiering, the torture and suffering associated with it, is most prevalent in the conflicts across Africa, in countries such as Sudan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, and Central African Republic.[4] Some estimates suggest that "120,000 children, 40% of all child soldiers, were soldiering in Africa at the beginning of the twenty-first century" and that Africa "has experienced the fastest growth in the use of child soldiers."[5] In almost all of the reported cases, the treatment children receive is abusive and

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[1] Branko Copic, Dozivljaji Nikoletina Bursaca (Beograd: Prosveta, 1975); Michelle Steel, "Kindersoldaten," Vision Journal: Einsichten und Neue Horizonte, http://www.visionjournal.de/visionmedia/article.aspx?id=6684 (accessed 25 August 2010); George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia*, http://www.george-orwell.org/Homage_to_Catalonia/2.html (accessed December 2, 2010), Chapter 3; Andre Krajewski, "Hitlerjugend-HJ," Shoa.de http://www.shoa.de/drittes-reich/herrschaftsinstrument-staat/151.html (accessed December 8, 2010); P.W. Slinger, *Children At War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2005), 13; Lewis D. Eigen, "Unfortunately Child Soldiers are Nothing New," Scriptamus, http://scriptamus.wordpress.com/2009/11/02/child-soldiers-are-unfortunately-nothing-new/ (accessed December 7, 2010).

[2] Malcolm Hill and Kay Tisdall, *Children and Society*, (London: Longman, 1997), 27.

[3] Human Rights Watch, "Facts about Child Soldiers," Human Rights (published December 3, 2008), http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2008/12/03/facts-about-child-soldiers (accessed December 11, 2010); Michael Odeh and Collin Sullivan, "Recent Developments in International Rehabilitation of Child Soldiers," Youth Advocate Program International Resource, www.yapi.org (accessed August 10, 2010), 1; Vera Achvarina and Simon F. Reich, "No Place to Hide: Refugees, Displaced Persons, and the Recruitment of Child Soldiers," *International Security,* Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006): 127-128.

[4] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Child Soldiers: Frequently Asked Questions."

[5] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide: Refugees, Displaced Persons, and the Recruitment of Child Soldiers," 131.

bordering on slavery.[6] Children are abducted from their homes, villages and schools, maltreated, starved and malnourished, raped and tortured, coerced to fight and commit gross atrocities.[7] They are viewed as easily accessible and therefore easily disposable material.[8] Some of these 'soldiers' are as young as 7 when they learn how to shoot.[9] Among them, there are many young female soldiers who serve as cooks and servants, satisfying much older men as their 'wives' and sexual slaves.[10] Many of those who manage to stay alive and return home are infected with HIV/AIDS, or are drug and alcohol addicts.[11] And if their physical injuries are not enough, these children return with so many more emotional wounds, which, if left unattended, haunt them and the society in which they live for the rest of their lives.

While prevention of abduction and eradication of armed factions is the only true protection mechanism, it cannot always be achieved. It is therefore of great importance that governments, organizations and individuals establish properly functioning mechanisms and provide meaningful tools which will assist children after their return from active participation with armed groups. Such functioning mechanisms and programs are not only important on a personal and humane level, but also imperative for the country's future success and development. Children and young adults who return from a life of a child soldier lack proper education and etiquette, and often face challenges trying to assume their roles and responsibilities as citizens of a nation. In fact, if their situation is not attended to, it may contribute to the continued decay of that nation, allowing gaps for the children to become future perpetrators of violence and criminals.[12] It is therefore vital that programs be effective and assist children's transition to peace and stability, helping them find a productive place in the social structure of their nation.

Researchers agree that realizing this transition effectively can only be achieved if programs are designed to address psychological, physical, and social consequences of

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[6] Mary-Jane Fox, "Child Soldiers and International Law: Patchwork Gains and Conceptual Debates," *Human Rights Review* 7 (2005): 27-28.
[7] Christine Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration During an Ongoing Conflict," *Cornell International Law Journal* Vol. 37 (2004): 499; Lorea Russell and Elzbieta M. Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 58 (2006): 59-60; Michael Wessells, *Child Soldiers: from Violence to Protection* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 33-84.
[8] Bartholomäus Grill, "Krieg der Kinder," *Profil* (2003): 117.
[9] United Nations, "Child Soldiers Briefing Papers," United Nations Cyberschoolbus, http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/briefing/soldiers/index.htm (accessed July 19, 2010).
[10] Tim Allen, *Trial Justice: The International Criminal Court and the Lord's Resistance Army* (London: Zed Books, 2006), 42, 64, 65.
[11] UNICEF, "The Rights of Children and Women in Conflict Situations," in *The Situation of Children and Women in Uganda* (Kampala: UNICEF Uganda, 2006), 188-189.
[12] "Kindersoldaten- die Jugend wiederfinden - Interview with Michael Wessells," Vision Journal: Einsichten und Neue Horizonte, http://www.visionjournal.de/visionmedia/article.aspx?id=6684 (accessed August 26 , 2010).

children's active involvement in armed conflict.[13] This is however, where their agreement ends. Approaches to achieving effective reintegration differ greatly. Some researchers consider social reintegration as the most important element, stating the need for the children to experience social re-acceptance and involvement with their communities.[14] Others stress the need of including standard approaches to psychological rehabilitation in programming.[15] The issue becomes even more complicated when addressing the application of justice, or proper access to educational and employment opportunities. Some research indicates the notion of restorative justice, pointing out that children need to learn to be accountable for their actions through cleansing, restitution and penance, while others point out that communities want to pursue retributive justice, prosecuting and punishing children and young adults for crimes committed, in order to prevent any future lawlessness and criminal behavior.[16] Additional incongruity exists in prescribing the adequate length and amount of NGOs direct involvement in the reintegration and rehabilitation. Statements range from highlighting that programs should assume a primary role and take charge in the rehabilitation and reintegration of children, to having only an auxiliary role of educating and building up communities to take charge of rehabilitating and reintegrating their returnees.[17] All of these concepts reflect a struggle for a suitable programmatic structure, resulting in the programs' utilization of diverging recommendations and program designs in the activities they conduct.

While achieving results, no program has been identified that has fully satisfied the demands of successful child rehabilitation and reintegration. This leads one to raise the question, what are the key normative, policy and academic frameworks for the rehabilitation and reintegration of children, and how have they found practical reflection in programs? In other words, how is child rehabilitation and reintegration best achieved?

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[13] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 126; Alcinda Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 108; Lysanne Rivard, "Child Soldiers and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programs: The Universalism of Children's Rights vs. Cultural Relativism Debate," The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance, http://jha.ac/2010/08/23/child-soldiers-and-disarmament-demobilization-and-reintegration-programs-the-universalism-of-children%E2%80%99s-rights-vs-cultural-relativism-debate/ (accessed August 25, 2010).

[14] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 126; Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, 108, 151.

[15] Katharine Stott, "Out of sight, out of mind? The psychosocial needs of children formerly associated with armed forces: a Case Study of Save the Children UK's work in Beni and Lubero territories, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of Congo," *International Journal of Health Planning and Management* 24(2009):52-72; see also John P. Wilson, and Boris Drozdek, *Broken Spirits* (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2004).

[16] Susan Shepler, "The Rites of the Child: Global Discourses of Youth and Reintegrating Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone" *Journal of Human Rights* 4 (2005), 197-211; Allen, *Trial Justice*, 87, 113, 125. Wessells, *Child Soldiers,* 218-224.

[17] Mark Knight and Alpaslan Özerdem, "Guns, Camps and Cash: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reinsertion of Former Combatants in Transitions from War to Peace," *Journal of Peace Research* 41(2004): 499-516.

In the attempt to find a solution to this question, the United Nations (UN) and its associated child-minded programs and funds, such as the United Children's Fund (UNICEF), and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), such as Save the Children, have pursued development of guidelines and standards for the rehabilitation and reintegration of children associated with armed groups. As a result, they have collected lessons learned and absorbed them to improve the existing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) guidelines. However, their development is fairly new and therefore an assessment of their practical application has not been fully realized yet. It remains to be seen how effective the translation of the theoretical framework into practice can be, and whether its implementation provides the best ingredients to achieving rehabilitation and reintegration of children. The aim of this thesis will therefore be to conduct a comparative case study analysis and through it critically assess the extent to which the developed working list of guidelines contributes towards successful long-term rehabilitation and reintegration of children associated with armed groups.

II. Literature Review

Graça Machel's study presented to the General Assembly in 1996 set the development of UN rehabilitation and reintegration guidelines in motion. However, while the academic research evaluated and discussed the development of individually designed rehabilitation and reintegration programs and their approaches, very little analysis of programs according to the developed UN guidelines and recommendations or of the guidelines themselves has been conducted.[18] Some individual recommendations and guidelines from UN documents, such as *Machel Report*, *Paris Principles* and United Nations *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS)*, are reflected through the scholarly literature written in the past five years, but they are never referred to as recommendations taken from these documents. In fact, the documents as such are only mentioned in a small sample of DDR literature, and never with the intention of providing an in-depth analysis of the documents as a whole or of any individual recommendations.[19] One possible explanation could be that the

[18] To find out more about the collaborative effort initiated with the establishment of the Office of the Special Representative and its goals see "Actions," United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG CAAC), http://www.un.org/children/conflict/english/actions.html (accessed 5 May 2010).

[19] Diane Marie Amann, "Calling to Account: The Proposal for a Juvenile Chamber in the Special Court for Sierra Leone," *Pepperdine Law Review* 29 (2001); Vera Chrobok and Andrew S. Akutu, "Returning Home: Children's

documents are numerous and rather lengthy and therefore not easily conducive to thorough analysis.

But, because they are so rarely referenced or used in scholarly work, the documents and their content have not been made available in any format as of yet that would render them implementable by NGOs, nor have they been subject to any comparative analysis.[20] While it cannot be expected that all of the developed standards and principles would have already been fully tested and evaluated, the lack of any theoretical analysis or evaluation of their practical application is puzzling. If they are mentioned it is usually in the form of handbooks used by the UN organizations to conduct their work. One such example can be seen in the handbook issued in 2009 by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) on how to monitor and evaluate disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs.[21] This handbook, like others, is a helpful tool, developed to aid anyone who is involved in designing and managing DDR efforts.[22] However, it is based on a general assumption that the latest UN developed guidelines have been proven efficient and are utilized by institutions, organizations and individuals. And exactly this efficiency and feasibility of utilization needs to be further addressed and analyzed.

At the same time, while there is little analysis or discussion on the guidelines and provisions within the international documents, much research has been dedicated to the child soldiers' rehabilitation and reintegration within the framework of the DDR initiatives. As a result, the scholarly research can guide the development of the theoretical framework which is then used to evaluate the guidelines' efficiency within the case study analysis. In order to set

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perspective on reintegration," Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, www.child-soldiers.org (report issued February 2008, accessed November 2008); Michael Wessells, "Child Soldiers, Peace Education and Post Conflict Reconstruction for Peace," *Theory Into Practice* 44(2004): 363-369; Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers "Release and Reintegration of child soldiers: One part of a bigger puzzle" (paper presented by the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers at the International Interdisciplinary Conference on Rehabilitation and Reintegration of War-Affected Children, Brussels, Belgium, 22-23 October, 2008).

[20] Nicole Ball and Luc van de Goor, "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles," *Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' Conflict Research Unit* (August 2006): 1, 7; Such references can usually be found within the articles, guides and handbooks issued by other UN entities, such as UNICEF and UNDP or INGOs , mainly in the articles made available through the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers and Save the Children.

[21] Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, "How to Guide: Monitoring and Evaluation for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programs," *United Nations Development Program* (Geneva, Switzerland, 2009).

[22] For other examples of handbooks used see also Department of Peacekeeping Operations, "Second generation disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) Practices in peace operations," United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/publications/ddr/ddr_062010.pdf (issued January 2010, accessed 5 September 2010).

up the framework, it is necessary to review the literature published in the past 7 years specifically addressing the child soldiers rehabilitation and reintegration issues.

Some of the first studies on the reintegration efforts appear in 2003 and these specifically address gender issues. Vanessa Farr's article examines the importance of gender perspectives in any disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts conducted by the UN and international agencies.[23] Pointing out the lack of women's inclusion in the general DDR processes, it encourages their active participation in planning and implementation, as well as greater attention to incorporating gender issues in the initiatives. Building further on the concerns of gender exclusion from programs, Kathleen Kostelny highlights the cultural and traditional stigmatization which existed in the various reintegration efforts from 1990 to 2002.[24] Published in 2004, the study provides specific recommendations to consider helping the reintegration process of the girl child. These recommendations call for greater efforts in ensuring psychosocial recovery, promoting community acceptance and changing of attitudes and behavior through the conduct of sensitization efforts on sexual violence and its impact on girls, and finally through provision of economic development opportunities. That same year, Christine Knudsen, the Child Protection Specialist from Save the Children, presents research that shows the importance of training agencies and organizations how to provide recruitment prevention means, such as closeness to the family, regular educational programming, and care taking of marginalized and vulnerable in the community.[25] As part of that prevention effort, Knudsen suggests that educating armed groups about children' rights is a powerful tool toward preventing recruitment. Nonetheless, when prevention is not possible, Knudsen refers to community reintegration through play and sports, psychological counseling and traditional healing mechanisms. In addition, Knudsen claims that education can be considered the most effective holistic reintegration tool. Two points should be raised here. First, this article was the first effort to address a holistic concept of reintegration. Second, education is defined broadly and is considered as a long-term recovery tool, not only for the children, but also for the community affected by conflict. While Kostelny's and Farr's research considered training and sensitization of communities, this article directly calls for development of educational opportunities for and in the communities. Because education and learning have a great power

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[23] Vanessa Farr, "The Importance of a gender perspective to successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes," *Disarmament Forum* 4 (2003):25-35.
[24] Kathleen Kostelny, "What about the Girls?" *Cornell International Law Journal* 37 (2004):505-512.
[25] Christine Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration during an Ongoing Conflict," *Cornell International Law Journal* Vol 37 (2004): 497-504.

to positively affect people's attitudes, inclusion of educational opportunities for the girl child soldiers as per Knudsen's recommendations can be considered vital indicator of reintegration's effectiveness.

In fact, Michael Wessells, one of the most established names in the field of child soldiering and reintegration, further builds on this notion in his article on child soldiers, peace education and post conflict reconstruction for peace.[26] Wessells points out in his article that lack of educational opportunities is often one of the greatest causes for children's voluntary involvement in armed forces and the failure of DDR programs. This is why he strongly urges that DDR programs and in particular rehabilitation and reintegration programs provide effective and well planned educational opportunities in their reintegration efforts. He further highlights that such settings can be used effectively to teach about peace, demonstrating through examples, how education can be applied to heal communities, include girls and vulnerable children and contribute toward a psychosocial reintegration. It should be noted that Wessells, like Knudsen, views education in a broad sense, such as vocational training, sensitization work, literacy and basic education, and finally development of livelihood incentives for and in the communities. In 2005, Lucia Castelli, Elena Locatelli and Mark Canavera make similar conclusions while collecting lessons learned in northern Uganda.[27] Analyzing the questionnaires and interviews with children reintegrated through the Associazione Volontari per il Servizio Internazionale (AVSI), the researchers conclude that the provision of education and humanitarian intervention is most beneficial when it involves the family and the community in the implementation activities.

All of these studies address individual areas and concerns of rehabilitation and reintegration programs. Elizabeth Jareg, a Save the Children program advisor from Norway, is the first to discuss the programmatic implementation of rehabilitation and reintegration in a more structured and coordinated manner, and in fact the only one to provide a specific list of guidelines. In her article from 2005, she stresses the importance of rehabilitative aspects within the reintegration initiatives. In addition, having collected twenty years of experience in the field, Jareg suggests 6 programmatic points, which if implemented by NGOs and INGOs, would contribute towards successful rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers. These are (1) restoring the family relationships, (2) re-establishing relationships with the

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[26] Michael Wessells, "Child Soldiers, Peace Education and Postconflict Reconstruction for Peace," 363-369.
[27] Lucia Castelli, Elena Locatelli and Mark Canavera, "Psycho-social support for war affected Children in Northern Uganda: Lessons Learned," Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, www.child-soldiers.org (accessed December 15, 2008).

community, (3) promoting children's health, (4) organizing learning opportunities, (5) providing vocational training and livelihood incentives, and (6) providing opportunities for children to play and build down stress through recreation.[28] While her key programmatic elements do not cover all of the aspects of a child soldier reintegration, she addresses psychosocial reintegration and gender considerations as cross-cutting issues and bases her framework on the legal rights of children as present in international law, incorporating issues of juvenile justice, their rights and responsibilities. In addition, her list provides general guidance to local NGOs, creating a blend between programmatic and cultural flexibility with internationally set rules and standards. Her research can therefore provide the most encompassing theory for the development of a working list to aid local initiatives.

Most literature published in 2005 and 2006 further builds on Jareg's structure. However, it also provides input toward managing legal challenges of child soldiers' reintegration. Wessells and Godfrey M. Musila look specifically into the issues of juvenile justice and how it is applied to the child combatants. Researching the application of justice and punishment of minor-offenders ages 15 through 18, Musila's research agrees with that of Wessells on the application of the restorative justice principle.[29] Showing the consequences of participation with the armed groups, Musila's and Wessells' studies suggest that restorative justice has a positive effect on the reintegration of children, and should be considered a crucial element of such efforts for the 15 to 18 age gap, which is considered a child under the international law, however lawfully be recruited and conscripted into the military in many countries. Wessells shows additionally how restitution through traditional cleansing and healing mechanisms can be implemented as a more effective tool to achieving the reintegration efforts in the family, the community and the child.

The outpouring of studies and analysis presented in 2007 show that many of the recommendations were not implemented effectively, allowing gaps in rehabilitation and reintegration programs. The Survey of War Affected Youth (SWAY), conducted by Jeannie Annan, Christopher Blattman, Khristopher Clarson and Dyan Mazurana in northern Uganda,

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[28] Elizabeth Jareg, "Crossing Bridges and Negotiating Rivers – Rehabilitation and Reintegration of children associated with Armed Groups," *Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers*, www.child-soldiers.org (accessed 25 October 2008).

[29] Godfrey M. Musila, "Challenges in establishing the accountability of child soldiers for human rights violations: Restorative justice as an option," *African Human Rights Law Journal* 5 (2005): 321-334; Wessells, *Child Soldiers*.

evaluates specific programming to rehabilitate LRA returnees.[30] Surveying 741 boys in 2005 and 2006, and 619 girls in 2007, the team focuses on child soldiers as well as other war affected youth in the region. The study shows that rehabilitation centers struggled to provide follow-up care, that programs were failing to properly address the issues of girl child soldiers and that work with families and communities was not properly administered, leading to frustration among the youth and lack of proper provision of livelihood means. In addition, the survey shows that programs were not sufficiently equipped to address medical cases and physical injuries, and finally, faced challenges providing comprehensive psychosocial assistance. The recommendations outlined in this survey all call for more specific programming in order to sufficiently address all of these areas of work, confirming the value of Jareg's 6 programmatic points. Julia Guyot's research, presented at the 4th World Congress on Family Law & Children's Rights in Cape Town, further details the necessity of adequately addressing the post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).[31] Together with Katherine Stott's research, study confirms that abandoning traditional psychological tools for rehabilitation of child soldiers completely and replacing them solely with culturally based healing mechanisms creates a rift, destroying a platform for the RR programs to sufficiently address deeply ingrained emotional and psychological effects of the war on children.[32]

It can be noticed that since Jareg, there are once again individual areas which receive attention in reintegration studies. However, Lorea Russell and Elzbieta M. Gozdziak's article is one of the first to examine the efforts in a more collective manner.[33] Their examination points for the first time towards the insufficiencies of the programs as a result of too many different, yet similar approaches. Gravely concerned with the duplication of services on the one end, the research shows that activities are being omitted which would have been needed to allow for adequate psychosocial healing. In particular, the study looks at the center-based approaches, showing that they have become the standard tools available for implementation of rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives, evaluating their effectiveness and concluding that community based approaches needed to be further developed.

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[30] Jeannie Annan, Christopher Blattman, Khristopher Carlson and Dyan Mazurana, "The Survey of War Affected Youth," *Feinstein International Center, AVSI Uganda, UNICEF Uganda*, http://chrisblattman.com/projects/sway/ (accessed on 25 May 2010).

[31] Julie Guyot, "Suffer the Children: the psychosocial rehabilitation of child soldiers as a function of peace-building," Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, www.child-soldiers.org (accessed 17 December 2008).

[32] Katharine Stott, "Out of sight, out of mind? The psychosocial needs of children formerly associated with armed forces: a Case Study of Save the Children UK's work in Beni and Lubero territories, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of Congo," *International Journal of Health Planning and Management* 24 (2009): 52-72.

[33] Lorea Russell and Elzbieta M. Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 58 (2006): 57-65.

Further research conducted in 2007 confirms how much impact community and their traditional values have on the psychosocial reintegration. Myriam Denov, discusses the correctness of cultural beliefs in RR efforts; suggesting that culture is not always therapeutic, showing how traditional systems in some African societies further ostracize girl returnees, thereby harming the initial work that was conducted by NGOs.[34] Wessells on the other hand does not fully support the notion of abandoning traditions, suggesting that culture can also enhance the reintegration efforts and that complete omission could ultimately lead to failure of the reintegration effort.[35] He identifies in his research that there needs to be a balance and inclusion of both western and cultural approaches, but that programs need to be sensitive to ensure that such balance was always geared toward providing the child with tools for rehabilitation within his or her cultural context, rather than creating a greater divide. With such statement, Wessells shifts the responsibility of NGOs to more focused community based programming.

During 2006, when much academic research was being presented, *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards* were drafted. A year later, *Paris Principles* were also issued. However, while both documents are mentioned, no scholarly literature provides evaluation or further discusses the documents' applicability and feasibility in the context of child RR initiatives. The only reference toward their evaluation can be seen in the article by Nicole Ball and Luc van de Goor from the Clingendael Institute, on general DDR challenges.[36] The research's importance can be found in its provision of questions to guide the design and implementation of the DDR on the national and international level, distinguishing between issues that DDR in general can and cannot do, and calling for greater coordination among relevant entities. However, the research fails to provide any insight into the *IDDRS* and to link it to the research conducted in the field.

As literature review shows, despite the nuances in their approaches, the scholarly research in this field considers similar main implementation areas when suggesting meaningful rehabilitation and reintegration efforts. Strong emphasis is placed on programs that address and support family and community initiatives, provide educational and vocational

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[34] Myriam Denov, "Is the Culture Always Right? The Dangers of Reproducing Gender Stereotypes and Inequalities in Psychosocial Interventions for War-Affected Children," Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (2007), www.child-soldiers.com (accessed October 25, 2008).

[35] Michael Wessells, "Trauma, Culture and Community: Getting behind Dichotomies," Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers Website (2007), www.child-soldiers.org (accessed November 15, 2008).

[36] Nicole Ball and Luc van de Goor, "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles."

opportunities, and consider child's physical and psychological wellbeing. In addition, some research points at special issues which need further consideration, such as juvenile justice and gender based implementation. As these topics echo throughout the research, they will be considered as topics of interest, or in other words as topics which research identified as contributing toward achieving long-term reintegration of child soldiers. Upon closer examination, it can be deduced that Jareg's rehabilitation and reintegration theory binds them all in a structured manner through the presentation of the 6 programmatic issues. Her work is to an extent complimented by Wessells's research. However, Jareg's study is the only attempt to address the rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers in a structured, systematic manner, providing general guidance to the design and development of RR efforts for local NGO initiatives. Since Jareg has in-depth experience in the field of child reintegration and rehabilitation, and her research is further supported by research available in the field of child rehabilitation and reintegration, the thesis will argue that her research and recommendations constitute a basis for development of a list of ingredients required for achieving rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers on a programmatic level. Therefore, general guidance from the scholarly literature provided by Jareg and Wessells will be used when formulating the research design and methodology, which will be briefly outlined here and further developed in Chapter 2.

III. Research Design and Methodology

While programs need to be flexible to adjust and adapt to cultural and political realities, too many differences in the application of programs thus far did not allow for lessons to be learned in a more systematic and effective way, contributing toward similar mistakes being made in various programs at different times before any corrective action could be taken by local, national or international entities. In addition, as highlighted by some studies, there was a duplication of services and omission of other activities, which could have been beneficial to the actual aim – achieving long term rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers.

The academic research available led to the development of questions that required evaluation of international community's involvement. While there is little to none analysis of the guidelines provided by the UN and affiliated programs and funds, the examination of their various guidelines and documents produced in the last 50 years shows that there is a development progression. These documents show that the UN attempted to respond to the

research available. Unfortunately, that response did not come in one succinct document, which could be adjusted according to lessons learned, but in many documents, different in format, length and detail provided. As a result, these documents were in a form unusable to the local initiatives, which often did not even have knowledge of their existence. The diversity of documents and the variety of recommendations contributes to the confusion. Which of the suggestions have greater importance? Did the next document supersede the previous, did it add to it or was it a completely new, fresh take and in contradiction with previously used guidelines? Were these guidelines considered when designing and implementing rehabilitation and reintegration programs, and if yes, which set had more value and importance? How did local initiatives learn of them? And finally, if there are all of these guidelines and recommendations available, why does academic research show continued gaps and discrepancies in the rehabilitation and reintegration work, consistently reporting similar or exactly the same mistakes in programs observed?

The thesis aims to assess the extent to which guidance in designing proper programs to achieve adequate rehabilitation and reintegration is present in the developed policy and academic frameworks but simply hidden in the vastness of paper and uncoordinated initiatives. The thesis will argue that progress could be made if there was a combined effort of the international, national and local programs in conjunction with the academic research, which would foster exchange of lessons learned and knowledge gained. The academic research confirms that when local initiatives are left to fend for themselves, it contributes towards their reinventing the wheel, and duplicating the work without the appropriate knowledge.

Applying guidelines in a coordinated effort, through the cooperation of international and national entities in educating and supporting local initiatives in their programmatic design would contribute in two ways. First, the mistakes of previous programs would not be repeated but adjusted and then passed on top down. This could be achieved when there are internationally developed and recognized guidelines, because they could provide a framework which can then be adjusted to fit the cultural, conflict and religious context, always in the best interest of the child. After all, the international community has spent a great amount of time interpreting what is in the best interest and deserves to be able to validate its theoretical work. Second, coordinated effort would resolve the greatest challenge local NGOs and their programs face – competition for resources. If there is a more regulated approach in program development of individual NGOs working in the same locality, it would show what can be

done at what level, providing international, national and local entities with clear delineation of duties and responsibilities. In addition, it would centralize the effort by teaming up different local initiatives to provide specific services that collectively could amount to a more synergized rehabilitation and reintegration effort in that area, district, region and country, rather than exhausting one program in an attempt to outbid others in provision of its interpretation of what rehabilitation and reintegration should be.

But, whether these assumptions hold true cannot be fully critically reflected upon due to the number of different documents, providing varied degree of detail and information on relevant guidelines and approaches. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to conduct an examination of the relevant UN documents, collating information provided in order to assess their practical applicability towards successful rehabilitation and reintegration by conducting comparative analysis of cases.

Testing these guidelines is important for two reasons. First, their practical testing allows identifying any gaps and inconsistencies in thinking, recognizing necessary adjustments. Second, as mentioned above, since these recommendations are developed by the international community they would allow for possible distribution of the same concept in all of the regions of the world. This would also mean that accountability in the programmatic implementation would be clearly indicated and provide a platform for lessons to be learned in a more methodological manner.

The development of a theoretical framework with which the conduct of the analysis is performed is supported by Jareg's research (as discussed briefly during the literature review). Her suggested guidelines provide a starting basis for a more systematic grouping of the recommendations, in addition to providing a programmatic structure to the rehabilitation and reintegration efforts.[37] Including examples of RR programs from various regions, she provides a global essence to the needs of successful RR programs, such as inclusion of gender issues and provision of medical assistance, as well as the flexibility of programs to learn and adjust both to the conflict and to the rehabilitation and reintegration needs.[38] Finally, because her research is embedded in international law, she indirectly also points out age of the child and cultural contexts for healing mechanisms according to the juvenile justice principles.[39] The versatility of her research and her theory of what constitutes successful rehabilitation and reintegration provides a good starting point in this research to create a working list for testing

[37] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 2.
[38] Jareg, "Crossing," 3, 4.
[39] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 9.

applicability and comprehensiveness of the international guidelines. In addition, because her theory is a hybrid of universalism that is flexible enough to allow adjustment, and a result of assessment of programs from different regions of the world, it contributes toward postulation that developed RR guidelines working list can also have applicability in other regions of the world. The significance of her research will be further discussed in Chapter 2.

The validation of the concepts mentioned above was conducted through the comparative analysis of similar cases. Through participant and naturalistic observations it was possible to collect data and information on how programs conduct their rehabilitation and reintegration efforts, and to then evaluate their effectiveness against the recommendations.[40] In addition, the comparative analysis of the two cases allowed for patterns to be discovered, such as weaknesses and strengths in the implementation of specific recommendations and guidelines, and to answer questions why these patterns were observed. It should be noted that the thesis will reflect the generalizeability of the findings from the two cases and only point towards the extent to which they could be utilized in other programs. The validation of such theory, however, would require additional field study analysis and can be considered a task for future research.

Five main principles guided the choice of the programs. First, in order to be able to address all of the important aspects of Jareg's theory, the cases needed to provide activities in those areas the theory considered as key points, namely vocational or educational training, building of family and community relationships, provision of health and medical service, inclusion of gender, and redevelopment of self through wholesome activities and play. Both cases therefore needed to provide some form of vocational training, implement some form of family tracing and family and community based sensitization work, as well as allow children to further develop through skills programming, apprenticeship, income winning opportunities, recreation and fun.

Second, this meant that the cases needed to have sets of same or similar rehabilitation and reintegration activities in their programs, such as transit centers, vocational or educational centers and community related work. This was important in order to provide a basis for

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[40] Gillian Fournier, "Naturalistic Observation," PsychCentral, http://psychcentral.com/encyclopedia/2009/naturalistic-observation/ (accessed on 9 February 2009); Mike Raulin, "Naturalistic Observation and Case-Study Research," Chapter 6 in the book *Research Methods*, by Graziano and Raulin, 2000, http://www.abacon.com/graziano/ch06/sld001.htm (accessed 25 January 2009); Janet Mann, Thomas Ten Have, James W. Plunkett, and Samuel J. Mesiels, "Time sampling: A methodological critique," *Child Development 62* (1991): 227-241; See also Roger Bakeman and John M. Gottman, *Observing interaction: An introduction to sequential Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

comparison of findings. Having more areas to examine allowed more thorough information gathering, ultimately leading to an in-depth comparative analysis of the outcomes.

Third, the programs needed to be managed and conducted by local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), rather than INGOs. This observation helped show how and whether local initiatives have knowledge of international guidelines and how they implement them. In addition, it was assumed that if local initiatives adapted the general directives to fit the local cultural context, such adaptation could show whether international guidelines can have applicability globally without disregarding the traditions and local customs. In other words, if international guidelines can be easily adjusted and applied by the two cases, their generalizeability can be hypothesized.

Fourth, the programs needed to be situated in areas that faced armed conflict and showed a record of active child abduction and forced recruitment. However, as field study was conducted in 2007 and 2008, it was important that programs were already well established at that time to show results of their work in the area. This also meant that they needed to be situated in areas, which experienced a level of stability and peace during the conduct of the observations. This combination portrayed an accurate picture of the challenges on the ground, and pointed out limitations to the implementation of the RR guidelines working list. This was central to discerning whether the abstract RR guidelines working list could find application in practice, and as such provided a platform to look at possible causes of any inapplicability. It should be noted, that while careful considerations were made, the conflict situation in the regions could only be predicted to an extent, and as such follow-up visit to the case study in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was not possible due to intensified fighting in the region as of October 2007 (shortly after the observations were conducted).

Finally, to allow for comparison of similar cases, two countries from a same region were chosen. This meant that there were similar external factors influencing the programs, as well as similar cultural and traditional contexts, such as the form of recruitment. While no two cases are completely the same, the comparative analysis of like cases was better suited to allow validation of the RR guidelines working list, because it allowed for a more thorough analysis of why similar cases produced different results, or confirming the theoretical framework where both cases had same results.

Two specific programs in the Great Lakes region, *Give Me a Chance* (GMAC) in northern Uganda and the *Communaute des Eglises de Pentecote en Afrique Centrale* (CEPAC)

in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) matched all the five main criteria.[41] After contacting various NGOs in the region, these two showed great transparency and presented themselves as the best suitable programs. Therefore, the two organizations were chosen for further research. While CEPAC is the largest democratically governed church network in the eastern DRC, GMAC is a non-denominational NGO. The day-to-day agenda and the approach taken when implementing the rehabilitation and reintegration activities varied and was therefore the key dependent variable. Both programs had a complex network, employed local rather than international staff, and considered cultural features in their programs. All these variables contributed to a new, fresh set of data for the final comparative analysis and validation of the RR guidelines working list.

Working Definitions

The two concepts used most often throughout this thesis are *child* and *rehabilitation and reintegration*. The meaning associated with the word *child*, observing in Western traditions, is usually connected with age delineation, while non-Western cultures associate it with rites, events, and rituals.[42] As such, the term will have a different meaning to different societies. While the thesis agrees that the experience of childhood and adulthood vary depending on the culture and society, it supports studies showing that the development of young adults is not fully completed until the late teens or early twenties.[43] In accordance with the definition adopted by the UN conventions and treaties, this thesis will therefore use age to separate child from adult and view all those younger than 18 as children, irrespective of their gender, relationships and circumstances.[44] As a result, when discussing issues of a child, the thesis refers to work conducted with and for all those who are 18 and younger. Accordingly, all those between the ages of 18 and 25 will be defined in the thesis as young adults (reflecting the

[41] Christian Relief Network, "About Us," CRN, http://crn.no/About+us/Where+we+work/DR+Congo (accessed February 10, 2009). As nationally recognized NGOs, both GMAC and CEPAC work through their local chapters in different parts of the country in which they operate. Both programs conduct similar activities and report back to their partner, *Christian Relief Network* (CRN), one of their principal donors.

[42] Alicia VerHage, "The Challenge of Implementation," *Transnational Civil Society's Ability to Successfully Influence State Actors on Human Rights Issues through International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs): A case study of the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers* (MA Thesis, Rhodes University, 2009), 15, http://eprints.ru.ac.za/1682/1/Verhage-MA-TR09-97.pdf (accessed August 26, 2010).

[43] Leslie Sabbagh, "The Teen Brain, Hard at Work... No, really," *Scientific American Reports: Special Edition on Child Development,* 17(2007):55.

[44] United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN GA Resolution 44/25*, (New York City, 20 November 1989), Article1.

terminology in the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS)).[45]

The second concept is of equal importance because it establishes the essence of this research. When asking the question how to best achieve *rehabilitation and reintegration* of children associated with armed groups, it is vital to ask what is implied by the use of the terms *rehabilitation and reintegration.* The term rehabilitation can often appear as a synonym for reintegration (the discussion on the relationship between rehabilitation and reintegration can be found in Chapter 1). In general terms, rehabilitation is concerned with the emotional and psychological effects of the reintegration, or according to its Latin form, to making one "fit again."[46] In essence, rehabilitation should help children "establish new foundations in life based on their individual capacities," addressing how they have been affected by their experiences and designing adequate support so that they can continue perceiving the world and events around them in a healthy, happy manner.[47] With this in mind, the thesis distinguishes between the two terms, adopting the definitions found in the *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards*, and *Paris Principles*. These state that reintegration is (1) "the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income," and as such can be viewed as "a social and economic process with an open time-frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level,"[48] and (2) a process "through which children transition into civil society and enter meaningful roles and identities as civilians, who are accepted by their families and communities," and through which "children access their rights, including formal and non-formal education, family unity, dignified livelihood and safety from harm."[49]

The thesis will view *best rehabilitation and reintegration* and *achieving rehabilitation and reintegration* as a long-term activity. While activities conducted during stays in interim centers contribute to the overall well-being of a child, the thesis will also be interested in learning how programs implement activities to produce a long-term effect within their families

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[45] United Nations, *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards*, United Nations IDDR Website http://unddr.org/iddrs/framework.php (accessed September 15, 2009).
[46] Medicine Net, "Rehabilitation Definition," Medicine Net.Com, http://www.medterms.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=5288 (accessed September 22, 2010).
[47] Graça Machel, *Promotion and protection of the Rights of Children: Study on the impact on children of armed conflict*, UNICEF, http://www.unicef.org/Graça/ (accessed March 24, 2009), Para 50.
[48] United Nations, *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS)*, Glossary and Definitions; United Nations Secretary-General, "Note to the General Assembly A/C.5/59/31," (New York City, United Nations, May 2005).
[49] UNICEF, *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups* (Paris, 5-7 February 2007), Definitions.

and communities covering periods of up to five years as suggested by IDDRS.[50] As a result, focus will be placed on activities contributing individually to the social or psychological development of a child, as well as on their combined benefit to the overall RR effort.

IV. The Significance of the Research

The most crucial significance of this thesis is that it examines ways to achieve the best possible rehabilitation and reintegration of children associated with armed groups. As the literature review has shown, programs vary in the extent to which they address gender, physical and psychological needs of the children and their efficiency to achieve real reintegration. There is a need for further guidance on how to promote successful reintegration of child soldiers and this thesis aims to contribute to this by analyzing the UN's guidelines and testing their effectiveness in RR programs. In an attempt to reach this objective, the thesis could further aid the international community and the body of academic research in many ways. First, the thesis provides an independent analysis of the newly developed reintegration and rehabilitation (RR) standards. While Honwana, Wessells, Blattman, Kostelny and others have evaluated different programs, no in-depth analysis of the implementation of the UN RR standards has been conducted. Their validation through case study analysis could lead to the postulation of a more methodical approach to designing and setting up rehabilitation and reintegration programs in other areas of conflict. Possible ways to developing a more coordinated approach could be by further developing the RR guidelines working list, developed in Chapter 2 and reevaluated in Chapter 5.

Second, since the thesis observed programs conducted by local NGOs, it enables their work to be recognized and given a voice within the academic community. Their work does not only validate effective international guidelines, it also validates local initiatives, showing that the international organizations and local initiatives can learn much from one another to afford the children the best possible assistance. Introducing these local NGOs and their work to the academic and international community provides new data to be added to the empirical knowledge available to date. Together with the findings of previous studies, this data can point toward specific approaches, challenges and successes that are similar across boundaries, identifying possible patterns and contribute in finding the answers how they can be adjusted to successfully achieve child RR in other regions.

[50] United Nations, *IDDRS*, Glossary and Definitions.

V. Challenges and Limitations

It is important to mention that this research has had a very specific set of challenges and limitations. Research ethics, the political situation in the regions, as well as the remoteness of the places were all limitations which influenced the final findings.

Both northern Uganda and the eastern DRC are still unstable. While there is peace in the northern parts of Uganda since 2007, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the major cause of the conflict, has not been seized yet. The constant threat of their return hangs heavy in the air. The situation is even worse in the eastern regions of the DRC. There are too many spillover ethnic conflicts from neighboring countries, such as Rwanda and Sudan, which cause disturbance to the peace along the long borders. To add to the complexity, there are many non-state actors and armed groups who roam the rain forests, causing constant commotion, continued abduction, pillaging and rape among the population. As these places are not safe, travel to the regions to conduct research was dangerous and logistically challenging. Therefore, the envisaged multiple trips to the regions to conduct follow-up visits and observations were not always possible. However, to circumvent this challenge, additional data was solicited through feedback forms, emails exchanges with the local staff and the staff at the headquarters.

Even more important than being able to conduct field visits and observations in person, the constant unrest legitimately led to questioning whether the effectiveness of the programs can be shown. If there is continued conflict can it be shown that the examined guidelines truly have an effect on the reintegration and rehabilitation of the children? The thesis attempted to answer this question through the provision of a theoretical framework. This framework evaluated the conceptual design through practice, rather than the other way around. As the goal was to learn more about what programmatic guidance could allow for successful implementation of RR initiatives, the fact that the instability in the region presented a challenge did not negatively affect the analysis of the theoretical framework, nor did it prove the programs' failure to achieve rehabilitation and reintegration. Finally, it should be noted, that a part of the answer to this question has to come from peace-building initiatives, which are outside the scope of this thesis.

The cultural and linguistic challenges, due to the diversity of the cultures and languages spoken in these areas also need to be mentioned. As the two countries are not homogeneous,

but rather a mixture of multiple number of completely different tribes, cultures and people, the language barriers and cultural differences presented a great challenge to obtaining in-depth, accurate information and data. In addition, as research attempted to find best child RR, there was constant interaction with the minors. Thus, in addition to other challenges, an ethical code of conduct needed to be adhered to at all times. While this was resolved by conducting conversations with the children under the supervision of social workers at all times, it also contributed to possible misinterpretation or provision of partial information. The thesis attempted to avoid this through personal observations and follow-up conversations with others to reaffirm general concepts. However, the reaffirmation could not be received for all information provided by individuals; therefore the thesis had to rely on the information provided.

Finally, a level of cultural sensitivity needed to be developed by asking questions and conversing with the local population, reading books and materials, interviewing staff from local and international organizations, and by observing local cultures. However the researcher, by default of coming from a different cultural context, can never have the absolute sensitivity to the culture, religion and traditions to fully comprehend all aspects that culture in such a short time. It was therefore attempted to solicit information from the local staff on value systems and their importance, as well as contexts of information gathered from interviewees. In addition, time was spent in the regions prior to visiting each of the programs to learn about the different cultures and tribes in northern Uganda and eastern DRC, as an aid in responding sensitively and respectfully to all subjects interviewed and observed.

VI. Chapter Overview

The thesis has been divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 conducts a narrative analysis of the historical developments of children's rights during an armed conflict, leading to the existing standards. As part of this analysis, the chapter highlights the evolution both the definition of a child and development of international standards underwent. After the familiarization with the main international documents, the chapter turns to the specific developments in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of children associated with armed groups, introducing different DDR concepts. As a result of the discussion, Chapter 1 sets the stage for the development of the analytical framework.

Chapter 2 is solely dedicated to the development of the RR guidelines working list and the analysis of the individual guidelines and recommendations within it. The chapter sets the stage for the case study analysis, establishing which guidelines should have more relevance in the case studies according to their working definitions.

Chapters 3 and 4 briefly describe the political situation in the areas where case studies have been done and then turn to individual case study analyses. The analysis of each separate case is conducted by comparing the RR guidelines working list developed in Chapter 2 against the findings made during field visits in 2007 and 2008.

Chapter 5 conducts a general comparative analysis of the cases, in addition to a comparative analysis and reflection of the RR guidelines working list. The two sections allow for validation of theory and the hypothesis presented Chapter 5 also evaluates the guidelines, proposing adjustments and raising questions that need further investigation before the RR guidelines working list can be adopted as a comprehensive RR working list.

VII. Main Findings

With the task to validate the reintegration theory according to Jareg and Wessells, and the applicability and effectiveness of the RR guidelines working list, the thesis contributed towards new data, introducing two programs, whose efforts for the most part, agree with the past academic research. This finding allowed for identification of general weakness in the design of RR programs. At the same time, the programs also show clear divergences from the past research, providing insights into ways to include the girl child and other vulnerable children in the RR programs effectively.

The analysis further shows that there are 5 main documents, which build the core of international body of documents and that guide the RR efforts in more depth. Through the cases studies it becomes easily discernable, which recommendations aid the RR efforts, and how they can be utilized in a more structured manner to help national and international, as well as local initiatives.

VIII. Conclusion

While it is unlikely that children can be taken out of conflicts around the world, it is possible to coordinate the efforts of international, national and local organizations to conduct activities to achieve their release and successfully implement their reintegration and rehabilitation. Such rehabilitation and reintegration, however, should provide long-term solutions to be in the best interest of each child going through the program. While research has been conducted on specific aspects of it, so far very little is known about the effectiveness of the standards developed by the UN and their affiliated programs and funds. The thesis aims to answer the question how to best achieve rehabilitation and reintegration of children associated with armed groups by conducting the comparative analysis of two similar cases in Uganda and DRC. The aim of the introduction was to familiarize the reader with the concepts relevant to the thesis and to set up its design and methodology. It will be the task of following chapters to provide more detail and analysis to the concepts introduced.

Chapter 1
Children's Rights during Armed Conflict

"The question of children and armed conflict is an integral part of the United Nations' core responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, for the advancement of human rights and for sustainable human development."[51]

Secretary-General Kofi Annan

I. Introduction

In early August 2009, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 1882, in which it reported the progress made in the field of the protection of children during an armed conflict.[52] The adoption of this resolution occurred twenty years after the ratification of the *Convention on the Rights of a Child* (CRC), which pledged to create a safer world for children where child abuse would be eradicated. While UNSC Resolution 1882 report confirmed the existence of children's rights abuses, such as sexual child slavery, child soldiering, internal displacement and an increase in the number of refugee children due to armed conflict, it also pointed out progress made in the past twenty years to improve the implementation mechanisms to protect children's rights, especially in situations of armed conflict.[53] It showed that world powers and UN Member states had undergone a learning process, resulting in a more coordinated commitment and development of tools to protect children's rights and dignity than what was available two decades ago.[54] The development of such codified and systematic standards and guidelines was not easy, and since these tools were fairly new, the resolution called for their practical implementation and testing to confirm their practical applicability.

What are these tools and standards? How did they develop and, more importantly, why are they considered a theoretical basis for more successful practical implementation? In pursuit to find answers to these questions, the chapter will provide a descriptive and chronological analysis of the major documents produced by the UN Member states in the past two decades since the drafting of the CRC. The chosen documents constitute international law and key documents consulted by the UN organizations when conducting child-minded efforts

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[51] Kofi Annan, "Children and Armed Conflict," (speech given to the Security Council at the United Nations, New York City, United States, July 26, 2000).

[52] Security Council, *UN Security Council Resolution S/RES/1882* (New York City, 4 August 2009), Article 1.

[53] Security Council, *UN S/RES/1882*, Preamble, Para 7 (a), 11, 20.

[54] Johan Kaufmann, Dick Leurdijk and Nico Schrijver, *The World in Turmoil: Testing the UN's Capacity* (New York City: The Academic Council on the United Nations System, 1991), 143. Malfrid Grude Flekkoy, *A Voice for Children: Speaking Out as their Ombudsman* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1991), 213.

in conflict areas. As such, they will help outline the two decades of development of existing internationally codified rules and guidelines for the protection of children during an armed conflict, especially in the case of the children associated with armed groups, as they stand today. After the general discussion, the chapter will focus on the developments in the field of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). The UN's DDR efforts, developed as a result of general peace-building discussions, can be considered as tools for assistance to areas in conflict. However, the aim of the section will not be to discuss all aspects of the DDR process as this is too great of a topic and outside the scope of this thesis. The main focus of the discussion is placed on examining its development toward the creation of child-minded reintegration and rehabilitation guidelines and principles.

The documents presented and discussed in this chapter are the backbone to the international laws and treaties and have been adopted as the leading documents when addressing protection of children's rights by the UN Member states and international non-profit organizations. Their substantive familiarization and analysis will set the stage for the preparation of the operational framework, which is developed in chapter 2.

II. Developments leading to the Existing Standards for protection of Children during Armed Conflict

The idea of human rights is of modern origin. According to some research, it had its beginnings in the French and American Revolutions' ideology.[55] The active pursuit for an implementable definition of the human rights concept, and with it that of children's rights during an armed conflict is a development of the last 50 years.

At the end of the First World War, appalled at the plight of children in Europe as a result of the war, Eglantyne Jebb established the "Save the Children Fund." She noted at the time that it was "the children who pay the highest price for our short-sighted economic policies, our political blunders, our wars."[56] The Fund established itself quickly and worked closely with the League of Nations in the hope of codifying a set of rules for the protection of children's rights during an armed conflict. Though it gained international recognition by 1923, with the collapse of the League of Nations in the rage of World War II, the Fund's endeavors remained

[55] Martin Woodhead and Heather Montgomery ed, *Understanding Childhood* (Milton Keynes: Open University, 2003), 137.
[56] Malcolm Hill and Kay Tisdall, *Children and Society*, (London: Longman, 1997), 27.

fruitless.[57] As a consequence, World War II committed all the mistakes and atrocities of the First World War against children, just on a grander scale.[58] In the aftermath of the war, the organization, supported by Member states such as Poland, launched a new effort to codify rules for the protection of children's rights during armed conflicts around the world. Among such efforts were the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, written by the League of Nations' successor, the United Nations, and the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child. However, these declarations not only lacked legal means and enforcement mechanisms, they also lacked momentum and the detail needed to contribute toward their proper implementation.[59]

Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions (Protocol II)

Having witnessed the brutalities of World War II, child-protection movements, such as Save the Children Fund, continued lobbying for internationally recognized children's rights, with a focus on their protection during an armed conflict. The world was still too weakened by the aftermath of the war to take immediate action, but the lobby helped raise necessary awareness, and slowly child protection-oriented thinking began emerging in declarations and discussions. The *Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Convention* of 1949 relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts can be seen as one example of such thinking.[60] The *Geneva Conventions* emerged from the lessons learned during the World War II as a codex of international humanitarian law, detailing rules on the treatment of civilians, prisoners of war, the shipwrecked and the injured. Its *Additional Protocol II*, besides providing general statements on the proper treatment of the civilian population during an armed conflict, also addressed the issue of child recruitment in an international setting.[61] In Article 4, paragraph 3, the *Additional Protocol II* specifically addressed the care and aid which was to be

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[57] Hill and Tisdall, *Children and Society*, 27.
[58] Linda B. Miller, *World Order and Local Disorder: United Nations and Internal Conflicts* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 1967), 20.
[59] Miller, *World Order and Local Disorder*, 20.
[60] See United Nations Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of the International Humanitarian Law applicable in Armed Conflicts, *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II)* (New York City, United States, 8 June 1977).
[61] International Committee of the Red Cross, "The Geneva Conventions: the Core of the International humanitarian Law," ICRC, http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/genevaconventions#a1 (accessed August 15, 2009).

afforded to children, clearly stating that all children "who have not attained the age of fifteen" were not to be recruited nor allowed "to take part in the hostilities." [62]

Though the *Additional Protocol II* was a concrete step in the right direction, stipulating some core provisions that are "undisputed for even non-state parties," it can also be seen as a hindrance to any speedy development at the time.[63] One of the main criticisms of the *Geneva Conventions* is that it lacks political will, leaving the compliance with its provisions to be often perceived as selective.[64] In addition, by setting the age of unlawful recruitment at 15 in paragraph 3, the *Additional Protocol II* also implicitly created the definition of a child in international law defined.[65] Without realizing the effects such classification would have, the *Additional Protocol II* contributed to diverging views, which still persist in the literature today and hindered the development of a unified approach for the protection of children for several decades.[66]

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

In 1979, two years after the *Additional Protocol II* was adopted and the Helsinki Final Act was signed, the United Nations pronounced the International Year of the Child. Influenced by the aftermath of the war, there was a revived attention towards enshrining "respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms."[67] The Polish government used this opportunity to propose a convention on children's rights, which received the General Assembly's approval. The Commission on Human Rights took ten years to present the final draft of the document, which was approved in 1989.[68] The United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar stated at that time, that

> The way a society treats its children reflects not only its qualities of compassion and protective caring, but also its sense of justice, its commitment to the future and its urge

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[62] Diplomatic Conference, *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions (Protocol II),* Article 4, Para 3(c).
[63] Knut Doermann, "GLOBAL: Do the Geneva Conventions still stand up?" IRIN Humanitarian News and Analysis, http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=84961 (accessed August 12, 2010).
[64] Doermann, "GLOBAL: Do the Geneva Conventions still stand up?"
[65] Hill and Tisdall, *Children and Society*, 142. See also Hugo Slim, "GLOBAL: Do the Geneva Conventions still stand up?" *IRIN Humanitarian News and Analysis,* http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=84961 (accessed September 12, 2010),
[66] Geraldine Van Bueren, "The International Law on the Rights of the Child," http://books.google.at/books?id=xEAmkaqn8lMC&pg=PA33&lpg=PA33&dq=definition+of+a+child+in+the+international+law&source=bl&ots=Ldy5chU4Tv&sig=MPUx1tJAsl-7sKRYsaPdDpULTec&hl=de&ei=uPdwTJH4JcWNOLWsrIUL&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=4&ved=0CCoQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=definition%20of%20a%20child%20in%20the%20international%20law&f=false (accessed on August 15, 2010).
[67] Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Final Act," http://www.hri.org/docs/Helsinki75.html#H4.7 (accessed August 10, 2010), Article VII. The Helsinki Final Act was signed on 1 August 1975 by 34 European States, Canada and United States of America.
[68] Woodhead and Montgomery ed, *Understanding Childhood*, 27.

> to enhance the human condition for coming generations. This is as indisputably true of the community of nations as it is of nations individually.[69]

This commitment was shown first and foremost by the number of Member states who signed and ratified the *CRC*.[70] It was hailed as "the most significant policy development intended to promote and protect children's rights," and many hoped it would be a force for good.[71] However, because it attempted to address and include all issues related to children's rights, it became apparent during the long drafting period that the *CRC* would not find universal endorsement.[72]

While some hail the international effort to codify children's rights, others claim that the *CRC* is not only gender-centric but also ethnocentric.[73] Critics argue that it upholds the western understanding of childhood and is yet another document on what "adults thought children's rights should be."[74] These claims are reflected in the quest to find the proper definition of childhood. A rift still exists between the activists rejecting the idea of universalism and those who support a universal definition of a child regardless of the cultural context. During the drafting period, non-universalists argued that the ideas and age delineation of childhood depended on the culture into which a child was born; since cultures varied, childhood could not be captured into one single event as this concept ignored the plurality of children's experiences.[75] This then not only meant that *CRC* neglected the fact that children were to be given certain rights and privileges according to cultural context, but it also meant that the age at which a child was viewed as an adult could not be presented in the document as a constant.[76]

Though the claims mentioned above have validity, and correctly state that childhood and the experiences associated with it will depend on the cultural context, this thesis will agree with those pursuing universalism of children's rights on the issue of age because that pursuit

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[69] Flekkoy, *A Voice for Children*, 17.
[70] As of October 2009, 193 countries have ratified the Convention. For more information on the treaty, see also http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en.
[71] Hill and Tisdall, *Children and Society*, 29.
[72] Bob Franklin ed, *The New Handbook of Children's Rights: Comparative Policy and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2002), 20. As of Aug 2010, Somalia and United States are the only two UN States Members to abstain from ratification.
[73] Hill and Tisdall, *Children and Society,* 30. For more information on the work and publications of Professor Frances E. Olsen, see http://www.law.ucla.edu/home/index.asp?page=645 (accessed October 20, 2008).
[74] Hill and Tisdall, *Children and Society*, 33. Woodhead and Montgomery ed, *Understanding Childhood*, 157.
[75] Rivard, "Child Soldiers and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programs." Hill and Tisdall, *Children and Society,* 21. See also Heather Montgomery, Rachel Burr and Martin Woodhead ed, *Changing Childhoods: local and global* (Milton Keynes: Open University, 2003), vii. Franklin ed, *The New Handbook of Children's Rights: Comparative Policy and Practice*, 17.
[76] Franklin ed, *The New Handbook of Children's Rights*, 19. Hill and Tisdall, *Children and Society*, 25.

provides protection from a potential danger by states and individuals to misuse adolescents under the premises of the cultural context.[77] The research conducted in 2007 supports the notion that the Universalist approach is necessary and that despite variations of cultural context, a 16 year-old, no matter the birthplace, cannot and should not be viewed as a fully fledged adult. Research points to adolescence as a period of role confusion where cognitive thinking, emotional and physical independence are slowly achieved until fully developed in the late teens or the early twenties.[78] In other words, a youth at the age of 17, though outwardly equipped to take on the responsibilities of an adult, still undergoes emotional and mental changes that may cause him to act as a child rather than as an adult. In stressful situations, such as war, this leads to overtly aggressive behavior, lack of complete understanding of the magnitude of actions, and greater emotional and psychological impact and trauma.[79]

Such research and considerations were not available at the time the *CRC* was drafted. However, a consensus was reached partially in favor of the universal approach, defining a child as "every human being below the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier."[80] Confusion caused by this partial decision can be seen when addressing the issues of the protection of children's rights during an armed conflict. Even though Article 1 set the age of a child at eighteen and below, Article 38 kept the recruitment age as set in the *Additional Protocol II of the Geneva Convention*, asking the states parties to "take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of *fifteen years* do not take a direct part in hostilities" and to "refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of *fifteen years* into their armed forces."[81] Aware of the gap created

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[77] David M. Rosen, *Armies of the Young: Child Soldiers in War and Terrorism* (Piscataway: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 3. See also Jenny Kuper, *International Law Concerning Child Civilians in Armed Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 8, 9. See also Erik H. Erikson, "Phasen der psychosozialen Entwicklung," *Werner Stangls Arbeitsblätter*, http://arbeitsblaetter.stangl-taller.at/PSYCHOLOGIEENTWICKLUNG/EntwicklungErikson.shtml (accessed October 31, 2008).

[78] Erikson, "Phasen der psychosozialen Entwicklung"; Sabbagh, "The Teen Brain, Hard at Work: No, really," *Scientific American Reports* (June 2007): 55; Jay N Giedd, Jonathan Blumenthal, Neal O Jeffries, et al, "Brain development during childhood and adolescence: a longitudinal MRI study," *Nature Neuroscience*, Vol. 2 no. 10 (1999): 861-863; Sharon Begley, "Getting inside a teen brain," *Newsweek*, Vol. 135 no. 9 (2000), 58-59; Ronald E. Dahl, "Adolescent Brain Development: A Framework for Understanding Unique Vulnerabilities and Opportunities," Wisconsin Council on Children and Families Website, http://www.wccf.org/pdf/dahl.pdf (accessed Dec 12, 2010). For further research conducted in South Africa, see also Lukas Muntingh, "After Prison: The case for Offender Reintegration," *Monographs* 52 (2001), http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/monographs/No52/Chap6.html (accessed August 18, 2010).

[79] Stott, "Out of sight, out of mind," 55.

[80] United Nations General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN GA Resolution 44/25* (New York City, 20 November 1989), Article 1.

[81] *Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN GA Resolution 44/25*, Articles 38: 1-4, and 39. Emphasis added.

between the age set for a child and the age allowing recruitment, the text attempted to rectify by stating that when "recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, states parties shall endeavor to give priority to those who are oldest."[82] Well intended wording caused much dispute. Having defined a child as every human being under the age of 18, the *Convention* still consented to military recruitment at the age of 15 to appease national governments who recruited at such age and as a result created "converging tendencies and constant bickering."[83] Ultimately, such wording meant that persons between ages 15 and 18 were not to be treated as adults under international law, which proved to be in their favor when considering accountability for crimes committed and granting them special protection.[84] Nonetheless, it also meant that under international law, governments and non-state actors could not be held accountable for child recruitment, opening the door for legitimate and potentially systematic misuse of the age group.

Though it is rightly being said that this is the first document to bring together under one single binding international instrument provisions of international law pertaining to children, the *CRC* failed to provide all encompassing protection by avoiding explicit age delineation that would apply to all situations, especially in the case of a military recruitment.[85] But it was "wrong to assume that the *Convention* was the final word on children's rights."[86] Future conflicts around the world revealed that there were additional gaps and discrepancies in the *CRC*, which required further conversation. They also confirmed that apart from the good will of the states signatories, the *CRC* lacked enforcement mechanisms and was thus only effective to the extent that countries allowed it to be.[87] This set in motion the development of more elaborate programs and standards to protect the rights of a child in armed conflict.[88]

The African Charter

The same year that the General Assembly held a World Summit for Children (1990), the Organization of African Unity (OUA) began drafting the *African Charter on the Rights and*

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[82] *Convention on the Rights of the Child, UN GA Resolution 44/25.*
[83] Kaufmann, Leurdijk and Schrijver, *The World in Turmoil: Testing the UN's Capacity,* 75.
[84] International Committee of the Red Cross, "Child Soldiers," 7-8.
[85] VerHage, "The Challenge of Implementation," *Transnational Civil Society's Ability to Successfully Influence State Actors on Human Rights Issues through International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs),* 15-16.
[86] Michael Freeman ed, *Children's Rights: A Comparative Perspective* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1996), 4.
[87] Hill and Tisdall, *Children and Society*, 33. See also Woodhead and Montgomery ed, *Understanding Childhood,* 157.
[88] Lisbeth Palme, *Personal Reflections on the New Rights for Children in War by Chairperson National Committee for UNICEF* (Norway: Sigma Forlag, 1991), 1.

Welfare of the Child. The Charter was finalized and entered into force in 1999 with a primary role to stress "both *the rights and the responsibilities* of the child" and to give an "equal weight to the concurrent responsibilities of the community towards the child."[89] Some critics saw this as a response to the *CRC*'s reflection of the western world, missing important "socio-cultural and economic realities of the African experiences;" others felt it did not oppose the *CRC* but rather complemented it, thereby providing a stronger framework for discussions of children's rights in Africa.[90]

Validating the *Convention*'s definition of a child, the *African Charter* also defined a child as "every human being below the age of eighteen."[91] In addition, the *Charter* called for actions that would always reflect the best interests of the child, especially in the cases of juvenile justice and armed conflict.[92] The clear text of the *Charter* prohibited the recruitment or direct participation in the hostilities of "any child."[93] Having defined a child as under the age of eighteen, the *Charter* clearly stipulated that the use and recruitment of youth between the ages 15 and 18 was also a violation of the standards. Though never clearly stated in the text, the implicit indication is significant, because it means that all African states who adopted the *Charter* promised to create mechanisms in their national legislation to implement the recruitment age at no earlier than 18.[94]

Besides involvement in direct hostilities, the *Charter* discussed issues of abduction, family tracing, refugee and internally displaced children, thus covering a wider range of topics relevant to armed conflict.[95] The fact that these topics are found in the *Charter* might not look revolutionary when examining it today. However, considering the events and the number of conflicts which the African continent experienced during the nine-year period from the birth

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[89] Organization for African Union, *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child CAB/LEG/24.9/49*, (drafted 1990, entered into Force November 29, 1999) http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/List/African%20Charter%20on%20the%20Rights%20and%20Welfare%20of%20the%20Child.pdf (accessed January 5, 2008). The African Charter places significantly more emphasis on responsibility of parents towards the child (Article 20) and the duties and responsibilities of children towards their parents (Article 31). As of October 2009, 45 out of 53 OUA countries have ratified the African Children Charter. From the 8 countries that have not ratified the convention, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sao Tome and Principe are the only two have not signed or ratified it. See also Woodhead and Montgomery ed, 159, 160. Italics added.

[90] Dejo Olowu, "Protecting children's rights in Africa: A critique of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child," *International Journal of Children's Rights* 10 (2002):128. Thoko Kaime, "The Convention on the Rights of the Child and cultural legitimacy of children's rights in Africa: Some Reflections," *African Human Rights Law Journal* 5 (2005): 228.

[91] *African Charter CAB/LEG/24.9/49*, Article 2.

[92] *African Charter CAB/LEG/24.9/49*, Article 4.

[93] *African Charter CAB/LEG/24.9/49*, Article 22.1.

[94] Olowu, "Protecting children's rights in Africa: A critique of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child,"130, 134.

[95] *African Charter CAB/LEG/24.9/49*, Articles 23, 25. 29.

of the *Charter* to its final entry into force, the inclusion of the topics addressed above gains greater importance. The states parties to the OAU did not only recognize the violation of children's rights during armed conflict in their regions but also confirmed their responsibility to actively address these at their respective domestic level, making the *Charter* a "potentially powerful tool" in implementing children's rights envisaged in it.[96] As the two programs chosen to conduct the case study are on the African continent, the *Charter*'s definition of the child and stipulations provided within it are important to the research's definition of a child and legal protection provisions of those involved in armed conflict and returning home.

Machel Report

In the context of efforts to assess the actual success of protecting children's rights during an armed conflict, the General Assembly and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child during its 85th plenary meeting in 1993 requested the Secretary-General to appoint an expert who would conduct a study on children in armed conflict areas.[97] The study was not only to serve as an assessment but also as a possible tool to persuade the countries who had not yet signed and ratified the *CRC* to do so, reinforcing the call towards universal adoption and ratification of the *CRC*.[98] In particular, the expert was

> to undertake a comprehensive study...including the participation of children in armed conflict, as well as the relevance and adequacy of existing standards, and to make specific recommendations on ways and means of preventing children from being affected by armed conflicts and of improving the protection of children in armed conflicts and on measures to ensure effective protection of these children, including from indiscriminate use of all weapons of war, especially anti-personnel mines, and to promote their physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration.[99]

It should be noted that the General Assembly was interested in long-term conflicts and requested the expert to "pay particularly close attention" to the consequences of such

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[96] Jean Didier Boukongou, "The Appeal of the African system for protecting human rights," *African Human Rights Law Journal* 6(2006): 269. Olowu, "Protecting children's rights in Africa," 132.

[97] The Children and Armed Conflict Unit, "Staff of the Unit –Patron," Essex University Website, http://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/unit/staff/index.html (accessed August 12, 2010).

[98] Children Rights Campaign , "The Campaign for ratification of the CRC," http://childrightscampaign.org/crcindex.php?sNav=getinformed_snav.php&sDat=status_dat.php (accessed March 29, 2009). After years of drafting, the United States withdrew from signing and ratifying the Convention. One of the obstacles for the ratification was the debate defining the minimum recruitment age. The United States reserved the right to recruit children younger than 18.

[99] United Nations General Assembly, *Protection of children affected by armed conflicts UN GA Resolution 48/157* (New York City, 20 December 1993), Article 7. The report was requested jointly by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the General Assembly. See also Graça Machel, "Promotion and protection of the Rights of Children: Study on the impact on children of armed conflict," UNICEF, http://www.unicef.org/Graça/ (accessed March 24, 2009).

prolonged conflicts, providing "specific recommendations" on how to improve the protection of children.[100] It was hoped that this study would "seek to give new coherence and fresh impetus to the efforts of the international community to protect children and children's rights from the effects of armed conflicts."[101] Often called the "children's rights campaigner," Ms Graça Machel, widow of Mozambique's president, the late Samora Machel, was chosen to conduct the study.[102] She had already made a name for herself by the time her appointment came in August 1994 for her longstanding humanitarian work on behalf of women and children.[103]

After a two-year study, she presented a comprehensive report on the impact of armed conflict on children.[104] The report's findings confirmed that the existing norms did not stop the violations of children's rights in times of conflict. It further showed that national governments who were engulfed in the long-term conflict lacked the ability and means to respond to the violations, and urged the UN Member states to aid in denouncing the "intolerable and unacceptable attack on children" by accepting their part of the duty to "transform moral outrage into concrete action."[105] The *Machel Report* specifically highlighted that there was a need for standards and mechanisms to ensure proper implementation of activities on the ground. In addition, the report reminded the states parties to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* of their obligation towards all children within their territory without discrimination, regardless of the level of the international involvement.[106]

Report's special contribution can be seen in the use of clear language. The report managed to forfeit vagueness of speech to bluntly and frankly call upon individual states and the international community to act, and in this respect is an exception in comparison to the other child-related UN documents of its time. No other document at that time "urged both state and non-state entities to make formal statements accepting and agreeing to implement the

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[100] *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Article 7.
[101] *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict*, Article 9.
[102] BBC News: World: Africa, "Mandela's Mission for Children," BBC News (August 28, 2001), http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1508841.stm (accessed April 18, 2009).
[103] BBC News: World: Africa, Josephine Hazeley, "Graça Machel: Children's Champion," BBC News (28 August 2001), http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1513267.stm (accessed April 19, 2009).
[104] Hazeley, "Graça Machel: Children's Champion,": "Those who have seen her in action say she does not flinch from challenging diplomats for sitting back in the comfort of their embassies while children in conflict are exploited and killed."
[105] *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict*, Para 5 and 318.
[106] *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict*, Article 229.

standards contained in the *CRC* and to establish proper and clear channels for accountability."[107]

The thesis considers the report presented by Ms. Machel as the most significant catalyst for the further development of programs to protect and address children's rights during an armed conflict for several reasons. First and foremost, the report abandoned diplomatic language neutrality to passionately advocate in behalf of children. By doing so it stands out among other documents, creating the needed momentum and awakening a desire of the member states to act. Awakening this desire and addressing the accountability were the most vital ingredients for any further development.

Second, its outputs showed the necessity for an international monitoring body that would focus on engaging in discussion and implementation of mechanisms for the protection of children in armed conflict. This led to the creation of the Office and to the appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict (UN SRSG CAAC). In addition, it showed a need for child-minded organizations and NGOs which would monitor and raise awareness of specific armed conflict issues, such as child soldiers, education and human trafficking. The establishment of two organizations, the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (1998) and the Interagency Network for Education in Emergency (2000), are a direct result of the report. They promptly assumed their role and have been instrumental in executing some of the key recommendations of the study.[108] Third, the report ushered in a new era of monitoring and reporting violations of children's rights during an armed conflict. It is in the *Machel Report* that the conduct of the DDR sensitization activities is mentioned in greater depth, urging states and child-minded organizations to establish better and more effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms.[109]

Finally, though it confirmed and validated the *CRC*, calling on those countries which had not signed and ratified it to do so, the report also showed that further development of guidelines for protection of children during armed conflict was needed because the *CRC* lacked clarity and detail. To this end, it provided explicit recommendations for each area observed on the ground. All documents discussing children and armed conflict that followed this report were greatly influenced by its frankness, detail and approach. It can therefore be said that the report paved the way for designing monitoring and protection, as well as

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[107] *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict*, Article 220.
[108] United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Children and Armed Conflict A/62/228* (New York City, 13 August 2007), Para 67.
[109] *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict*, Article 266.

rehabilitation and reintegration standards for children associated with armed groups. Considering the reasons listed above, the document will be greatly consulted during the development of operational framework and as a guideline for analysis of effectiveness of reintegration and rehabilitation programs.

Cape Town Principles

Taking note of the recommendations presented in the *Machel Report*, the NGO Working Group on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF held a symposium in Cape Town in April 1997 with the aim of further discussing child recruitment and child-minded DDR.[110] As a result of a three-day meeting, the experts prepared a document containing recommendations for the prevention of child recruitment, suggesting ways of demobilizing and reintegrating those children who had already been associated with armed groups. Revisiting the implication created by the age discrepancy mentioned above, the *Cape Town Principles* bear significant importance to children's rights development because they urged governments to affirm 18 as the minimum age of recruitment. This also meant adopting the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, as well as "other regional and international treaties, and incorporating them into national law."[111] Following the example of the *Machel Report*, the document presented a list of specific tools and means to promote best practices, which included actions such as monitoring and documenting cases of recruitment, using community efforts to advocate against recruitment, conducting speedy family reunifications and promoting education, vocational training and other activities which contribute to social reintegration of the children.[112]

It is important to highlight that the document stressed the importance of including other vulnerable children in programs, such as refugee and internally displaced children. Reports from the field showed that refugees and internally displaced children were increasingly becoming targets of recruitment, both voluntary and involuntary, due to the poverty level and the lack of protection in the refugee and internally displaced people (IDP) camps.[113] Thus,

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[110] See UNICEF Symposium on the Prevention of Recruitment of Children into the Armed Forces and on Demobilization and Social Reintegration of Child Soldiers, *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices* (Cape Town, 27-30 April, 1997).
[111] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, Preamble.
[112] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 2, 3.
[113] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "IDP Camp Coordination and Camp Management," UNHCR (draft CCM Framework, produced 26 September 2006), http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CFA06/%28httpKeyDocumentsByCategory%29/39961C34119C0349C125723500457F21/$file/Draft%20CCCM%20Framework%2012Dec%20compl.pdf (accessed August 20, 2010).

programs "targeted at former child soldiers" needed to be "integrated into programs for the benefit of all war-affected children" in order to strengthen the tools and mechanisms for prevention of any additional involvement with armed non-state actors.[114] Such regulation was an important step in avoiding a future wave of returning child soldiers.

The document did stipulate that this targeting went beyond group specific programming and needed to include gender-based considerations, especially in the case of child DDR.[115] At the time of the *Cape Town Principles* drafting, though not fully formulated, the DDR process was becoming a standard to transitioning warring parties back to civilian society. The efforts at the time had no clear guidance on how to deal with child soldiers and, in particular, how to deal with girl child soldiers, often leaving them out.[116] This is why it was crucial that further development of programs actively address the inclusion of girls and their mothers in DDR activities. Unfortunately, research conducted in countries such as Sierra Leone pointed out that even though the *Cape Town Principles* were a "strong guiding policy document" and gave "explicit reference to girls," they lacked implementation mechanisms and thus "failed to protect" the returning girls whose needs "continued to be ignored" during the DDR process.[117]

Despite its deficiencies, the *Cape Town Principles* was the first document to directly address the creation of an international institution which would charge those who are recruiting children, thus contributing to the establishment of the International Criminal Court, which has since charged Thomas Lubanga, Joseph Kony and other notorious leaders for crimes against humanity and specifically for their abduction and forced recruitment of children.[118]

Rome Statutes of the International Criminal Court and the Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention (ILO No. 182)

Alarmed by the increasing number of child abductions and mistreatment under international law, member states recognized the need to embed laws and regulations into statutes and conventions which would be applicable to conflict and extraordinary situations. It

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[114] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 10.
[115] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 5.
[116] Chris Coulter, "Reconciliation or Revenge: Narratives of Fear and Shame among Female Ex-combatants in Sierra Leone, *Being a Bush Wife*" (PhD diss., Uppsala University, 2006), http://www.life-peace.org/sajt/filer/pdf/New_Routes/NR%200604%20Chris%20Coulter%20Bush%20wives_2.pdf (accessed July 23, 2010).
[117] Coulter, "Reconciliation or Revenge, *Being a Bush Wife.*"
[118] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 2; International Criminal Court, "ICC Weekly Update," International Criminal Court Website, http://www.icc-cpi.int/NR/rdonlyres/6D250095-E1A8-4DC9-9D7E-C220BED38556/282419/Ed43Eng.pdf (accessed August 20, 2010).

was hoped that such inclusion would provide tools and implementation mechanisms to regulate the issues of children's associations with armed groups. One example of such an inclusion could be found in the *Rome Statutes of the International Criminal Court,* which entered into force in 2002. Included in its listing was the "conscripting or enlisting children under the age of fifteen years into the national armed forces or using them to participate actively in hostilities" as war crimes charges.[119] However, while such inclusion can be viewed as a positive contribution towards eradication of child recruitment, it was a set back at the same time. It showed that international law still only considered the recruitment and use of children ages fifteen and below as punishable. According to the *Rome Statutes*, leaders such as Joseph Kony and Thomas Lubanga, could only be charged for forced recruitment of those children younger than 15 and remained innocent of their abduction and forced recruitment of minors between 15 and 18. As a result, the *Rome Statutes* do not provide the perfect legal protection of all children as per their definition in the *CRC*.[120] However, they do draw their significance in stipulating rape and sexual slavery as a war crime.[121] This can be considered a remarkable feat for the time because categorizing rape and sexual slavery as a war crime set a precedent against the violation of the rights of a girl child, "expressing recognition of gender violence" and strongly condemning it.[122] Some critics expressed disapproval that these crimes have not been given a status of crimes against humanity, but others acknowledge its inclusion as an important step to concerted effort to prosecute armed forces leaders for forced recruitment of girls.[123]

In addition to the *Rome Statutes*, the International Labor Organizations adopted a Convention on the *Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention (ILO No. 182)* in June 1999. The Convention, which entered into force a year later, "considered adopting new instruments for the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor."[124] It stipulated that

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[119] International Criminal Court, *Rome Statutes of the International Criminal Court A/CONF.183/9* (Rome, 1998), Article 8.2.b (xxvi). Entered into Force 1 July 2002. As of October 2009, 110 countries have ratified the Rome Statutes. 38 have signed, but not ratified it, and three of the signatories, Israel, Sudan and USA have unsigned the treaty, and thereby have no legal obligations as stipulated by the treaty. For more information, see http://untreaty.un.org/cod/icc/index.html.

[120] Jason Hart, "Politics of Child Soldiers," *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 13 (2006): 220-221.

[121] *Rome Statutes A/CONF.183/9*, Article 8.2.b (xxii).

[122] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of New Zealand, "Treaties and International Law," http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Treaties-and-International-Law/03-Treaty-making-process/National-Interest-Analyses/0-International-Criminal-Court.php (accessed July 12, 2010).

[123] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 14. See also Office of the Prosecutor, "Situation in Uganda - Warrant of Arrest against Joseph Kony," International Criminal Court, http://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/doc/doc97185.PDF (accessed August 14, 2010).

[124] International Labour Organization, *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182)* (New York City, 17 June 1999). As of October 2009, 171 countries have ratified the ILO 182.

education and rehabilitation, as well as social reintegration were necessary for each child's successful development into adulthood. The *ILO Convention* also stressed the importance of understanding the poverty level of children and seeking long-term solutions to address the needs of the child's family.[125] Article 2 acknowledged "forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict" as the worst form of child labor, calling it a "form of slavery."[126] Its main objective was to call on each member state to establish mechanisms and programs to address eradication of the worst forms of child labor within their own jurisdiction, including the implementation of measures to provide "direct assistance for the removal of children from the worst forms of child labor and for their rehabilitation and social reintegration" and "to identify children at special risk, taking into account the special situation of girls."[127]

The *Rome Statutes* and the *ILO Convention* are important contributors to the children's rights because they codified in law at least partially, that the recruitment and use of children during armed conflict is unlawful and unacceptable. In addition, these two bodies of international law present themselves as enforcement mechanisms, providing some means for remedying children's rights violations. At the same time, however, they added to the already existing rift in the international documents related to child protection during armed conflict by failing to pronounce the recruitment of minors between 15 and 18 as unlawful. Finally, though "having rhetorical significance in diplomacy," some political analysts commented that countries only implemented these legal documents when in their national interest.[128]

Optional Protocol to the CRC

The rift created by the discrepancy between the definition of a child and the legal recruitment age reached a climax during the United Nations' adoption of the *Optional Protocol* for signature in 2000. The main focus of the addition was to strengthen the original text and clarify the vague language of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, calling upon all states who had signed and ratified it to reinforce their commitment by setting the military recruitment age at 18 and thereby closing the existing gap.[129] It was the UN's prerogative to

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[125] *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182),* Preamble.
[126] *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182)*, Articles 1 and 2.
[127] *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182)*, Article 7.
[128] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 4-5.
[129] United Nations, *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict UN GA Resolution 54/263* (New York City, 2000). The Optional Protocol entered into Force on 12 February 2002. As of October 2009, 125 countries have signed it. For more information, see

confirm the military age under international law. Seizing this opportunity can be viewed as a step to bring an end to contradictions in age delineation and redirect the member states' focus towards proactive actions to "adopt all legal measures necessary to prohibit and criminalize" the recruitment of all younger than 18.[130] No matter how much the international community was able to move in the right direction, the recurring confrontation created by the age gap between 15 and 18 was strong enough to slow down progress. It can be seen from the documents thus far presented that the states realized that for any real progress to occur, the proper definition of the recruitment age needed to be agreed upon. The reports from the field, which slowly emerged through the DDR processes, confirmed the necessity of laws and standards for protecting especially the 15 to 18 year-olds, who continued to suffer disproportionately from abduction.[131] In response to these reports, the *Optional Protocol to the CRC* also addressed child-minded approaches to demobilization, rehabilitation and social reintegration.[132] Inclusion of the child-oriented DDR was a positive development, indicating how demobilization and reintegration could produce a more effective approach. However, despite this addition, the *Protocol to the CRC* failed to include any provisions towards the protection of girl child soldiers as part of the child-minded DDR. As a result, it took years before programming was designed in such a way to include and alleviate suffering of a girl child associated with armed groups.[133] Considered as an important topic in the child DDR, this issue will be further addressed in the following chapter.

Security Council Resolutions

Two months after the *ILO No. 182* was adopted, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution (UNSCR) 1261 at its 4037th meeting, which "strongly condemned the violations of the international laws by targeting children in armed conflict, including sexual violence, abduction and forced recruitment."[134] This resolution was significant in its own right because it showed that the issues of child soldiering had become a topic of discussion within

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http://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-11-b&chapter=4&lang=en. See specifically Article 3. 1.

[130] *Optional Protocol to the CRC*, Article 4. 2.

[131] Grill, "Krieg der Kinder," 116 -117; *Optional Protocol to the CRC,* Articles 6 and 7.

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[133] Els De Temmerman, *Aboke Girls: Children Abducted in northern Uganda* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2001). 139 Aboke girls were abducted from the St. Mary's Boarding school, maintained by the catholic order. Dedicated catholic sisters and parents of the abducted girls created a successful lobby, which raised the awareness of girl child abductions by armed non-state actors for the first time. This lobby paved the way for future endeavors to address the protection and RR of girls, granting them equal status in DDR initiatives.

[134] United Nations Security Council, *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1261* (New York City, 25 August 1999), Para 2.

the Security Council. The resolution called for states to "comply with their obligations under international law" and to coordinate the work of the national and international stakeholders to "ensure the protection of children in situations of armed conflict."[135] Over the next five years, the Security Council issued annual resolutions, always drawing the attention of the member states to the children's rights during an armed conflict, calling on all relevant agencies to "intensify," coordinate, and implement programs not only to protect children during armed conflict but also to "facilitate the disarmament, demobilization rehabilitation and reintegration of children used as soldiers," including the provision of "medical and educational services," as well as "rehabilitation of children who have been maimed or psychologically traumatized, and child-focused mine clearance and mine-awareness programs."[136] While some resolutions addressed the issue of ending the impunity of perpetrators, requesting that those responsible for genocide and crimes against humanity be charged,[137] others suggested stronger incentives for "corporate actors" to halt all commercial relations with those parties to the conflict who violate international law,[138] or elaborated the consequences of sanctions,[139] and considered involving children and youth, especially girls,[140] in the development of policies and child protection mechanisms.[141]

In parallel with efforts to address the protection of children in armed conflict, resolutions called for an "era of application"[142] as they realized that the "1990s was a decade of great promises and modest achievements for the world's children,"[143] and that the promotion of the "physical, psychological, spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive and cultural development of children" was to become a "matter of national and global priority."[144]

With each year, the language of the resolutions became more direct. From the mentioned resolutions, it can be easily seen that the Security Council began realizing the magnitude of the work and issues that needed to be addressed simultaneously in order to truly afford children the rights and protection member states had committed to provide. Such could be observed in

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[135] *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1261*, Para 3-9.
[136] *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1261*, Para 15, 17.
[137] United Nations Security Council, *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1314* (New York City, 11 August 2000), Para 2.
[138] United Nations Security Council, *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1379* (New York City, 20 November 2001), Para 9 (c).
[139] *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1314,* Para 15.
[140] United Nations Security Council, *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1460* (New York City, 30 January 2003), Para 13.
[141] *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1379,* Para 13 (a).
[142] See *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1460.*
[143] United Nations General Assembly, *A World Fit for Children A/RES/27/2* (New York City, 11 October, 2002), Section II, Para 11.
[144] *A World Fit for Children A/RES/27/2*, Section IIIA, Para 14.

the text of the *UNSCR 1460*, issued in 2003.[145] The clear language and the approach contained in it changed the language of resolutions to follow. Just like the *Machel Report,* the resolution was clear, bold and presented a detailed plan of action. This style confirmed the international community's learning process and maturity. It also greatly aided the monitoring and reporting as it gave clear guidelines on what to monitor and assess and how to report progress. To accomplish the tasks at hand, each consecutive resolution further developed time-bound action plans for the release of all children from armed group ranks, called for improved monitoring and reporting, and requested states to "impose targeted and graduated measures" to ensure proper implementation of the action plan tasks.[146] With the adoption of the *UNSCR 1612*, the international community continued to further the development of implementation tools and workable guidelines.[147]

All of the Security Council resolutions assisted in highlighting the challenges and considering the various elements and complexities of children's presence in armed conflict. But more importantly, because they were discussed and issued by the Security Council, the member states the United Nations put in more effort to develop an action plan to eradicate the problem, listing tangible tasks and action points which could be accomplished. With the resolutions, the member states could no longer claim that they did not know how to act. In other words, the resolutions took away the theoretical discussion and replaced it with practical implementation. In addition, not only did they design steps to be followed to achieve progress in protection of children during armed conflict, they also called for accountability, showing that actions would be taken against those states and non-state actors who failed to do their part. All this made it clear that specific guidelines for DDR had to be refined and codified to reflect activities in the best interest of the child. Most significantly this also meant inclusion of guidelines and activities for protection of the girl child. As a result of this call for an era of action, the United Nations and member states drafted and developed the *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards* in 2006 and in particular the *Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups* (*Paris Principles*) in 2007.

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[145] United Nations Security Council, *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1460* (New York City, 30 January, 2003).
[146] United Nations Security Council, *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1539* (New York City, 22 April, 2004), Para 5. See also Watchlist, *UN Security Council Resolution 1612 and Beyond* (New York: Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, 2009), 4.
[147] United Nations Security Council, *Security Council Resolution S/RES/1612* (New York City, 26 July, 2005).

Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS)

The drafting of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards brought relevant UN agencies to the table in 2004 in order to develop "a series of integrated DDR standards (IDDRS), i.e., a set of policies, guidelines and procedures for UN-supported DDR programs in a peacekeeping context."[148] Based on the lessons learned and the best practices which were drawn from past experiences with the UN peacekeeping missions, this particular set of guidelines, policies, and rules was meant to aid the DDR process, addressing some challenging and complicated cross-cutting issues, including cross-border movement, women and gender, children and youth, and health aspects of DDR.[149] The highly compact and elaborate framework provided the UN system with tools to work in a more coordinated manner and was presented for testing in 2005. Since then it has been approved by 15 members of the Working Group of the United Nations.[150]

The child-minded DDR was divided the two distinctive groups in the framework; that of children, ages up to 15, and that of youth, ages 15 through 24. By doing this, the *IDDRS* created a precedent and for the first time addressed the gaps in the laws for those between 15 and 18 years. It further acknowledged that many young adults older than 18 needed to be included in the child-minded DDR to ensure inclusion in the rehabilitation activities of those who were minors at the time of their recruitment,[151] got lost "between the legal categories of child and adult," and were therefore not "necessarily well served by programs designed for mature adults or very young children."[152] The *IDDRS* recognized that the "young people in countries emerging from conflict are both a force for change and renewal in the country, and simultaneously a group that is vulnerable to being drawn into renewed violence," and for this reason needed to be given special assistance "to manage their expectations and direct their energies positively."[153]This statement is important as a measurement tool in this thesis because it stipulates that activities and programs should be designed to teach children and young adults about their responsibilities towards themselves, their past and their future. Such programs will tend to draw on positive input, reinforce education and teach the concepts of justice, healing and equality. All these attributes are viewed as important elements of successful reintegration and rehabilitation.

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[148] See also *IDDRS*.
[149] *IDDRS*, Home.
[150] *IDDRS*, Chapter 1.
[151] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.20.
[152] *IDDRS*.
[153] *IDDRS*.

In addition to its rehabilitative and reintegration concept, and the inclusion of 18 through 24 year-olds, the significance of the *IDDRS* can be seen in the inclusion of chapters on issues of a girl child, as well as the gender related DDR issues. Though girls were more often mentioned in resolutions and development policies, the experiences on the ground showed that girls continued to receive inadequate attention in the formal DDR process. The *IDDRS* attempted to rectify this mistake by providing definite guidelines on how to treat girls within DDR programs.[154] *IDDRS* showed that the DDR activities could not be "treated purely as a security issue" and needed to properly consider and address the complexities of gender-based initiatives.[155] Giving the gender-based violence noteworthy attention, it clearly stated that sexual slavery and enslaving of girls for housekeeping chores needed to be viewed and treated as child soldiering.

The *IDDRS*'s main significance arises from its focus on general DDR issues and the presentation of more precise and transparent guidelines for child DDR from a socio-economic perspective. In addition, designed to provide programmatic help to UN and affiliated funds and programs, *IDDRS* provides some guidelines that are outside of the scope of local RR initiatives. As a consequence of this, it lacks more detailed recommendations in areas such as community, family, and psychosocial RR, which are found in the academic literature, and which would help local initiatives in designing programs. Though a thorough reference guide, this framework could therefore not be used a standalone guideline for NGOs and local initiatives.

The Paris Principles

In February 2007, 58 countries, 70 inter-governmental organizations and 30 non-governmental organizations attended the two-day "Free Children from War" conference.[156] The conference, initiated and organized by the French government and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), provided a platform for concerned parties and high government officials to draft "detailed guidelines for protecting children from recruitment and for providing assistance to those already involved with armed groups or forces."[157] As such, the

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[154] *IDDRS.*
[155] *IDDRS.*
[156] Dan Thomas, "Paris Conference makes historic Commitment to liberate children from War," UNICEF, http://www.un.org/children/conflict/english/parisprinciples.html (accessed October 10, 2009). Since 2007, a total of 76 countries have endorsed the Paris Principles.
[157] France Diplomatie, "Paris Commitments Review Forum," France Diplomatie, http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/france-priorities_1/democracy-human-rights_1101/children-rights_3265/international-conference-on-children-involved-in-armed-forces-and-armed-groups-paris-5-

Paris Principles' primary duty became that of "complementing the political and legal mechanisms already in place at the UN Security Council, the International Criminal Court and other bodies trying to protect children from exploitation and violence" in hopes of bringing equality and best practices in the treatment of both boys and girls.[158]

The *Paris Principles* stand at the end of the progression in the development of policies and guidelines on how to implement sustainable and child-friendly principles and can be therefore seen as a milestone. The standards set by the *Paris Principles* showed the gaps in the existing policies and concrete protection measures developed by member states to protect children's rights during an armed conflict.[159] As with the *IDDRS*, the strength of the *Paris Principles* can be found in its explicit nature. The document aims to rectify specific gaps of children's involvement in armed conflict, such as protection of the girl child, the juvenile judicial system, trafficking, sexual abuse and other crucial child rights issues, which had lacked clear guidance in the past. Drawing on the observations and lessons learned during the implementation of various programs, the *Paris Principles'* primary role is to clarify international standards and to call for improved and more adequate child and gender specific focus within rehabilitation and reintegration programs. The *Paris Principles* add stress to the necessity for gender-based equality, highlight gender-specific issues and emphasize the need to address them in all programmatic developments.[160] This inclusion of a gender-based focus in the *Paris Principles* showed that there was a growing realization that girl child experiences differed from those of male peers and that rehabilitation programs needed to incorporate that within the activities they conducted.

Finally, the distinctiveness of this document can be observed in its detailed guidance on how to deal with crimes committed by children during their association with armed groups. Drawing upon the established international conventions and treaties, the *Paris Principles* reiterated clearly that the International Tribunals and Courts were not to charge the minors for crimes committed during recruitment and thus also provided guidance to all national courts on how to prosecute cases of juvenile justice.[161] The recommendations for implementation tools and activities to deal with children in the judicial system were important additions at the time

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6.02.07_8638.html (accessed October 16, 2009); see also Thomas, "Paris Conference makes historic Commitment to liberate children from War."

[158] Thomas, "Paris Conference makes historic Commitment to liberate children from War."

[159] UNICEF, *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups* (Paris, 5-7 February 2007).

[160] *Paris Principles*, Para. 4.0-4.3.

[161] *Paris Principles*, Para. 8.6; ICRC, "Child Soldiers," 7-8.

because disarmament and demobilization activities begun to be conducted more systematically but lacked the knowledge on how to address judicial questions of their disarmed and demobilized child soldiers. Outlining the approach and the means to act accordingly singled out the *Paris Principles* as a unique document, elaborating on some highly complex issues within the field of child protection in armed conflict and its aftermath, which only a few documents up to that time had attempted but failed to do as comprehensively.

Machel+10 Report

While the *IDDRS* and *Paris Principles* were being drafted, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict conducted a follow-up, re-evaluating the situation of the world's children in the ten years since the original Machel study had been conducted. Taking into account all the efforts, resolutions and principles established in the meantime, the Special Representative revisited the recommendations of the *Machel Report* and re-evaluated their effectiveness in the selected countries experiencing conflict. The findings were presented in the UN Resolution 62/228, also known as the *Machel+10 Report*, and read before the General Assembly in August 2007, only six months after the *Paris Principles* were prepared and adopted.

In the first part, the report focused on the "critical themes" in the protection of children in armed conflict, stating progress, further commitments and in some situations backslides to the overall effort in countries visited during the reporting period.[162] After capturing the status of implementation on the ground, the second part of the report presented the "strategic review" of the Machel study, once again bringing to states' attention the recommendations and action points they had agreed to implement.[163] It is noteworthy that the report reflected the commitments of the *Paris Principles*, placing continued emphasis on the issues revolving around the girl child and gender-based violence, as well as the involvement of children in the judicial system.[164]

Comparing abstract thinking and development of guidelines and standards against real life situations, the *Machel+10 Report* pointed to concrete issues that needed to be revisited, reaffirmed or restructured as part of the effort to develop proper policies and mechanisms to end the use of children in armed conflicts. As a practical study, this document added important weight to the newly established standards and guidelines and encouraged their testing and

[162] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Summary.
[163] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Summary.
[164] Allen, *Trial Justice*; *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Para. 13.

implementation on the ground. Revisiting the original document and presenting feedback to the member states was an important contribution for two reasons. First, it showed continuity, signaling that the *Machel Report* was not a onetime research, but was meant to be followed-up and evaluated, and that the recommendations made in 1996 should be built upon and, if found necessary, further adjusted. Second, it was a practical report, helping member states focus their attentions on real life issues and further fine tuning of guidelines for the benefit of practical implementation. Finally, the report served as a motivational mechanism, showing member states what progress had been made since the presentation of the first report.

As seen in Figure 1, the member states took a slower pace to develop specific guidelines and standards in the beginning but gained momentum after the presentation of the first *Machel Report*. Each document was an important step in itself, attempting to fill the gaps discovered and refine the development of child protection measures. Each contributed to the creation of a set of detailed, uniform guidelines that would address all issues related to the protection of children's dignity and rights during an armed conflict. Further discussion of these documents in the following chapter will allow for the creation of a framework to guide the analysis of the case studies presented in this research. However, to gain a better understanding of the operational framework used for the case analysis, it is important to discuss developmental challenges in the field of the overall DDR, which ultimately led to the development of child-minded rehabilitation and reintegration tools and mechanisms in the DDR process.

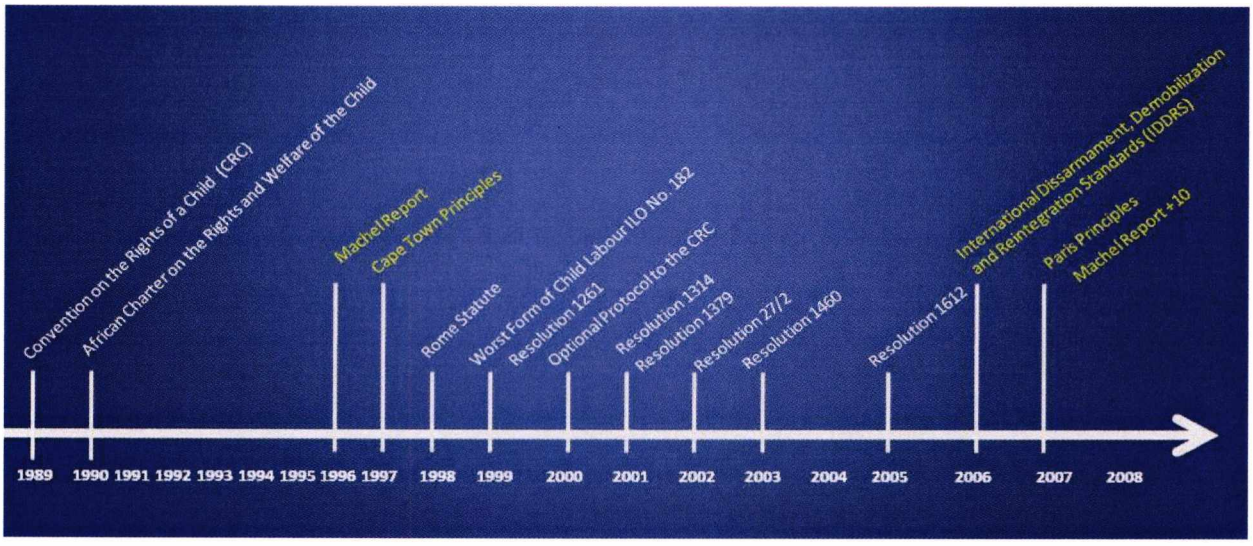

Figure 1: Time line of documents related to children and armed conflict developed since the *CRC*. The documents highlighted in yellow indicate those specifically addressing the DDR of children associated with armed groups.

I. Recent developments in the approach towards disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of children associated with armed groups

In its entire context, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration is an official process through which state and non-state armed groups and individuals are demilitarized. As such, DDR includes activities such as "collection of small arms and light and heavy weapons within a conflict zone," which "frequently entails weapons collection, assembly of combatants and development of arms management programs, including their safe storage and sometimes their destruction," as well as "discharge from armed group and active fighting."[165] The main focus of the disarmament and demobilization process is not only to "disband non-state armed groups, but also to reduce the size of state security services."[166]

The first tasks of DDR are therefore to disarm an armed group and to reduce its fighting capability by reducing the manpower and number of light weapons available. If combatants join an army or rebel groups voluntarily, they often do it in search of food and shelter. The release or discharge from an army or rebel group does not alleviate the poverty which led them to join armed groups in the first place. Being vulnerable and devoid of means to provide sustenance, the ex-combatants are in need of special assistance if they are to integrate back into civilian life. If the process is not completed appropriately, the ex-combatants often end up being re-recruited. During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, the poverty level and insufficiently developed DDR programs were the two most common reasons for re-recruitment among the population, including child soldiers and internally displaced children (IDP children).[167]

To properly transition the combatants from life as a soldier to a life as a civilian, the DDR then needs to adequately address the (1) surrender, both voluntary and involuntary, (2) assembly of weapons and combatants, (3) discharge from the armed group or military, (4) short- to medium-term reinsertion through small kits and financial incentives and (5) long-term reintegration.[168]

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[165] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "DDR and Psycho-social Section," Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, www.child-soldiers.org/resources/ddr (accessed May 23, 2005).
[166] Ball and van de Goor, "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, 2.
[167] Vera Achavarina and Simon F. Reich, "No Place to Hide," *International Security* 31 (2006): 127-164.
[168] Ball and van de Goor, "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration," 2.

Though the DDR process continues to be conducted according to this basic schema, its actual implementation has been a topic of much discussion in the past, resulting in some adjustments. The main considerations have been to clarify where one stage ended and the next began, and how the stages interconnected and could best be conducted. Initial DDR activities were planned and conducted with reinsertion and rehabilitation as a part of the reintegration efforts (see Figure 2, concept 1, below). The reasoning was that whereas disarmament and demobilization fell most often purely under military activities, reinsertion and reintegration were more complex and required more coordinated efforts among multiple actors in order to be successful. However, the activities conducted soon showed that reintegration was not a one-time activity but a long-termed process made of two parts—the physical and psychological rehabilitation and social reintegration. Reintegration therefore needed to be more adequately developed, as it was a long-term, multi-activity effort, while disarmament, demobilization and reinsertion were seen as short or time-bound activities.

If these stages were short-termed and time-bound, then it was important to find the appropriate placement for reinsertion in the process. During early efforts many agencies, such as the members of the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP)[169] applied reinsertion immediately following the demobilization of combatants with the aim of providing short-term financial and material assistance as an incentive to leave fighting:

> In order to respond to immediate needs and bridge the gap between demobilization and medium term reintegration support, most MDRP-funded projects have established short-term reinsertion mechanisms that offer a temporary safety net and help ex-combatants cover their immediate basic needs. Within MDRP-supported programs, reinsertion assistance is targeted for a period of six to twelve months after demobilization. It generally consists of a combination of in-kind entitlements and cash payments.[170]

Since combatants used their arms and status to provide for themselves, ex-combatants would have no immediate means of earning a livelihood if they were to turn in their weapons. These sustainability incentives helped them in an attempt to return to civilian life. In Sierra Leone and some other conflict-stricken areas, these incentives were most often a combination

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[169] Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) was a multi-agency effort, conducting various demobilization and reintegration activities between 2002 and 2009, mainly working on the DDR in the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa: Angola, Burundi, CAR, DRC, Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. The main goal of the program was to support national incentives for the implementation of DDR programs. Since it closed, a follow-up program was set up to support the activities initiated by the MDRP. For more information visit the MDRP website http://www.mdrp.org/.

[170] MDRP, "In Focus- Reinsertion: Bridging the Gap between demobilization and reintegration," www.mdrp.org (accessed March 10, 2007).

of in-kind entitlements, financial assistance (since 2006, more often in form of loans), basic clothing, utensils and hygiene kits, as well as starter goods, such as canned food, blankets, baby wraps, agricultural kits, seeds and basic tools.[171] The provisions distributed to the individual varied depending on the country of conflict, the individual's marital and family status, and their age and gender. Most programs aimed to grant the reinsertion provisions first to the most marginalized in the group. Many of the countries implemented these activities differently and made adjustments according to the lessons learned from the previous programs, using the help of NGOs and employing creative means to accomplish their tasks, such as using available technology (mobile phones) to reach the ex-combatants and distribute monthly financial subsistence in a timely manner.[172]

According to Body and Brown, reinsertion approaches faced different challenges.[173] In one example they pointed out that distribution of the financial and material aid was only given to certain marginalized groups, such as ex-combatants. They further commented that the incentive to receive such assistance caused the vulnerable and the poor in the distribution communities to act in ways they otherwise would not, leading them to activities such as theft, false witnessing, and voluntary involvement with armed groups in hopes of fulfilling the requirements needed to receive reinsertion packages.[174] Such artificially created inequality and the selection of recipients of the reinsertion packages at times contributed to ill feelings and contention in the communities, calling for structural changes — some programs distributed reinsertion packages to adults only, some programs offered training instead of reinsertion packages, while some abandoned reinsertion packages and moved to micro-loans. Though well intended, all these changes made it difficult to distinguish whether reinsertion was to be viewed as a part of the disarmament and demobilization or as a part of the reintegration process. Adding reinsertion as an element in the DDR group would have made reintegration stand on its own, indicating that reintegration was a coordinated process but needed to be addressed outside of the main DDR activities. The *Paris Principles* clarifies this distinction by pointing out that the "formal DDR process" encompasses the "controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups" with the "second stage of the demobilization," that "encompasses the support package provided to the demobilized [adults],

[171] MDRP, "In Focus- Reinsertion;" Coulter, "Reconciliation or Revenge."
[172] MDRP, "In Focus- Reinsertion."
[173] Tom E. Body and Susan Brown, *Reintegration of Ex-Combatants through Micro-Enterprise: An Operational Framework* (Cornwallis Park: Canadian Peacekeeping Press, 2005), Introduction. Though officially part of the demobilization, some programs have moved to distribution of micro-loans as part of the reintegration phase.
[174] Body and Brown, *Reintegration of Ex-Combatants*, Introduction.

which is called reinsertion."[175] In other words, as was also highlighted in the *IDDRS*, reinsertion was to be viewed as an element of demobilization, aiming to provide immediate time-bound and short-term assistance:

> Reinsertion is the assistance offered to ex-combatants during demobilization but prior to the longer-term process of reintegration. Reinsertion is a form of transitional assistance to help cover the basic needs of ex-combatants and their families and can include transitional safety allowances, food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short-term education, training, employment and tools. While reintegration is a long-term, continuous social and economic process of development, reinsertion is a short-term material and/or financial assistance to meet immediate needs, and can last up to one year.[176]

To underline this point, some DDR literature referred to the process as DDR+R or Disarmament, Demobilization, Reinsertion + Reintegration. The concept 2 presented in Figure 2 shows this thinking, by distinguishing in purple the activities that constitute broader DDR. This distinction meant that the first three stages were single events and short time-bound activities, presenting a clearer picture of the process itself. In addition, concept 2 points out the notion that reintegration was viewed as an interdependent activity, shaded in gray, and was meant to cover both the social reintegration and psychological rehabilitation of an individual.[177]

By ratifying the *Paris Principles*, states confirmed that reintegration according to this distinction was a crucial, parallel element and needed to be addressed as an independent process in the endeavor to help children in armed conflict. This meant that reintegration could be pursued by local initiatives and did not need to vest in the hands of the international organizations and the UN, but could be coordinated through them. According to the document, sustainable reintegration could only be achieved "when the political, legal, economic and social conditions needed for children to maintain life, livelihood and dignity have been secured."[178] This meant that the focus of an effective reintegration was to "ensure that children can access their rights, including the right to formal and non-formal education, family unity, dignified livelihoods and safety from harm."[179] In other words, reintegration efforts aimed at achieving the emotional and mental wellbeing of those involved and affected by conflict, as well as providing opportunities and establishing perspectives for the future. Considering the

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[175] *Paris Principles*, Definition 2.9.
[176] *IDDRS,* Framework.
[177] For more information see Ball and van de Goor's discussion on the DDR process, "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles," 2-6.
[178] *Paris Principles*, Definition 2.8.
[179] *Paris Principles.*

multiple aim of the process, the *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards* established that reintegration could not and should not have a specific deadline, as is the case with reinsertion:

> Reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open time-frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country and a national responsibility, and often necessitates long-term external assistance.[180]

This did not preclude setting goals which needed to be reached by a certain date, but the final deadline of the reintegration efforts would vary depending on the initiative, approach, and the financial assistance available to the NGO or the program.[181]

All of the above mentioned considerations show that framing reintegration within the DDR programs is challenging. Not only are reintegration efforts time consuming, they extend over time and are complex in nature as they aim at rehabilitation of various actors in the society as a whole rather than just that of ex-combatants.[182] Understanding this complexity helps explain why activists and academics suggested separating reintegration programs from the rest of DDR efforts.[183] If reintegration efforts were to be viewed as an attached process to the formal DDR, this would mean that the entire DDR programming needed to be monitored for at least 5 to 10 years for each child. Since this is often not feasible, separate reintegration programming allows multiple actors to take over where the official DDR stops.

One might ask, if reintegration is viewed as a separate process from the formal DDR, should rehabilitation be viewed as a coordinated yet independent process or should it be an activity within the reintegration efforts?[184] Many programs conducted their rehabilitation and reintegration activities in parallel, but some programs gave more weight to one aspect than the other.[185] This notion is reflected in concept 3 in Figure 2. These programs called activities conducted in concentration on a child's emotional and physical wellbeing immediately after the discharge and while at the transit centers as rehabilitation initiatives, and defined

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[180] *IDDRS,* Definitions.

[181] To consult one example, see Save the Children, "Rewrite the Future Policy," http://www.savethechildren.org (accessed February 17, 2007).

[182] *Paris Principles*, Introduction 1.1. Kostelny, "What about the Girls?," 505-512. See also MDRP News and Noteworthy, "MDRP hosts event about youth and DDR in Burundi."

[183] Michael Odeh and Collin Sullivan, "Recent Developments in International Rehabilitation of Child Soldiers," *Youth Advocate Program International Resource Paper*, www.yapi.org (accessed August 10, 2010).

[184] Rehabilitation is primarily concerned with the emotional status of a person, while reintegration addresses the physical and social needs of an individual. For more information, see also Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, 135-156.

[185] Stott, "Out of sight, out of mind?," 54-58.

reintegration as activities focused on alleviating the alienation from society by offering opportunities for a child to return and resume social and civil activities in the community. This did not mean that rehabilitation ended once the child returned to the community, but because it was embedded in the reintegration activities, it was sometimes underdeveloped, as programs placed more weight on social aspects of reintegration. Research conducted by Stott showed that programs needed to be aware of not undermining rehabilitation because in its traditional context, psychological rehabilitation was an important aspect of the holistic healing.[186] From the considerations made above, it can be concluded that reintegration and rehabilitation activities both need to have a long-term perspective and, despite their interdependent character, must been given independent implementation realms if the programs are to have long-lasting effects and afford both processes equal attention. This implicitly meant that there was a five- rather than three-part process to be followed, namely DDR+RR as depicted in the concept 3. In fact, distinguishing the process in such a manner further indicates that there are complex and unique issues related to rehabilitation and reintegration that deserve to be addressed separately. However, because they are both long term and interdependent, they are to be grouped together, shaded in gray, to allow distinguishing them from the broader DDR short-term activities.

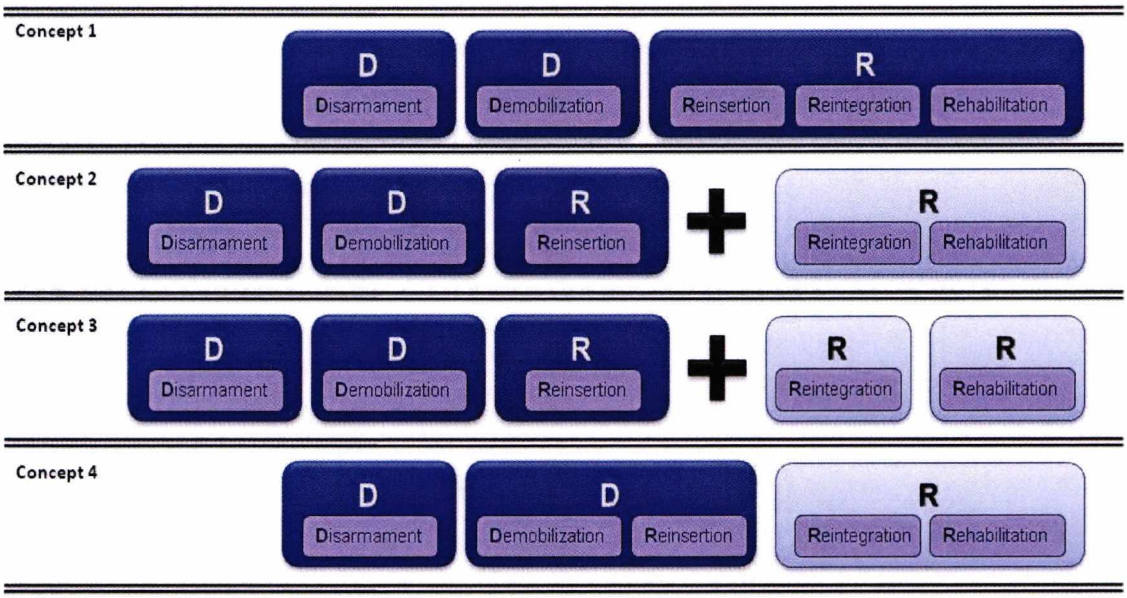

Figure 2: The DDR conceptual development – these changes occurred in attempts to best capture the individual stages in the entailed activities and programs. Concept 1 was the general concept used in the DDR initiatives across the globe in the early 1990's. Concept 2 was employed by international relief organizations in conflict areas such as Sierra Leone, Mozambique etc. As a result of lesson learned, concept 3 emerged, and has since been redefined by the *IDDRS* as is reflected in concept 4.

[186] Stott, "Out of sight, out of mind?," 68-69.

It should be noted that concept 3 is often used interchangeably with concept 4 for ease of discussion. When academic literature discusses the final letter in DDR, it refers specifically to rehabilitation and reintegration rather than to the whole DDR process. This concept has received greater acceptance in the international documentation and literature since the drafting of the *IDDRS* and *Paris Principles*. These documents brought back the general DDR to the three stage process, indicating the interdependent and at the same time complex and thereby unique role that rehabilitation and reintegration play within the overall DDR process. This was achieved, as can be seen in concept 4 in Figure 2, by grouping demobilization and reinsertion activities together under the broader DDR, and rehabilitation and reintegration together under the R. The connection (plus sign) present in concepts 2 and 3 has been omitted to indicate the interdependency and coordinative nature of the entire process. However, the shading in gray has been left to show that R (rehabilitation and reintegration) are still long-term activities and solutions that can be implemented through local NGOs and initiatives, independently of other DDR activities.

The thesis supports the definition of DDR provided within the *IDDRS* and as visualized in concept 4. This implies that the thesis considers rehabilitation and reintegration within the DDR broad spectra of activities which need to be conducted to transition a society from war to peace. However, as was indicated earlier, it should be considered that rehabilitation and reintegration are the most prevalent activities conducted in helping children associated with armed groups from war to peace that can be addressed by local initiatives and NGOs. DDR as outlined in concept 4 cannot be addressed by local NGOs in its entirety, because disarmament and demobilization activities fall under the jurisdiction of the national legislature or are pursued by international organizations such as the UN. With this reasoning, when discussing efforts conducted by the two programs observed, the term RR will be used to indicate the separation from the broad DDR initiatives, to purely address rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives.

Adopting the use of this terminology will be done for three reasons. First, this will establish the separation of the thematic analysis and avoid the observation of activities that clearly fall under the general DDR and thereby peace-building process, such as sensitization of armed groups, demilitarization and negotiation efforts, or disarmament and demobilization activities in a specific area. These activities, though passively observed during the field study in some instances, are not within the scope of the thesis. For this reason, important cross-

cutting issues in the field of peace building and child soldiering, such as human and drug trafficking, small arms trade, landmines, and the spread of HIV/AIDS, will not be addressed in detail but referenced to if it is found that they influence the RR initiatives observed in the two cases. Playing a significant role in the protection of child rights and in peace-building efforts, these topics ought to be examined in more depth separately and could lead to more concise findings to improve overall child DDR efforts, as much as they exist. However, to address them all within the framework of the thesis would take away focus from reintegration and rehabilitation—the life after child soldiering—and the interplay between the two in the programs observed, which are the actual research topics. The disarmament and demobilization activities will be briefly mentioned to the extent that they are conducted by the programs observed, although the information collected during the field trips and observations is insufficient to allow for any accurate analysis of the peace-building initiatives in their entirety.

Second, the official disarmament and demobilization activities can be part of the effort to aid children associated with armed groups, but more often they focus on the adults. In the first DDR activities, adult males were primary beneficiaries of disarming and demobilization incentives since they were considered combatants and soldiers.[187] At that time, it was assumed that involvement of children in armed groups, if it existed, was differed from that of adult involvement.[188] Even the laws and international standards addressing the demobilization issues, such as punishment, amnesty, and witness protection were created in retrospect on the basis of adult experiences within armed groups and, as was discussed in the previous section, have only recently been adapted to address cases involving child soldiers.[189] As the past has shown, children experience armed conflict differently and often do not end up being formally disarmed and demobilized. If they carried a gun, they are disarmed and directly sent to transit centers. But many children who were associated with armed groups do not carry guns or have not participated in direct fighting and therefore were not granted opportunity to participate in

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[187] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Child Soldier Use 2003," (paper presented at the 4th UN Security Council Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict, 16 January 2004), also available at www.child-soldiers.org/document/get?id=690. It was observed during the open debate that the "existing demobilization and reintegration programs discriminated against child soldiers, many of whom carried out the same duties as adults during the conflict. While adult combatants received identification cards, resettlement kits and food assistance from the government, many child soldiers were excluded, receiving only an identification card and food aid. Specific programs are needed to address the needs of girls who were used as cooks, domestics, porters and sexual slaves."

[188] Denov, "Is the Culture Always Right?"

[189] *Paris Principles* is the first document to clearly address international standards and laws to when children committed atrocities as part of their involvement with the armed groups.

the disarmament activities.[190] In addition, as many children escaped and auto-demobilized; they too need to be sought out to participate in the official RR activities.[191] The complexity of adequately conducting and addressing the issues of the children DDR has led the UN member states to incorporate otherwise DDR issues such as juvenile justice and gender-based issues into their RR initiatives rather than to address them as a part of disarmament and demobilization activities.[192]

II. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to capture the developments which led to a more focused and systematic protection of children's rights during an armed conflict. This included also a discussion on the development of the DDR process and its different concepts in order to best capture the reintegration and rehabilitation approaches for children associated with armed groups within the overall DDR.

Since the drafting of the *CRC*, the UN Member states have concerned themselves with the need for protecting children's rights in meaningful ways, especially during an armed conflict. Nonetheless, the *Machel Report* presented in 1996, was one of the first documents that considered the development of programs specifically for reintegration and rehabilitation of children who were actively involved in the hostilities. It can therefore be seen as a precursor to the current standards, opening the doors for further development of child protection programs, and transforming the concepts applied within the DDR efforts for child soldiers since the 1990s. In an immediate reaction to the report, the United Nations and its affiliated international non-governmental relief programs and funds (INGOs) continued development of guidelines and recommendations as a common frame of reference for all INGOs and community activists working in the field. This development led to the drafting of the *Paris Principles* and to the inclusion of the child-minded reintegration and rehabilitation concepts

[190] According to the *IDDRS*, disarmament is "the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population," also including "the development of responsible arms management programs."

[191] The *IDDRS* refers to demobilization as "formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The first stage of demobilization may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centers to the massing of troops in designated for this purpose (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks). The second stage of demobilization encompasses the support package provided to the demobilized, which is called reinsertion."

[192] The established norm for the DDR of children strongly discourages support packages which are not obtained through participation in reintegration activities, such as vocational training.

and approaches in the *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards*, thereby creating a set of policies and guidelines.[193]

The importance of the presented documents can be seen in their proactive nature and framework detail on how to address RR of children associated with armed groups. However, these documents, though highly relevant to the body of international law, are theoretical frameworks still facing challenges and growing pains in terms of practical applicability. A question could therefore be raised regarding their applicability to the real life situations. To what extent, and how, do they help the rehabilitation and reintegration process? Some evaluation of this can be found in the *Machel+10 Report.* In pursuit of a more precise answer to these questions, however, an in-depth analysis needs to be conducted. It will therefore be the aim of the following chapter to analyze the RR guidelines provided in the documents developed since the *CRC* and, with their help, develop a framework for the further analysis of the case studies presented.

[193] Wessells, "Child Soldiers" *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists-Pangaea Website.*

Chapter 2
Achieving Successful Reintegration and Rehabilitation: Guidelines for Further Analysis

"This powerful desire for normalcy and acceptance, in people whose childhood experiences were so far from ordinary, testifies of their resilience, and it reminds us that the journey from soldiering to civilian life is as much social as individual."[194]

Michael Wessells

I. Introduction

Each of the documents discussed in Chapter 1 presented its own set of recommendations for reintegration and rehabilitation of children in armed conflict situations. Many of these recommendations are attempts to act upon lessons learned, exhibiting increased sensitivity to cultural and traditional contexts, gender and health issues, and the development of DDR initiatives for children involved with armed groups. Since many conflicts in the world reveal inconsistent patterns and no conflict is the same, the purpose of these recommendations is not to provide a one-glove-fits-all solution, but rather to "suggest practical steps for improvement."[195] Such practical steps could be used to help the set up, monitoring and evaluation of progress made in designing RR programs in the best interest of the child. And while not all will, or need to, be applied in every program, it is beneficial to examine and analyze the produced documents in order to extract from them the key elements necessary to produce one comprehensive list, which can be used for further analysis of their practical functionality and their contribution toward successful reintegration and rehabilitation of children associated with armed groups.

The aim of this chapter is therefore two-fold. First, the recommendations from the main and most relevant documents discussing reintegration and rehabilitation of children associated with armed groups are extracted into the first data set. The guidance for the extraction according to the areas of interest is aligned with the research presented during the literature review, allowing for development of a possible comprehensive working list of RR guidelines. This consolidated RR guidelines working list is then evaluated against the reintegration theory set up by Jareg, allowing for a comparison whether the elements she indicates as contributors towards achieving reintegration and rehabilitation success of children

[194] Wessells, *Child Soldier*, 207.
[195] *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Para 32.

associated with armed groups also receive the same attention in the international documents. Finally, the chapter examines guidelines per say, estimating their applicability for programs conducted by NGOs.

The research design structure allows for analysis of the individual cases, and greatly enhances the comparative analysis by highlighting whether these recommendations and guidelines contribute to the RR success in the selected case studies. The two case studies also serve as validation factors of Jareg's theory, because if they validate the developed working list they also validate the theoretical framework supporting that development. Further, if it can be observed that these guidelines are implemented under the operationalization of the UN organizations and international child minded non-governmental institutions, then the two cases may facilitate discussion of the guidelines' applicability in other regions of the world. However, if the RR success is achieved without application of the guidelines, their value needs to be assessed. Likewise, if the implementation of the guidelines is present but fails to produce long-term RR, this acknowledgment can contribute toward further discussion and adjustment of the reintegration theory and through it a revision of the list to facilitate successful RR programming in the future.

II. Reintegration and Rehabilitation of Children associated with Armed Groups: Development of the RR Guidelines Working List

Chapter 1 provided an analysis of all the major documents drafted and approved in the field of child protection during an armed conflict. Since these documents provided different level of detail to specific recommendations and guidelines, before development of a list of recommendations can take place, documents to be further examined need to be extracted from the general list of documents. This filtering process has been conducted according to specific criteria. As shown in the literature review, the scholarly research outlines areas which are more relevant to the holistic rehabilitation and reintegration. Most of these areas are directly embedded in Jareg's 6 key programmatic elements, such as (1) restoring the family relationships, (2) re-establishing relationships with the community, (3) promoting children's health, (4) organizing learning opportunities, (5) providing vocational training and livelihood incentives, and (6) providing opportunities for children to play and build down stress through recreation.[196] Further, while not stated directly as part of her programmatic elements, Jareg

[196] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 1-9.

considers special and cross-cutting issues, covering aspects such as gender, adjustments of psychosocial and programmatic implementation according to cultural contexts and coordination of efforts and involvement of youth in design and implementation of RR programs, which need to be added to the list.[197] Studies conducted by Knudsen, Denov, Kostelny, Honwana and others also show the relevance of addressing gender, psychosocial and cultural considerations in the RR programming. Further issues are addressed by Wessells, Breen and Musila, discussing juvenile justice and the importance of restorative justice principles. All of these researchers conclude that RR programming for children entails inclusion of persons 18 and younger.

While never specifically defining the child as a person 18 and below, Jareg's theory is ingrained in the international norms and standards, assuming that programs will automatically adopt international children's rights in their design, including gender, justice, and the definition of the child.[198] In addition, because Jareg applies a 'transactional model,' she supports the reintegration of a child as an individual within the context of his or her culture, community and family.[199] As a result of this model, her theory suggests that the culture, attitudes and behavior surrounding the child in socio-economic, political and legal contexts will greatly affect the RR and that each child will perceive RR differently. Because she looks at the broader aspects of successful RR and uses examples of programs in various regions of the world, Jareg urges that programs need to be flexible, and in addition, to "respond to children as legal subjects as well as developing human beings."[200] This theory not only reinforces the restorative justice principle, proper inclusion of the girls and corrects the designation of child and adult as discussed by Wessells and others; it also calls for cultural sensitivity in development of programs, thereby making it generalize-able to different conflicts and regions. This is important for development of the list which is used during the case study observations, because it allows an assumption that the list will have general applicability, if it is found contributing towards achieving RR. Considering all of the above mentioned issues, Jareg's framework seems to be the best suited as a theory to guide the establishment of a set of guidelines and for testing their applicability towards achieving the rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers. In congruence with the academic literature, and the internationally developed children's rights, which were discussed in Chapter 1, Jareg

[197] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 5.
[198] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 1.
[199] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 1.
[200] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 1.

combines all relevant fields found vital for achieving successful RR by both the international community and the academic research. As a result of this incorporation, Jareg's theory enables a deduction that implementation of the following topics ensures successful RR programming: (1) *sets the age of a child at 18*, (2) *prohibits all forms of recruitment for those younger than 18*, (3) *encourages local, national and international coordination of the DDR programs*, (4) *addresses family tracing, reunification and support during RR efforts, (5) addresses community based support and (re-) recruitment prevention, (6) considers special case of a girl child – ensures gender sensitive RR initiatives, (7) considers medical assistance to children with disabilities and other health issues as RR efforts, (8)considers psychosocial RR aspects, (9) encourages education, vocational training and livelihood initiatives* and *(10) addresses issues of juvenile justice and treatment of youth in justice mechanisms.*

These topics are placed against the documents produced by the international community in order to conduct the filtering process. The filtered documents will aid the development a list of documents to be used for a further more detailed analysis of the individual cases, as well as in the comparative case analysis. As it is important to create a context why these topics are considered contributors toward RR, a brief discussion follows.

The topics of the definition of age as per topic 1: *sets the age of a child at 18*, and the therewith associated recruitment age, as addressed by topic 2: *prohibits all forms of recruitment for those younger than 18*, are both issues embedded in the international law as discussed in the previous chapter. While neither *CRC* nor the recruitment age at 18 have been universally adopted, the research into the psychology of the involvement of persons 18 and younger in traumatic events has confirmed that young people of those ages should be protected by the DDR programs, and if their recruitment cannot be prevented, then adopted into the RR efforts and given the appropriate attention.[201] The trauma and the challenges the children face at that age to transition to peace shows that inclusion of this topic and examination of recommendations and advice given to initiatives on how to deal with it will have a great influence on the design and scope of the RR programs.

Topic 3: *encourages local, national and international coordination of the DDR programs* has been included because the issue of coordination arose in the late 1990s in the DDR literature, showing that coordinated efforts, such as the MDRP program, have the

[201] Sabbagh, "The Teen Brain," 55-57; Rivard, "Child Soldiers and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programs," 4.

tendency to produce better results.[202] Wessells and others show examples of such coordination work in their research, pointing to the power of cooperation.[203] Thus, considering the complexity of DDR programs, the workload and the limited resources available, coordination should be present in RR initiatives. In fact, the thesis argues that this coordination should be a vital and carefully planned and executed aspect of successful RR efforts in any region among the many local NGOs, INGOs and national institutions. Coordination would ensure that no duplication or competition occurs, which only slows down the work. Checking which documents highlight this concept and how they present the recommendations will help validate the argument of their importance when designing RR efforts.

All research concerning child RR has confirmed the importance of a family support system, not only because of its psychological effect on the children, but also because of its feasibility.[204] It is in the normal structure of a home that children are able to receive the long-term support system they need. This is why topic 3: *addresses family tracing, reunification and support during RR efforts* is one of the most obvious areas that should be included in the list of RR guidelines. Identifying how recommendations address this topic, and what specific suggestions they provide concerning long-term RR, has a great potential to shape RR initiatives. Topic 4 is similarly crucial to the RR success. This topic *addresses community based support and (re-) recruitment prevention.* Research suggests that the empowerment and the support programs afford communities, especially to the community leaders, have a great bearing on RR success.[205] Gaining further understanding of this concept could lead to many changes in the way local NGOs currently design their RR programs. Learning how major documents address these two topics and what recommendations they provide will also show what normative values they place when considering what constitutes successful child RR. It should be noted that these two topics are also addressed by Jareg as key elements, which further highlights the importance of their inclusion in the filtering process.

The importance of including issues pertaining to the girl child in the list arises from discussion previously conducted in Chapter 1 and will be addressed in further detail during individual discussion of this topic. However, it is based on the debates that reinforce the

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[202] MDRP, "Reinsertion."
[203] Wessells, *Child Soldiers,* 214-216; Wessells "Trauma, Culture and Community," 3.
[204] Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 61; Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration During an Ongoing Conflict," 500; Wessells, *Child Soldiers,* 187-188; Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 5.
[205] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Release and Reintegration of child soldiers," 8-9; Wessells, *Child Soldiers,* 186, 199-202; Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration During an Ongoing Conflict," 500; Wessells "Trauma, Culture and Community," 5; Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 6; Guyot, "Suffer the Children," 12.

notion that girls should be included in RR initiatives, supported by much research showing that despite international efforts; girls did not receive proper attention in the execution of RR programs.[206] All of this confirms that topic 6: *considers special case of a girl child – ensures gender sensitive RR initiatives,* has its rightful place in the working list, if the list is to be considered comprehensive. It is particularly important to learn which international documents address the issues of a girl child and to what extent.

Topic 7: *considers medical assistance to children with disabilities and other health issues as RR efforts* does not often appear as a standalone topic in the academic literature, but it is sometimes referred to as part of the overall psychosocial RR efforts.[207] Yet, despite the limited literature available to address medical and health issues alone, Jareg addresses it as an important programmatic element.[208] Because such efforts require specific knowledge, resources and facilities, examining whether and how the international community addresses these issues can confirm whether physical and medical issues should be part of the overall RR efforts or rather be turned to specialized agencies. As mentioned above, the literature focuses more on topic 8: *considers psychosocial RR aspects*, addressing a range of activities and issues that should be considered to enable adequate psychosocial healing to take place.[209] Given the significance that this concept has received in the literature, the list could not be considered comprehensive if the documents were not chosen for further extraction according to whether they included psychosocial RR recommendations and guidelines.

Similar to the previous topic, topic 9: *encourages education, vocational training and livelihood initiatives*, has also received significant attention in recent research, showing that provision of livelihood incentives and vocational training opportunities has multiple RR characteristics.[210] Studies showed that in many conflict areas in Africa the returnees needed to be economically independent and to have a vision and prospects for the future. Vocational training and livelihood incentives served as psychosocial tools, because they gave returnees a

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[206] Kostelny, "What About the Girls?," 505-506; Denov, "Girl Soldiers and Human Rights," 814; Farr, "The Importance of a gender perspective to successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes," 24-28; see also De Temmerman, *Aboke Girls*.

[207] Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 59-60; Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration During an Ongoing Conflict," 500, 502; Stott, "Out of sight, out of mind?," 56; Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 6; Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, 108.

[208] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 6.

[209] Denov, "Is the Culture Always Right?"; Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 61-64; Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration During an Ongoing Conflict," 502; Stott, "Out of sight, out of mind?," 53-54; Guyot, "Suffer the Children," 7-11.

[210] Wessells, "Child Soldiers, Peace Education and Postconflict Reconstruction for Peace," 363, 368; Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration During an Ongoing Conflict," 502; USAID, "Role of Education and the Demobilization of Child Soldiers – Aspects of an Appropriate Education Program for Child Soldiers," *USAID Issue Paper no. 2* (March 2007), 4-7; Blattman and Annan, "Consequences of Child Soldiering," 21, 22.

meaning and built their self-esteem. This concept finds agreement with Jareg's theory, who stresses the critical need for formal education and vocational training that will allow livelihood incentives and skills development in young returnees to prevent any further frustration and return to lawlessness.[211] It can be therefore concluded, that a comprehensive RR should envisage a form of training or provide educational incentives and income winning opportunities to the returnee to be effective. Finally, topic 10: *addresses issues of juvenile justice and treatment of youth in justice mechanisms,* is one that has been recognized as a crucial element to RR by researchers such as Wessells and Musila.[212] It is however, also a topic which has received little attention in the academic literature. While traditional healing and cleansing rituals are general topics of academic research, the greater issues of juvenile justice and treatment of children in the court system are important aspects of RR, yet have been only seldom addressed in greater depth. Breen argues that children's rights diminish when the children are recruited, which shows that their rights are not protected adequately by international law, resulting in double punishment – first, by being coerced and mistreated, and second, upon release because they participated in the conflict.[213] The children may indeed have committed acts of cruelty and aggression, but the fact that they were forced to commit them must be taken into consideration when making judgments. It is therefore important to confirm whether documents place importance on the issues of juvenile justice and what they suggest RR initiatives should do to execute justice principles.

In addition to Jareg's theory, each of these ten guidelines finds support in the scholarly literature on child soldier reintegration. A final note should be made that such research recommends that their implementation should not be a 'one time' intervention, but rather embedded in activities and initiatives in such a way to produce continuance.[214]

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[211] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 7-8.
[212] Musila, Godfrey M., "Challenges in establishing the accountability of child soldiers," 322-326; Claire Breen, "When is a Child Not a Child? Child Soldiers in International Law," *Human Rights Review* (Jan-March 2007): 97-98; Wessells, *Child Soldiers: from Violence to Protection,* 219-220.
[213] Breen, "When is a Child Not a Child?," 73.
[214] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 9; Muntingh, "After Prison," Chapter 6: Punishment and Sentencing.

Document	Year	Sets age of a child at 18	Prohibits all forms of recruitment for those younger than 18	Encourages local, national and international coordination of DDR programmes	Addresses family tracing, reunification and support during RR efforts	Addresses community based support and re-recruitment prevention	Considers special case of a girl child – ensures gender sensitive RR initiatives	Considers medical assistance to children with disabilities and other health issues as RR effort	Considers psychosocial RR aspects	Encourages education, vocational training and livelihoods initiatives	Addresses issues of juvenile justice and treatment of youth in justice mechanisms
Geneva Convention Additional Protocol II	1977	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Convention on the Rights of a Child	1989	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Machel Report	1996	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cape Town Principles	1997	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rome Statutes	1998	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
African Charter	1999	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Resolution 1261	1999	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
ILO Convention 182	2000	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Optional Protocol	2000	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No		No	No
Resolution 1314	2000	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
Resolution 1379	2001	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Resolution 1460	2003	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Resolution 1539	2004	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Resolution 1612	2005	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
IDDRS	2006	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Machel 10 Strategic Review	2007	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Paris Principles	2007	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Figure 3: Roster indicates all the documents which address protection of children during armed conflict. Documents specifically addressing all the ten issues towards successful RR of children associated with armed groups are highlighted in red.

Seventeen documents offering recommendations for reintegrating soldiers were examined and filtered for their suitability to contribute to a working list of guidelines for reintegrating child soldiers according to the ten topics described. The filtering process considered including those documents which would provide in-depth recommendations for the respective topic. In addition, document needed to address all of the ten chosen topics to be added to the list of documents contributing to the extraction process. This was done with the reasoning that a more comprehensive list could be produced only if it was ensured that all topics received adequate attention and were sufficiently discussed in the documents. This also

meant that because they addressed all topics considered as important RR issues, there would be redundancy, and the documents not taken into the list could be still omitted without jeopardizing detail. According to this criteria, as can be seen in the Figure 3, there are five documents, namely *Machel Report*, *Cape Town Principles*, *IDDRS*, *Machel+10 Strategic Review* and the *Paris Principles*, which provide specific recommendations towards all of the ten topics. These five documents are also the main framework documents used by United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, and as such reflect the norms applied by the international organizations. In addition, because these documents were produced in different years and in different contexts, their development provides broader insight into recurring RR issues. This notion is important when considering whether recommendations and guidelines can have general or universal application. Since these documents are a result of lessons learned from different conflict areas, recurring RR issues indicate that there are universal RR concerns, which require consistent development to address them adequately. Finally, as each document presents detailed suggestions on most of the ten topics of interest, the consolidated version can provide a greater pool of recommendations that allow not only a more thorough analysis of the case studies and validation of the effectiveness of such a list, but also a greater flexibility and creativity in developing specific RR activities.

The following section presents an extraction table for each of the ten topics, with two sets of data. The first set lists the recommendations found in each of the five documents on that topic. The second set presents the consolidated working list of recommendations to be validated through the analysis of the two case studies. It should be noted that not all of the recommendations that were extracted from each document were automatically added to the consolidated working list. After recommendations were extracted in the first set of data, they were cross-examined against each other and extrapolated into the consolidated RR guidelines working list of that particular topic of interest according to three main criteria. First, it was examined how often the same or similar recommendations appeared across the first set of data. Recommendations which were found to appear two or more times were automatically moved to the second set of data. This was done because it indicated a concern which was not being reached, or a concept whose implementation the international community deemed important enough to bring up in many documents, and as such needed to be investigated during the case study. Second, if recommendations were addressed in only one document, it was further investigated what importance the document attached to that particular recommendation. If it

was an issue which was elaborated in the document quite extensively and its importance was supported by literature, the recommendation was adopted into the second set of data. Third, if a recommendation did not have supporting literature, but was extracted from one of more newly produced documents, such as *IDDRS* or *Paris Principles*, the recommendation was also added to the working list in the second set of data. This was done with the reasoning that newly produced documents responded to the lessons learned from previous programs, and were important progress indicators. It should be noted that most of the latter recommendations have not been tested yet and this way received a platform for evaluation of their practical applicability for the first time.

Through the filtering process, it was possible to classify the recommendations which contribute to the overall success in achieving RR. In addition, as not all recommendations will have the same impact on the success towards RR, analyzing the topics of interest as a whole helped provide a better understanding of what was to be observed. Predicting which of the topics contributed more towards achieving child RR through local initiatives and which had an auxiliary function or required higher national or international authority for their implementation helped the research in two ways. First, it directed the case analysis to answer the thesis questions without overwhelming the analysis with the additional activities programs conduct. Second, it allowed for in-depth analysis of recommendations from the working list of each topic, confirming whether recommendations in the list play an equally important part in the successful implementation by the local programs, and contributed to explaining whythis was the case.

Before the discussion on the individual recommendations and the topics of interest proceeds, it should be noted, that the topical areas *age of a child* and *prohibition of the recruitment of all younger than eighteen* have been merged together. Both consider the same issue, namely, the proper definition of a child and therewith associated privileges and protections during armed conflict. In addition, they relate to RR efforts indirectly as peace-building and DDR initiatives, which were not examined in great detail in this thesis. As a result of this merge, there are nine topics discussed. Finally, for the ease of further discussion, the topics of interest will be referred to as guidelines, because they address a set of suggestions or advice that contributes toward improvement in that specific area. As such, they are guidelines to be followed to achieving successful RR in that particular area.

Guideline 1: Setting the age of a child and prohibiting recruitment of those younger than 18

Since documents such as *CRC*, *Optional Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions*, and the *Rome Statutes* failed to address the recruitment age adequately, it was crucial that the *Machel Report* clarified this grey area of debate.[215] This is why one of report's first and most direct recommendations insisted that "all combatants younger than 18 ... be removed from any armed group."[216] The *Machel Report* did take into account the circumstantial conditions where children opted to fight themselves and were considered invaluable contributors to the cause of their country or viewed as adults in their cultural context. However, it also showed the traumatic effects of active involvement with armed groups.[217] A year later, when the *Cape Town Principles* were drafted, they urged the "governments to adopt national legislation that sets the minimum age of 18 years for voluntary and compulsory recruitment," and to develop recruitment procedures which would ensure that legal standards on age were kept.[218]

	Sets the age of a child at 18, prohibiting all forms of recruitment for those younger	**Guideline 1 Working List**
Machel Report (1996)	1. Remove everyone under 18 years of age from armed forces 2. Launch a global campaign to eradicate the use of children under the age of 18[219]	**1. Programs should include all children and youth below age 18** **2. Programs should also cater to those between 18 and 24, where needed**
Cape Town Principles (1997)	1. Establishes minimum age for participation in hostilities as 18 2. Calls for ratification of Optional Protocol of CRC 3. Calls on govts' to adopt means to enforce recruitment procedures 4. Prosecute those recruiting younger than 18 5. Demobilize all younger than 18[220]	
IDDRS (2006)	1. Includes all children and youth till age 24 2. Programs to ensure that those who were recruited as children and are now over 18 receive proper support[221]	
Paris Principles (2007)	1. Child refers to every person less than 18[222]	
Machel 10 Strategic Review (2007)	1. Focus on children, but extended to youth –those ages between 15 and 24[223]	

Figure 4: Guideline 1 working list for observation during case study analysis

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[215] For more detailed discussion on the definition of a child and the recruitment age, refer to Chapter 1.

[216] *Promotion and protection of the Rights of Children: Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Para 49-50.

[217] See *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict.*

[218] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices,* 1.

[219] *Promotion and protection of the Rights of Children: Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Para 48 and 62(a).

[220] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices,* 1, 2.

[221] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.20, Summary and Section 4.

[222] *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, Para 2.0.

[223] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Part II, Article 5.

As can be seen from Figure 4, *IDDRS* not only called for defining everyone younger than 18 as a child, but in the case of DDR, it stipulated the inclusion of those ages 18 through 24 in the child RR initiatives (recommendation 1.2). *Paris Principles* confirmed the *IDDRS* recommendation, because many returning young adults were younger than 18 at the time of their abduction and as a vulnerable group, needed the benefits of child-minded RR rather than adult DDR programs.[224] Therefore, recommendation 1.2 is added to the working list, and during the case studies an additional focus will be placed on examining how programs and their activities include the age group between 18 and 24 and why. The observations for this guideline and the recommendations in the working list will relate directly to the treatment and benefits youth and young adults receive within a program as well as in the community.

Guideline 2: Encourage Local, National and International Coordination of DDR Programs

All five documents point towards the need for coordination among local, national and international efforts to achieve more focused and better developed RR and DDR programs. However, while cross-examining the recommendations summarized in Figure 5, it can be noticed that they address a broader spectrum of peace-building initiatives and associated activities. Recommendations, such as recommendation 2.1 (*Coordination of DDR programs among the UN, specialized agencies and civil societies*), though important to the RR efforts, are not the focus of the case study analysis, and cannot therefore be adequately addressed. They will be mentioned only in the context where they directly contribute to the long-term success of the RR programs, for example, when the case study programs join coordination meetings, or take part in activities coordinated by UN and international organizations, such as Save the Children.

Recommendation 2.3 falls under that same categorization *(Link between peace-building and DDR programs and RR efforts, without dependency on the progress of the first)*. Although it discusses DDR efforts, it also calls for an establishment of a link between these general efforts and specific child minded reintegration and rehabilitation programs. As such, during the field study, it will be observed to what extent this link exists and what activities are conducted that specifically contribute to the RR efforts of the program. However, it will not be possible to examine the disarmament and demobilization process of child soldiers in detail, as this is not an aim of the RR programs. In addition, due to its complex nature and safety issues, observations of such activities are outside the scope of this thesis.

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[224] See *IDDRS*, Chapter 4 on Youth and DDR.

	Encourages local, national and international coordination of DDR programs	Guideline 2 Working List
Machel Report (1996)	1. UN, specialized agencies and civil societies to pursue quiet diplomacy with govt's and non-state forces 2. Peace agreements to include DDR measures and international community to support the programs 3. States to ensure successful drafting of the Optional Protocol to the CRC[225]	**1. Coordination of DDR programs among the UN, specialized agencies and civil societies** **2. Sensitization of non-state actors to be conducted as a joint effort** **3. Link between peace-building and DDR programs and RR efforts, without dependency on the progress of the first** **4. Develop common approaches and strategic links** **5. Encourage participation of youth in decision-making process** **6. Create special measures to achieve release and RR of girls**
Cape Town Principles (1997)	1. Advocacy through local human rights organizations 2. Govts' and military coordination[226]	
IDDRS (2006)	1. Secure safe environment 2. Involve youth in discussions on the security issues 3. Create strategic links between various DDR programs 4. UN agencies involved in DDR to be responsible for finding, identifying and securing the release of young women 5. Set up national commission on DDR, create synergy and ensure continuity[227]	
Paris Principles (2007)	1. Sensitize armed groups in relation to the recruitment of girls-wives, cooks etc also a breach to CRC-and achieve their release 2. Programs should not depend on the progress of formal peace processes or DDR programs 3. All actors to work together to develop coordinated advocacy strategy 4. Encourage sensitization programs which will grant direct and free access to children within the armed groups-in particular to girls 5. Include RR in all stages of any peace process 6. Develop links, policies and initiatives with all national and local programs 7. Advocate with programming partners and donors for the necessary linkages between short-term humanitarian assistance and long-term development assistance 8. All relevant actors to develop common approaches and to inform children on the available support, without any forms of discrimination[228]	
Machel 10 Strategic Review (2007)	1. IDDRS and Paris Principles require effective implementation 2. Expand public/private alliances and coordination with NGOs to address war's impact on children 3. Expand the participation of the youth in the decision-making process 4. UN to assist states in providing children with quality basic services, protection and support systems, and in the development of community based RR 5. Ensure funding which will sustain multi-year, flexible and thematic child-focused programming[229]	

Figure 5: Guideline 2 working list for observation during case study analysis

Finally, it should be noted that similar recommendations extracted in the first data set have been consolidated under one general recommendation, as was the case with recommendation 2.1, which is derived from multiple recommendations from the first data set

[225] *Promotion and protection of the Rights of Children: Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Para 62(b), (c), and (d).

[226] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 2, 4.

[227] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.20, Section 7, Para 12.1, and 12.2. See also section 7.1.: the links should be created between DDR programs and (1) broader youth strategies and action plans, (2) broader employment policies and programs, (3) SSR and justice sector reform, and (4) DDR programs in neighboring countries; Section 11.2., Section 13.2.

[228] *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, Para 6.30, 7.1, 7.8, 7.9, 7.12, 7.32, 7.40, and 10.1.

[229] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Part II, Section IV Articles 57, 68, 70, Section V, Article 80, and Section VI/D, Article 114(a).

addressing coordination of DDR initiatives, as well as creation of synergies or acting together to develop coordinated advocacy strategies. Similarly, the multiple recommendations addressing the involvement of children in the decision-making and development process have been consolidated in the recommendation 2.5.

Guideline 3: Family Tracing, Reunification and Support during RR efforts

In times of peace, home provides an environment in which children are nurtured, protected and loved, so that they can best develop. As such, this guideline mirrors the notion of a protective home, aiding the returning child to rehabilitate properly as well as reintegrate back into its community and society. This guideline is the first key element outlined by Jareg, who indicates that family support during RR begins prior to, but should be also extended during and after the reunification process.[230] Realizing that family and home have a crucial therapeutic effect on a child and that separation cannot be always avoided, the documents underline the importance of conducting reunification activities. Thus, the documents clearly point out that in any reintegration and rehabilitation programs, the reunification process, as shown in recommendation 3.1 (*Begin family tracing as soon as possible*) should receive the highest priority. Not only because the tracing process takes time, but also because reunification with the family in most cases has a greater positive effect on a child than any other activities.[231] Children who are able to be reunited with their families have greater chances of abandoning feelings of guilt, aggression or hopelessness. Unfortunately, the reunification with parents and immediate family is not always possible, for many reasons, beginning with the death of a family member or relocation of the entire family without trace to unwillingness of the family to take the child back in.[232] In addition, in some situations, it might be more beneficial for the child not to return to his or her family, as the family situation could have led them to join an armed group in the first place. In all of the cases mentioned above, where possible, the guidelines recommend reunification efforts to focus on the extended family or the community itself, before looking for a foster home for the child. This concept has therefore been consolidated in recommendation 3.3.

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[230] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 5.
[231] Dodge and Raundalen, *Reaching Children in War*, 114.
[232] *Paris Principles*, Para 7.36, 7.45. Families often move or are relocated for their protection during an armed conflict. If their movement is registered and/or they move to an IDP camp, they can be traced easier. However, due to limited communication infrastructure, it is sometimes hard to trace the movement of a family. Tracing extended family and distant relatives also faces similar challenges.

As most abducted children have been forced to commit gross atrocities within their own circle of family or community, though vital to a child's rehabilitation, reuniting the victim and the perpetrator is never easy. No matter how unwillingly the crime was committed, reunification can cause further trauma to all parties involved.[233] Recognizing that families also need emotional support, the documents recommend that the programs not only focus on the child during the tracing and reunification process, but also extend their efforts to include the respective family and, when needed, the community as well (recommendations 3.2 and 3.5), concurring with Wessells' research on the importance of supporting family of the returning children emotionally in addition to providing support to the children themselves.[234] In addition to the emotional burdens reunification can cause, financial burdens can become major concerns hindering effective reintegration. In some situations, poverty might have been one of the causes for a child's recruitment, and if one or both parents have become casualties of the conflict, this could leave the child and the rest of the family with low or no funds and no way to cope.[235] Recommendations were developed to address these possible scenarios, suggesting a provision of opportunities for livelihood incentives and social assistance to the family (recommendation 3.4). Such aid, in addition to helping the financial situation in the family, also contributes to psychological rehabilitation. A child that is perceived as a contributor will be treated differently and in return will also respond more positively.

From Figure 6 it can be observed that all recommendations from the first data set have been consolidated and are reflected in the RR guidelines working list. It will be of particular interest to observe the implementation of all of the recommendations previously mentioned. In addition it will be important to observe how recommendations 3.4 (*Assist family with social support*) and 3.6 (*Conduct regular follow-up*) are addressed, because they are more long term in their approach.

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[233] Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration during an Ongoing Conflict," 502.

[234] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 3, 6, and 8.

[235] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," *International Security* 31 (2006): 127-164. While determining that poverty is not the sole reason for child's recruitment, the authors do acknowledge that poverty levels can hinder possible reintegration and demobilization efforts.

	Addresses family tracing, reunification and support during RR efforts	Guideline 3 Working List
Machel Report (1996)	1. Re-establish contact with the family[236]	**1. Begin family tracing as soon as possible** **2. (Re) establish contact and an emotional bond with the family** **3. If no immediate family –first search for extended family and relatives, then for foster home within the community, as a last option for foster home elsewhere[237]** **4. Assist family with social support** **5. Conduct sensitization and training on how to deal with aggressive behavior within families** **6. Conduct regular follow-up** **7. Consult families and children on their rights and duties** **8. Provide children with proper documentation**
Cape Town Principles (1997)	1. All efforts to reunite children with family or to place them within a family structure 2. Family reunification the most vital factor for effective reintegration-reestablish emotional link	
IDDRS (2006)	1. Begin family tracing at the earliest possible stage 2. Reunification to follow mediation and situation assessments –in the best interest of the child 3. Activities to be based on Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children 4. Assist family with social support and follow-up 5. If no immediate family, place child with relatives or within family system-ensure more consistent follow-up[238]	
Paris Principles (2007)	1. All efforts should be made to keep children with families –provide community setting with adequate care and protection 2. If children sent away to avoid recruitment provide information and consultation 3. Child protection agencies to work with governments to provide urgent response to support family reunification 4. Provide children with registration documents and teach them their names/origin 5. Liaise with the family and community on the rights of a child 6. Family tracing should begin and contact with families be re-established as soon as possible 7. Sensitize families to avoid stigmatization and to prepare them for aggressive behavior 8. Develop local capacity to support foster/alternative care for children who cannot return to immediate family[239]	
Machel 10 Strategic Review (2007)	1. Provide RR help to families as well as the child[240]	

Figure 6: Guideline 3 working list for observation during case study analysis

Guideline 4: Community based Support and (re-)recruitment Prevention

The previous guideline shows that families cannot always have the resources and capacities needed to do everything alone, and that success may be more readily achieved when communities' capacities are utilized to reinforce the RR efforts. While the need for strong support and collaboration with the communities has not received sufficient attention in the literature, Jareg strongly urged for "on-going dialogue with communities," to ensure RR

[236] *Promotion and protection of the Rights of Children: Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Para 51.
[237] Wessells, *Child Soldiers: From Violence to Protection*, 183-185.
[238] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.30, Section 8.9. International Committee of the Red Cross, *Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children* (Geneva: ICRC, 2004).
[239] *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, Para 6.31, 6.32, 6.33.0, 7.14.1, 7.36, 7.38, 7.41, and 7.45.1.
[240] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Part II, Section V Article 95.

progress once children return to their homes.[241] In addition, the *Machel Report* recognized the need for NGOs and child-minded organizations to include communities in the RR efforts, because they can make or break their successful.[242]

As can be seen from Figure 7, both *IDDRS* and *Paris Principles* stress the need to work to develop, rehabilitate and sensitize the communities themselves before their strength can be utilized to help children. However, while *IDDRS* focuses on socio-economic and leadership network building initiatives, the *Paris Principles* underline the need for the psychosocial aspects to be taken care of, such as understanding the motivations of the communities, managing conflict, and developing youth and peer groups.[243] The *Machel+10 Report* also highlights the importance of sensitization and training of the local leaders and clergy, empowering them with the task to promote reunification and to monitor the development of returning children. Scholarly research confirms this, with the reasoning that due to their status within the community, their network and knowledge, these men can provide incredible assistance during family reunification, as well as help eliminate stigmatization.[244] Sensitized elders understand how returning children can be used to contribute healing of the community itself, which will in return help the children gain a new sense of belonging and build their trust to open up and share their experiences in a healthy, positive way.[245] This process aids both the child and the community in returning to normality which existed prior to the abduction of the child.[246] This is why recommendations outlining these concepts have been consolidated and are reflected in recommendations 4.1 (*Programs to be developed together with the community –coordination between NGOs and elders/leaders*), 4.4 (*Conduct sensitization and training in the community*) and 4.6 (*Assist communities in conflict management*).

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[241] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 6.
[242] See Susan Shepler's "The Rites of the Child."
[243] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.30 and 5.20, and *Paris Principles*.
[244] Montgomery, Burr and Woodhead ed., *Changing Childhoods*, 171. Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 202-205; Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, 120.
[245] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 203.
[246] *Paris Principles,* Para 7.46-7.49.

	Addresses community based support and re-recruitment prevention	Guideline 4 Working List
Machel Report (1996)	1. Re-establish daily routines of family and community life, opportunities for expression and structured activities[247]	**1. Programs to be developed together with the community – coordination between NGOs and elders/leaders** **2. Include youth in community program development** **3. Assist community in setting up community-based child networks** **4. Conduct sensitization and training in the community** **5. Support local initiatives** **6. Assist communities in conflict management** **7. Conduct long-term monitoring and follow up through local leaders rather than individually focused monitoring** **8. Support development of (re)recruitment prevention programs and community-based initiatives**
Cape Town Principles (1997)	1. Develop programs with the communities and NGOs 2. Capacity of the community and family to prevent recruitment and care for the child should be supported[248]	
IDDRS (2006)	1. Identify community-based and community-driven projects 2. Focus on youth involvement, especially of young women 3. Protect communities and work with them to build understanding and prevent recruitment 4. Assist communities to develop and establish community-based child protection networks 5. Prepare communities through awareness-raising, education, sensitization of community leaders, etc[249]	
Paris Principles (2007)	1. Plan context-specific programs which support community efforts to prevent recruitment 2. Coordinate planning efforts with local communities and children – focus on the most vulnerable 3. Understand attitudes and motivations of communities and families 4. Support local initiatives to protect children from recruitment 5. Encourage formation of youth groups-sports, theatre, youth initiatives and involvement in community work and leadership 6. Engage community, building on existing resources, acknowledging the changing roles, responsibilities, hierarchies and social dynamics 7. Work on non-violent conflict resolution and management for children returning from opposing armed groups 8. Support local capacities and include local leaders to provide long-term monitoring and follow-up 9. Avoid individually focused monitoring[250]	
Machel 10 Strategic Review (2007)	1. Conduct sensitization work and community-based RR approach[251]	

Figure 7: Guideline 4 working list for observation during case study analysis

In addition, the analysis shows that documents deem community based training on re-recruitment prevention to be important, as per recommendation 4.8, and while not explicitly calling it by that name many activities that strengthen the community contribute to this concept. Therefore the re-recruitment prevention terminology from *Cape Town Principles* has been added in the recommendation 4.8. Though a part of peace-building activities, recruitment prevention training and awareness building initiatives are considered important in the RR

[247] *Promotion and protection of the Rights of Children: Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Para 183(b).
[248] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 2, 9, 11.
[249] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.30, Section 12.1, 7.4, and 9.3.
[250] *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, Para 6.27, 7.48, 7.49, 7.4, 7.43, 9.0, 9.3, 10.0, and 9.1.
[251] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Part II, Section V, Article 94.

efforts as well, because they greatly influence long-term RR. Beah's account shows that it is not unusual that a child is re-abducted upon his or her return to the village, or that he or she runs off to re-join the group if there are no prospects for a better future, or if the family situation demands it.[252] Program success may therefore hinge on the extent to which the community is involved in the reintegration effort of a child.

It can be observed that all of the extracted recommendations from the five documents are in agreement with each other, and that all build on each other. As a result of this, the recommendations have been consolidated in such a way that they incorporate all of the recommendations from the first data set. The final list of recommendations is considered as an important contributor to long-term efforts. It will therefore be important to observe how programs implement them and what results they are able to achieve.

Guideline 5: The Special Case of a Girl Child

Though the issue of a girl child was hinted at in Chapter 1, no in-depth familiarization with the topic has been conducted so far. The widespread abuse of girls' rights in armed conflict and challenges to eradicate it, however, deserve a closer look. Before any discussions of the related recommendations takes place, the issue will be addressed here.

The knowledge of the plight of a girl child and the nature of her involvement with the armed groups in Africa in particular was sparse for many years. It received a unique and special public attention through the abduction of Aboke girls from northern Uganda in 1990s.[253] Through the work of dedicated parents and clergy, many Western politicians and activists learned for the first time of the existence and realities of girl child soldiering.[254] Both Machel and Jareg addressed this reality, indicating that girls were active contributors to the camp life and combat of the armed group but were ignored in DDR programs.[255] Their constant physical closeness to the camp and chores associated with the camp household, as well as having given birth to a child, significantly reduced their chances of escaping. In addition, since they were considered an integral part of family structure within an armed group, girls were not viewed as children by the leaders, but rather as wives and mothers, which is why their release was held off to the last possible moment.[256]

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[252] Ishmael Beah, *A long Way Gone* (London: Harper Perennial, 2007), 180.
[253] Els De Temmerman, *Aboke Girls.*
[254] Temmerman, *Aboke Girls*, 66.
[255] *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Para. 45. Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 8.
[256] *Paris Principles*, Para. 4.0. and 7.23; *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict*; Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa* (2006), 78.

Those who managed to escape or were released faced even greater challenges when returning to their communities.[257] Studies report that in some African cultures, girls are shunned more often than boys for having been involved with armed groups. If a girl child was forced to have sexual relationships outside of her marriage bonds, which is the case with most girl abductions, according to some local beliefs, she is considered as having brought shame to her family and community, thereby destroying any possibility of winning family a bride price and honor.[258] Even though girls are not lone targets of sexual abuse (according to the *Machel Report* findings, many boys have been sexually abused as well), they carry their scars more clearly, as they often return back to their communities as mothers. Single mothers receive much scorn from their clan and community, and together with their children, since given birth in the bush, are viewed as unclean and possessed by evil spirits.[259] Denov elaborates on this innuendo, recounting some of the prejudice which returnee mothers and their young babies faced in African countries, stating that 'if child mothers are ostracized and isolated for having given birth out of wedlock, and they are carrying the shame of rape and sexual violence, the stigma is even greater for the children.'[260] Wessells adds by stating that 'the world has failed to come to grips with the fate of babies that are born as a result of rape or sexual activity within an armed group.'[261] To find relief in their post-involvement environment, ex-combatant girls oftentimes identify with their perpetrator, hoping to continue their lives with the man who was, how they would call them 'their husband.'

In these more traditional African settings, NGOs focus on changing certain traditional stigmas related to gender, establishing support programs for victims of sexual abuse and gender-based violence. To be successful, the programs need to teach importance of building down traditional prejudices, and condemn shaming and ostracizing girl mothers.[262] Reflection of such programming was mentioned in Graça Machel's report, but it took additional ten years and the drafting of the *Paris Principles* for it to be implemented in a more strategic manner, and adopted as a programmatic activity. During the drafting, *Paris Principles* considered the special case of a girl child, redefining how they ought to be viewed and received into RR

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[257] De Temmerman, *Aboke Girls*, 50, 84.

[258] Kostelny, "What about the Girls?,"506; see also Denov, "Girl Soldiers and Human Rights;" and Denov, "Is the Culture Always Right?"

[259] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Para 21. See also Jareg, "Crossing Bridges": "The issue of rape of boys is an extreme taboo and those experiencing such acts have great difficulty in talking about them. It is important to be aware ... that such abused could be behind serious behavioral and psychological disturbance in returning boys."

[260] Denov, "Girl Soldiers and Human Rights," 831.

[261] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 101. See also Apio, "Forgotten Children."

[262] *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Article 110 (f).

programs. Major challenge was awakening the realization that they also fit the category of a child soldier.[263] They had not been seen as fitting the child soldiers' category for many years, which meant that the girls were automatically excluded from RR programs in the past, increasing thereby level of stigmatization they experienced in their communities.[264] This is why in the *Machel+10 Strategic Review*, the Special Representative admonished that even though girl child issues gradually received more attention in the RR context, more needed to be done to "deepen the knowledge base" and develop "more effective advocacy and program intervention."[265] This is further stressed by Jareg, who suggests that the programs designed need to be flexible to consider gender-based differences and challenges, to understand girls and girl mothers' special needs, and as outlined in the *IDDRS*, to provide girls an access to education and livelihood support. As the issues mentioned above are important to the girl RR, recommendations from the first set of data have been consolidated and adopted into the RR guidelines working list.[266] These are reflected in the recommendations 5.1 (*Special attention to reunification needs of girl soldiers*), 5.3 (*Include girl mothers in livelihood and vocational training programs*), and 5.6 (*Grant girls access to education and schooling and provide vocational training and income earning opportunities*).

In addition, besides educational and financial attention, as Honwana and others point out, girls need to be helped in dealing with their physical scars and possible health conditions which resulted from their time with the armed group.[267] As recommendations dealing with this issues are discussed in greater detail in the guideline 6 (*Medical assistance to children with disabilities and other health/physical RR efforts*), they are only mentioned here in recommendation 5.2 *(Establish support programs to deal with emotional and physical consequences of rape*), to ensure the linking with this guideline and to underline the understanding of their importance when addressing issues of a girl child.[268]

Next to ensuring protection of girl child rights in the community and presenting a set of recommendations to fulfill such obligation, the *IDDRS* and *Paris Principles* highlight the positive effect programs would have if they created a venue for young women to participate in decision-making, and incorporated female role models in "leadership positions in peace talks,

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[263] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 2.
[264] *Paris Principles*, Para. 4.0. See also *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, and Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, 78.
[265] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228,* Para 5.
[266] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 8-9.
[267] Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa,* 80, 90, 101. See also Farr, "The Importance of a gender perspective to successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes," 27-29.
[268] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Para 98.

within political parties and in the formal reconstruction and peace-building initiatives of the war-torn countries."[269] It is evident that the documents support the notion of empowering young women in order to break the cycle of gender stereotypes which would also put and end to the exclusion from DDR programs.[270] Such statement resonates throughout the academic research conducted, which considers women's rights and empowerment as an important step towards building a more tolerant and gender equal societies.[271] Since such a society would ultimately be a product of successful long-term RR, this recommendation has been adopted into the working list as an important indicator (recommendation 5.4 - *Conduct sensitization and empower women in the community*). However, because empowering girls in is considered a crucial element for a successful long-term RR, it will also be important to observe how programs implement provision of education and training to all girls, including girl mothers, and especially how they help the girls rehabilitate and reintegrate into their community where stigmatization exists as part of the empowerment effort. In this context, the recommendations also shed light into how sensitization work is conducted to build down the stigmas that revolve around the gender-based prejudices for children involved with armed groups.

As can be seen, the majority of recommendations added to the RR guidelines working list have been pulled from the *Paris Principles* and the *IDDRS*. However, to avoid repetition of the concepts, similar recommendations have been consolidated together. This attempt ensures that there is a manageable list of recommendations to be examined, flexible enough to allow some room for interpretation by the individual programs. This interpretation could reveal gaps and issues RR initiatives still need to consider when designing and catering programs to the needs of their female returnees.

[269] Denov, "Is the Culture Always Right?"
[270] Farr, "The Importance of a gender perspective to successful DDR," 28.
[271] Denov, "Girl Soldiers and Human Rights," 814. See also Denov, "Is the Culture Always Right?"; Farr, "The Importance of a gender perspective to successful DDR."

Considers special case of a girl child		Guideline 5 Working List
Machel Report (1996)	1. Emphasize reproductive health needs of women and girls 2. Support reunification of girl soldiers with the family 3. Establish support programs for victims of rape with counseling, educational and skill training activities[272]	**1. Special attention to reunification needs of girl soldiers** **2. Establish support programs to deal with emotional and physical consequences of rape** **3. Include girl mothers in livelihood and vocational training programs** **4. Conduct sensitization and empower women in the community** **5. Girls to benefit equally from the RR efforts** **6. Grant girls access to education and schooling and provide vocational training and income earning opportunities** **7. Ensure confidentiality**
Cape Town Principles (1997)	1. Special attention should be given to the needs of girls and appropriate responses should be developed to this end[273]	
IDDRS (2006)	1. Grant girls eligibility in DDR and RR programs 2. Make available appropriate services to meet girls' needs who experience sexual and gender-based violence 3. Involve girl mothers in livelihood programs 4. Empower the young women to become valuable members of society in all its aspects 5. Relationship with older women in the community should be encouraged-if it is helpful to the girl 6. Conduct sensitization and mediation activities with the community to support girls' return –especially for girl mothers[274]	
Paris Principles (2007)	1. All measures should be taken to ensure full involvement and inclusion of girls in RR programs 2. Take measures to ensure the girls' experiences and differences to the boys' experiences are understood 3. Should be given same right to education and special care to prevent abduction 4. Programs to establish positive values of girls in their families and communities 5. Careful consideration and balance between programming without causing further stigmatization of the girl 6. Provide vocational training and income earning opportunities 7. Support girls who decide not to return to the community[275]	
Machel 10 Strategic Review (2007)	1. Provide confidential access to reintegration programs[276]	

Figure 8: Guideline 5 working list for observation during case study analysis

Guideline 6: Medical Assistance to Children with Disabilities and other Health/Physical RR efforts

The physical injuries represent the most apparent evidence of children's involvement in armed groups. As they are many, and often impede both the general health and psychological recovery of the child, it is essential that they be dealt with appropriately in order to achieve any long-term RR success. Almost all children, when admitted to a transit center, exhibit signs of malnutrition, starvation and illnesses such as malaria, or drug addictions.[277] Some children return with their limbs, or facial extremities cut off, and with battle injuries

[272] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Para 110(a), 51, and 110(f).
[273] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 6.
[274] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.20, Sections 11.2 and 11.3, Chapter 5.10., and Chapter 5.30, Sections 6.3, and 6.5.
[275] *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, Para 3.2, 4.2, 6.30.3, 7.59, 7.60, 7.63, and 7.67.
[276] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Part II, Section V, Article 96.
[277] GUSCO, "Life in GUSCO Center," *Home Again* 4 (2003):4. GUSCO, "Facts about Lord's Resistance Army," *Children and War* 6 (2004):6-10.

inappropriately dealt with, causing infections and further illnesses.[278] Machel stated that "according to WHO, armed conflict and political violence are the leading causes of injury, impairment and physical disability of over 4 million children who currently live with disabilities."[279] In addition to the disabilities and illnesses, some boys and most girls experience repeated sexual assaults during their time in the bush, exposing themselves to a number of "sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV, syphilis, and gonorrhea."[280] In addition, in the case of sexual assault against a girl child, violent injuries, unsanitary conditions and stress often cause "internal bleeding, cervical tearing, uterine deformation, abdominal pain, infection, premature and stillbirths."[281]

Despite the fact that little analysis of health and medical RR initiatives is available in academic literature, Jareg considers this an important issue, including the health as one of her key elements.[282] In addition, all five documents recognize that any programming needs to address medical assistance and physical rehabilitation and stipulate that at least, basic medical and health assessments in RR programs must be included. While *Machel Report* reminds of the need for facilities, which will provide adequate rehabilitative care, the *IDDRS* and *Paris Principles* stress more vividly the need to deal with gender-based violence and medical issues associated with it.[283] Such incentives also embrace the principal of avoiding institutionalization of children and youth, and making sure that children with disabilities feel included in regular programming, rather than being treated separately, and are reflected in the consolidated recommendation 6.3.[284]

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[278] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 42: "At talk peace in 1994, Kony justified the acts of the LRA stating: "If you picked up an arrow against us and we ended up cutting off the hand you used, who is to blame? You report us with your mouth, and we cut off your lips. Who is to blame? It is you!"" See also De Temmerman, *Aboke Girls*, 74.

[279] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Para 145.

[280] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 116. See also ISIS Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange, *Documenting Women's experiences in Armed Conflict Situations in Uganda 1980*-1986 (n.p: Kampala, 2005).

[281] Dyan Mazurana and Susan McKay, "Child Soldiers: Where are the girls?" *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 57 (2001): 30-35.

[282] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 6.

[283] Christian Relief Network, "Fistula Treatment." CRN Programs, www.crn.no (accessed February 7, 2009): "Thousands of women and girls in DR Congo suffer from vaginal fistula caused by brutal rapes or unassisted complicated labor. The physical consequences of fistula include continuous leaking of urine, feces or both, causing severe pain and infections." See also PENN Surgery, "Intestinal Fistula," The Division of Colon and Rectal Surgery, http://www.uphs.upenn.edu/surgery/clin/cr/fistula.html (accessed February 17, 2009): "Intestinal fistulas are abnormal passages from the intestine to either an internal organ or the body surface. They can occur as the result of congenital defects, injuries, infection radiation or illnesses such as inflammatory bowel disease."

[284] Guyot, "Suffer the Children," 5.

	Considers medical assistance to children with disabilities and other health issues as a RR effort	Guideline 6 Working List
Machel Report (1996)	1. Ensure maintenance of basic health services and base programs on community participation 2. Adequate rehabilitative care, provision of artificial limbs etc should be ensured 3. Avoid development of separate mental health programs 4. Support health programs which re-establish sense of normalcy 5. Prevent institutionalization of children-if required only with a support of the community 6. Conduct child-focused basic health and needs assessments[285]	**1. Provide child-focused basic health services in the communities and centers** **2. Ensure adequate rehabilitative care, including prosthetic limbs, wheelchairs, reconstructive surgery (if possible) etc** **3. Prevent separation of children with disabilities and institutionalization of children (addiction, aggressive behavior)** **4. Support existing health services and improve response capacities to cases of HIV/AIDS, victims of rape, drug and alcohol abuse, etc** **5. Train staff to deal with more challenging cases** **6. Provide clinical support to treat physical injuries of rape**
Cape Town Principles (1997)	1. Health assessment and treatment should be prioritized 2. Existing health services within the community should be supported[286]	
IDDRS (2006)	1. Improve capacity of the health sector in trauma and reproductive health matters –contraception, HIV/AIDS 2. Pay particular attention to the information dissemination so that harmful rumors – rape, HIV/AIDS rates can be effectively countered 3. Offer support services to treat drug and alcohol addiction 4. Provide clinical management of the consequences of the sexual abuse 5. Health care providers should have training in basic counseling to aid victims of sexual abuse[287]	
Paris Principles (2007)	1. Children with disabilities should not be treated separately 2. Involve children with disabilities in planning, advocacy and training activities 3. Undergo health assessments upon release 4. Make available health care facilities through the entire RR effort 5. Train staff to deal with different child abused related issues respectfully and confidentially 6. Develop appropriate ways to deal with physical consequences of GBV, pregnancies etc[288]	
Machel 10 Strategic Review (2007)	1. Address long-term needs such as health care, fistula treatment, legal support etc[289]	

Figure 9: Guideline 6 working list for observation during case study analysis

Since no RR can be fully successful unless physical and mental injuries caused by active involvement have been sufficiently addressed, as can be seen in the Figure 9, all of the recommendations were viewed as important indicators and have therefore been consolidated and adopted into the RR guidelines working list. However, the most prevalent recommendation, which will be more closely observed is recommendation 6.1 (*Provide child-focused basic health services in the communities and centers*), because it summarizes the guideline and because it specifically addresses the need for health services that will cater to

[285] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Para 165(a), 183(a),(b),(d), and 165(b).
[286] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 6, 10.
[287] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.20, Section 9.7., Chapter 5.30, Section 9.3., and Chapter 5.70, Section 8.4.1.
[288] *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, Para 7.50.2, 7.50.4, 7.69, and 7.71, 7.72.
[289] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Part II, Section V, Article 96.

children and youth in their own communities. While other recommendations might be too challenging for one RR program to fulfill, it is considered that the recommendation 6.1 can be achieved and therefore a great care will be placed in examining what programs do to specifically accommodate this recommendation.

Finally, it should be noted, that this guideline also provides recommendations to address the infrastructure and logistics of physical and mental challenges, while the following guideline addresses dealing with the psychological and psychosocial consequences of the war on the returning children.

Guideline 7: Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects

Literature discussing the RR of children often places more focus on approaches which aim at rehabilitating a person as a whole being, in the context of his or her own society. Such an approach has been labeled as *psychosocial* rehabilitation and reintegration, and is meant to "advance a child's psychological and social development" in a balanced manner.[290] As such, the approach encourages activities which involve mind and spirit in an attempt to influence it in a positive way. To appropriately assess which recommendations bear importance to such an approach, a brief discussion of the concept will be conducted before examining the recommendations for the working list.

Since each person experiences events differently, the threshold at which the war affects an individual remains a somewhat grey area of research. Because different cultures deal with pain and trauma according to their customs and belief system, the means to work through children's traumatic experiences need to be addressed properly in order to aid their return to normal life. The *Machel Report* showed that it is not enough to address one aspect of children's return to civilian structure, and that RR is best achieved when approaches are synergized.[291] Despite the journalistic accounts confirming children's resilience, studies show that war associated traumas run deep and are poignant in a life of a child.[292] A children's way of dealing with traumas can be deceptive, and sometimes perceived as resilience. In their

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[290] Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 60, 61: "Psychosocial describes the dynamic relationship between psychological and social factors – how each continuously influences the other." See also Colin MacMullin and Maryanne Loughry, "Investigating Psychosocial Adjustments of former Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone and Uganda," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 17 (2004); Lucia Castelli, Elena Locatelli and Mark Canavera, "Psycho-social support for war affected Children in Northern Uganda: Lessons Learned." *Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers*, www.child-soldiers.org (accessed December 15, 2008).

[291] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Article 169. See also Dodge and Raundalen, *Reaching Children in War*, 21.

[292] Dodge and Raundalen, *Reaching Children in War*, 113- 114.

research on war experiences and the psychological impact of war on children, Cole Dodge and Magne Raundalen, reported that about 67 percent of the children they interviewed said they tried not to think at all, while an even higher percentage (74%) avoided any association that would trigger the memory of a bad experience.[293] Dodge and Raundalen concluded their report by stating that the "denial might be very helpful right after a traumatic event, but if a child is not given the opportunity to work through his or her anxiety, much mental energy is consumed to keep bad thoughts away."[294] If traumas and anxieties are not treated appropriately, victims of violence are at great risk of becoming the perpetrators themselves. Michael Wessells commented in his essay, that a "society that mobilizes and trains its young for war weaves violence into the fabric of life, increasing the likelihood that violence and war will be its future. Children who have been robbed of education and taught to kill often contribute to further militarization, lawlessness, and violence."[295]

It was noticed during the early DDR efforts that western methods, such as behavior therapy, were not always as effective because meaningful approaches depended on the cultural and traditional (or religious) context.[296] This gave rise to the psychosocial concept, creating an outlet for the children to express and work through their "unique inner emotions" within the comfort of their own societal rules and traditions, and without creating additional traumas and discomfort.[297]

According to the recommendations presented in both of the *Machel Reports*, as well as in the *IDDRS* and the *Paris Principles*, and which are summarized in Figure 10, this synergy implies group therapy and the inclusion of community and family in the programming (consolidated in recommendation 7.5), as well as other structured activities such as sport, play and school (consolidated in the recommendation 7.9).[298]

Jareg's theory strongly resonates in the recommendations presented in the first data set, including discussion on why programs need to be aware of the culture, traditions and political

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[293] Dodge and Raundalen, *Reaching Children in War*, 26.
[294] Dodge and Raundalen, *Reaching Children in War*, 26.
[295] Wessells, "Child Soldiers."
[296] See Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 95: "Behaviour therapy training can range from systematic desensitization to helping the child through a visit to a place where he or she was frightened... Behaviour therapy can be used to treat fear and phobias that have been acquired during times of war. Two methods are highly effective in treating children's fears. The first is called direct conditioning and consists of providing a stimulus that arouses positive responses simultaneously with a gradual presentation of the feared stimulus. The other is social imitation. This means showing the fearful child that a non-fearful child is interacting with the feared object." See also Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 62, 63.
[297] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges."
[298] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Para. 183.

realities.[299] This confirms the importance of adopting and examining the recommendations into the RR guidelines working list, such as 7.1 (*Include traditional, cultural and child development perceptions, as well as political and social realities of the region in the program development – always to reflect the best interest of the child*). Why this is important can be illustrated through an example. Some communities in Africa amplify the notion that anyone who had killed was haunted by evil spirits of the dead, and was therefore unclean and unwanted.[300] In such belief systems, resentment and fear towards a child can be further fueled by religious and community elders.[301] However, if religious leaders lead by an example of acceptance, the community will be more prone to follow it. As such, this recommendation contributes toward the success of the guideline 4 and should therefore be evaluated.

It should be noted, that the extracted recommendations have all been adopted into the RR guidelines working list in such a way that they are a summary of the recommendations of each document to ensure comprehensiveness of this guideline. Also, it should be highlighted that this is the only guideline that offers a recommendation regarding the rehabilitation and transit centers as part of the RR efforts. And since they constitute a vital part of the NGOs RR efforts, this recommendation is included into the RR guidelines working list. This recommendation calls for the stay in interim or transit centers to be as short as possible, suggesting that programs concentrate on achieving rehabilitation with the support of families and in the community. As not all children will have been formally demobilized, presence in the community reaches those children, helping them receive proper treatment and fulfill the official release requirements (recommendation 7.6). This goes hand in hand with recommendation 7.5, which recognizes the need to develop all-inclusive programs. As these recommendations might put a strain on the programs, it will be of particular interest to observe how programs address the concepts outlined by these recommendations.

[299] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 3-4, 5.
[300] Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, 113.
[301] See Denov, "Is the Culture always right?" and Wessells, "Trauma, Culture and Community."

	Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects	Guideline 7 Working List
Machel Report (1996)	1. All phases of emergency and reconstruction assistance programs should consider psychosocial RR 2. RR programs to support psychosocial wellbeing should include local culture, perceptions of child development, and understanding of political/social realities and children's rights[302]	**1. Include traditional, cultural and child development perceptions, as well as political and social realities of the region in the program development – always to reflect the best interest of the child** **2. Develop socio-economic and livelihood incentives** **3. Train staff, local leaders and teachers and provide positive adult role models and strong peer support network** **4. Centers should provide comprehensive support to the returning child** **5. Avoid individual therapy and adopt all inclusive approach in the community based-programs** **6. Cater programs to deal with those who have gone through formal release process and to those who did not** **7. DDR programs for children to be separated from adult programs** **8. Children to stay in interim care and centers as short as possible** **9. Provide recreational activities, sports, theatre etc**
Cape Town Principles (1997)	1. Programs should help children reattach to family and community 2. Traditional practices which support psychosocial RR should be encouraged[303]	
IDDRS (2006)	1. Develop socio-economic incentives 2. Use variety of innovative strategies, raise awareness, empower youth 3. Study socio-political and generations conflicts in the region and provide reconciliation measures 4. Offer psychosocial support instead of individual therapy 5. Provide positive adult role models outside of the military, sense of solidarity, sense of responsibility and contribution in the community 6. Base programs on community approach 7. Adopt all inclusive approach in the programs 8. Religious beliefs should serve the best interest of the child-cleansing rituals etc[304]	
Paris Principles (2007)	1. Prepare programs which will address the needs of those who went through formal release process and those who did not 2. All appropriate measures to be taken to promote physical, psychological recovery and social reintegration 3. Develop specific programs to address the challenges faced by the infants returning with girl ex-soldier 4. Separate children from adult fighters upon release 5. Provide an inclusive approach 6. Conduct risk assessment within programs on issue such as discrimination etc 7. Programs should build child's self-esteem, promote their capacity to protect themselves, build a positive life and take into consideration the age and stage of development 8. Cultural practices and cleansing rituals should be supported as far as they are in the best interest of the child 9. Interim care in centers to be as short as possible, and build within the broader community RR efforts 10. Develop strong peer support networks and provide recreational activities 11. Provide livelihood opportunities-not all children traumatized 12. Train staff to allow children to open up, speak about past experiences, or the freedom not to talk[305]	
Machel 10 Strategic Review (2007)	1. Centers should provide comprehensive health, legal and psychosocial support[306]	

Figure 10: Guideline 7 working list for observation during case study analysis

[302] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Para 183(a) and (c).
[303] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 9, 11.
[304] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.20, Sections 8, 9, 9.7., 12.1; Chapter 5.30, Section 9.1, and Section 9.3.
[305] *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, Para 7.5, 7.6.4, 7.7, 7.21, 7.30, 7.31, 7.53, 7.55, and 7.75.
[306] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Part II, Section V, Article 96.

Guideline 8: Education, Vocational Training and Livelihood Initiatives

According to Jareg, the implementation of concepts within this guideline would lead to successful reintegration, because organized learning opportunities and vocational training create opportunities for the future as these children should replace the "brain drain" caused by the war.[307] This is supported by the findings of the two *Machel Reports*, which show that effective reintegration and rehabilitation cannot have a long-term effect without adequately structured and accessible-to-all educational opportunities.[308]

Besides providing catch up education, the *Machel Reports* claim that vocational training directs child's focus towards a different future, "facilitating their acceptance at home, providing them with a sense of meaning" and helping them support themselves and their families, thereby achieving a great acceptance of the community and developing "an identity separate from that of a soldier."[309] *IDDRS* particularly addresses the importance of vocational training as a livelihood means, indicating that labor market surveys should be conducted and the job opportunities examined to provide the youth with meaningful training, enabling them to be self-reliant. This is why recommendations highlighting these concepts have been added to the RR guidelines working list, as can be seen in the recommendations 8.4 (*Do not provide training in jobs which are hazardous or not needed in the labor market*) and 8.8 (*Create educational opportunities for children to utilize positive skills gained while associated with armed groups*). The strong emphasis on programs which will offer vocational training and provide mechanisms for the youth to earn income themselves (recommendations 8.5 and 8.6) has, in addition to its scholarly value, another function. Documents and past research identified that the receipt of monetary incentives from NGOs or the state can numb children, because it obstructs them from developing a sense of self-esteem and independence, and stops them from contributing in the community, which as was shown earlier, is an important aspect of their long-term RR. As evaluation of the applicability of the recommendations mentioned above has not been conducted yet, these recommendations will be of particular interest during the case studies. In addition, as mentioned previously, including disabled children and youth and allowing girl mothers to participate by providing day-care centers for the children, plays an important role in successful RR, and has been added to the list as recommendation 8.3. This thesis supports the notion that RR efforts can be viewed as successfully achieved only if truly

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[307] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 8.

[308] *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Para 54. See also *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Para 29, 84.

[309] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Para. 55, 56. See also "Rewrite the Future," *Save the Children.*

ostracized groups, the disabled children and girl mothers, have been adopted into programming effectively.

	Encourages education, vocational training and livelihoods initiatives	Guideline 8 Working List
Machel Report (1996)	1. Maintain education systems during conflict 2. Develop age-appropriate educational programs 3. Importance of establishing a link between education, vocational training and economic security of the family to ensure effective social reintegration 4. Educational initiatives developed for conflict situations should be designed to allow for easy integration in the post-conflict period[310]	**1. Develop age-appropriate and catch-up educational programs** **2. Develop programs which will have a link between education, vocational training and income-winning opportunities** **3. Involve children with disabilities and girl mothers in the programs –provide child care for the mothers** **4. Do not provide training in jobs which are hazardous or not needed in the labor market** **5. Do not provide cash or instant material assistance** **6. Provide apprenticeship and immediate earning opportunities** **7. Abolish school fees and use educational system to teach behavioral and political realities and to raise awareness on issues of concern** **8. Create educational opportunities for children to utilize positive skills gained while associated with armed groups**
Cape Town Principles (1997)	1. Access to education (secondary) and vocational training should be promoted 2. Built upon traditional ways to generate income 3. Provide vocational training and employment opportunities for children with disabilities[311]	
IDDRS (2006)	1. Create stable employment and income-generating opportunities –sustainable livelihood 2. Offer education and training, incl. apprenticeship programs 3. Avoid offering RR opportunities in jobs that are hazardous or not required in the labor market 4. Provide short-term accelerated catch-up education and part-time vocational training 5. Offer child-care facilities to allow young mothers and household heads youth to attend schools[312]	
Paris Principles (2007)	1. Material assistance should be avoided or planned in provision of services and assistance to the community 2. Cash benefits should not be given 3. Programs to take into account the age and the lost educational opportunities 4. Include children with disabilities in peer activities 5. Acknowledge and utilize the good skills obtained with the armed groups 6. Provide accelerated, training programs, which will be suitable for boys and girls 7. Conduct technical assessment of the job market and livelihood systems to adapt training 8. Coordinate and develop joint programs to teach basic business and life skills, and offer apprenticeship 9. Training programs for girls should provide child care[313]	
Machel 10 Strategic Review (2007)	1. Abolish school fees 2. Educational systems should play a central role in HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and care 3. Special emphasis on education and livelihood support is needed 4. Special attention that girl mothers have access to education and livelihood support – day care for the child[314]	

Figure 11: Guideline 8 working list for observation during case study analysis

[310] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Para 203(a), (e), (d), 53, and 200.
[311] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practices*, 3, 9, and 10.
[312] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.20, Section 8, 8.1, and 9.1.
[313] *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, Para 7.33, 7.35, 7.78, 7.79, 7.81, 7.82, 7.83, 7.83.1., 7.83.3., 7.83.4., 7.83.6., 7.83.7, and 7.83.9.
[314] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Part II, Section V, Articles 84, 92, and 98.

Finally, it can be noted that some documents refer to recommendations which are not fully within the operational framework of the local NGOs, such as recommendation 8.7, calling for abolishment of school fees. However, because this recommendation appears in the most recent document *Machel+10*, it is added to the RR guidelines working list and to evaluate its applicability during the case studies. Along with such analysis will also be the examination of how the recommendation 8.8 (*Create educational opportunities for children to utilize positive skills gained while associated with armed groups*), which was discussed in *Paris Principles*, is utilized. As the programs' prerogative is to help children forget their involvement with the armed group, it will be important to evaluate what skills are considered as positive and how they are addressed and used in the education of children.

Guideline 9: Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms

Guideline 9 has been developed in the past 5 years, and just as in the case of a girl child, has received most attention during the drafting of the *IDDRS* and the *Paris Principles*. Jareg's framework, though embedded in international children's rights laws, did not specifically address juvenile justice principle. This concept is however addressed by Wessells and others, and as such this thesis will therefore add this concept to her theoretical framework. Its main concept will therefore also be briefly addressed prior to further discussion on the recommendations. It should be noted, that the juvenile justice and the treatment of the youth in the justice system addresses both how punishment is administered among minors and how protection is provided to youth witnesses.[315]

The oxymoron of the phrase *child soldier* poses a burden to programs dealing with justice issues in RR. In many cultures, though still minors, child soldiers are no longer considered children under national laws when they are released or escape the armed group.[316] This is further aggravated by the fact that the *CRC* recruitment age is not universally accepted, and that the *Rome Statutes* prohibit recruitment of children who are 15 and below, making enlistment of youth between the ages 15 to 18 not punishable according to the international law. This per se, makes the recruit rather than the recruiter, though a child in the sense of the

[315] United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the International Criminal Court UN GA Resolution A/64/356* (New York City, 17 September 2009), Article 10: "Among the witnesses, 19 were included in the International Criminal Court Protection Program, including 8 vulnerable witnesses who testified with in-court protective measures (e.g., the use of pseudonyms, voice and face distortion and partially closed sessions) and other special measures (e.g., screened from viewing the accused, allowed testify in free narrative, psychosocial support in court and frequent breaks)."

[316] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Part II, Para 5.

Convention on the Rights of a Child, punishable by law for any action conducted during the enlistment period.[317] By the nature of their engagement, child soldiers are dangerous. During their active involvement with the armed group, they carry guns and they use them, sometimes in a very brutal fashion. Because of their youth, they are often unaware of the consequences, and execute orders more aggressively than adult fighters.[318] When they are released, as there are no uniform standards, in some cultural realms children and youth are viewed and treated as adult fighters before the law.[319] The programs cannot refute the reality that children, and more particularly the youth and young adults, had committed atrocities, and if healing is to take place, then programs need to address the issue of the atrocities committed and to teach the children to accept the consequences of their actions. But to punish them for crimes committed during forced recruitment means punishing them twice – first through abduction and coercion to commit the brutalities, and second through incarceration and an inappropriate judicial system. Unfortunately, such application of justice often occurs and is harmful and counter-productive to any further RR efforts.[320]

The criminal past of child soldiers has been a complicated and a challenging issue since the first *Machel Report*, with debates concerning whether children should be partakers of the retributive justice and made accountable before the court, as was the case with the adult fighters, or whether they should be granted a chance to repay their "debt" through a restorative model of justice and healing.[321] Those seeking retributive justice feared that perpetuators, even though children, would continue committing criminal acts, because they would not develop the sense of accountability for acts committed, if they were not punished according to national

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[317] Breen, "When is a Child Not a Child?," 74. See also *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Para 32(a).
[318] Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, 57.
[319] Musila, "Challenges in establishing the accountability of child soldiers," 324.
[320] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Para. 250, 251: "The severity of the crime involved, however, provides no justification to suspend or to abridge the fundamental rights and legal safeguards accorded to children under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. States Parties should establish a minimum age below which children are presumed not to have the capacity to infringe penal law. While the Convention does not mention a specific age, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) stress that this age shall not be fixed at too low a level, bearing in mind the child's emotional, mental and intellectual maturity. The Committee on the Rights of the Child states that the assessment of the children's criminal responsibility should not be based on subjective or imprecise criteria, such as the attainment of puberty, age of discernment or the child's personality. Those children who have been deemed criminally responsible should, as article 40 of the Convention asserts, be treated with dignity, and have their social reintegration taken into account. Children should, inter alia, be given the opportunity to participate in proceedings affecting them, either directly or through a representative or an appropriate body, benefit from legal counseling and enjoy due process of law. Deprivation of liberty should never be unlawful or arbitrary and should only be used as a measure of last resort. In all instances, alternatives to institutional care should be sought."
[321] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 218, 221.

laws of the land.[322] Even though this was sometimes the case, the international community has been more actively involved in seeking restorative means of justice with the claim that children, had they had the choice, would not have committed the atrocities.[323] The need for restorative justice system has strongly been supported by the notion that abducted children remained with the armed group because of the fear of punishment by the national legislature, which resulted in prolonging their plight.[324] During her visits to various countries in conflict, the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict confirmed this in the *Machel+10 Strategic Review*, noting that returning children were detained and many were experiencing additional torture and prolonged sentencing, due to the insufficiencies of courts to deal with the juveniles and the charges.[325] It was obvious that there was a gap between international considerations and national and local implementations.[326] The concerns on how to best address the juvenile justice reached their climax during the Paris Convention in 2007. The *Paris Principles* became one of the most detailed legal frameworks for the international community, outlining how states should address the juvenile justice in the case of forced child recruitment, and recognized children primarily as victims.[327] With the drafting of the *Paris Principles*, the international community arrived at a consensus and constituted that *the Rome Statue of the International Criminal Court* should have no jurisdiction over any child under the age of 18.[328] In fact, some of the conflict countries believe that their young people should not be prosecuted for crimes committed during forced recruitment at all, and have extended amnesty to former child soldiers over the age of 18.[329] Further, the guidelines within the *IDDRS*, as was seen in the guideline 1, called for extension of protection to youth up to 24 years of age, which included protection under the national laws through restorative justice programming.

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[322] *The Goldin Institute* "Child Soldiers: Juvenile Justice Debate," www.goldininstitute.org/index.cfml?n=2&sn=1&id=185 (accessed October 5, 2008).
[323] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 221.
[324] De Temmerman, *Aboke Girls*, 51, 58-59, 61, 70, 91.
[325] De Temmerman, *Aboke Girls*, 141.
[326] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Part II, Para 48.
[327] *Paris Principles*, Para 3.6-3.8: "Children who are accused of crimes under international law allegedly committed while they were associated with armed forces or armed groups should be considered primarily as victims of offences against international law; not only as perpetrators. They must be treated in accordance with international law in a framework of restorative justice and social rehabilitation, consistent with international law which offers children special protection through numerous agreements and principles. Wherever possible, alternatives to judicial proceedings must be sought, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international standards for juvenile justice. Where truth-seeking and reconciliation mechanisms are established, children's involvement should be promoted and supported and their rights protected throughout the process. Their participation must be voluntary and by informed consent by both the child and her or his parent or guardian where appropriate and possible. Special procedures should be permitted to minimize greater susceptibility to distress."
[328] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Para 8.6.
[329] *Report of the Special Representative A/62/228*, Part II, Para 5.

	Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms	Guideline 9 Working List
Machel Report (1996)	1. Codify rape as a crime against physical integrity 2. Treatment of rape as a war crime should be pursued and legal and rehabilitative remedies made available 3. International community should develop methods to apprehend and punish individuals guilty of child rights abuses 4. States to establish minimum age below which children cannot infringe penal law and have no criminal responsibility for crimes committed 5. Deprivation of liberty used only as a last resort – in all instances, alternatives to institutional care to be sought 6. Those charged should be provided legal assistance –always follow the best interest of the child[330]	**1. Establish age limit below which children cannot be charged** **2. Do not treat children as deserters and do not apply death sentence** **3. RR programs to adopt the restorative justice principles and be applied always in the best interest of the child** **4. Seek alternatives to judicial proceedings and provide children with highest standards of safeguards and reconciliation mechanisms** **5. Avoid detaining children and youth** **6. Use local approaches and traditional healing mechanisms**
Cape Town Principles (1997)	1. Special assistance and protection 2. Not to be counted as deserters[331]	
IDDRS (2006)	1. Any judicial proceedings for children should take place in the context of juvenile and restorative justice 2. Children should not be prosecuted or detained for military crimes, or acts committed while associated with the armed groups 3. Always in the best interest of the child-apply restorative mechanisms to achieve reconciliation within the community, the offender and the victim[332]	
Paris Principles (2007)	1. No amnesty should be granted to those who commit crimes against children 2. Children who have committed crimes while associated with armed groups should be treated within the framework of restorative justice and social rehabilitation 3. Alternatives to judicial proceedings should be sought 4. Capital punishment or prison for life shall not be applied to those younger than 18 at the time of the crime committed 5. Provide demobilization or release papers 6. Take all measures to protect child witnesses 7. States responsibility to prosecute offenders of children's rights through national laws or the ICC 8. Provide children with highest standards of safeguards in national judicial proceedings, and give priority before other cases to be tried 9. Protect children through the truth-seeking and reconciliation mechanisms[333]	
Machel 10 Strategic Review (2007)	1. Illegal detention to be countered with provision of remedial measures in situations where the administration of justice systems are weak or non-existent 2. Adopt child-friendly procedures and protective measures for child witnesses 3. Uphold international juvenile justice standards 4. Avoid long and arbitrary detention of child offenders and provide adequate legal support and assistance 5. Use local approaches to justice and reconciliation and traditional healing mechanisms[334]	

Figure 12: Guideline 9 working list for observation during case study analysis

[330] *Promotion and protection of the Rights of Children: Study on the impact on children of armed conflict,* Para 104, 110(d), 248, 250, and 251.

[331] *Cape Town Principles and Best Practice*, 7, 8.

[332] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.30, Section 5.8.

[333] *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, Para 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, and 7.6, 7.17, 8.3, 8.5, 8.9.1, 8.10, and 8.14.

[334] *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Resolution A/62/228*, Part I, Section II, Article 11; Part II, Section V, Articles 97, 107; and Section III, Articles 47, 48, and 50.

The extracted recommendations in the first data set in Figure 12 cover more aspects of juvenile justice than what can be addressed by local initiatives. In fact, many of the recommendations consider broader peace-building and DDR efforts and encourage changes which can only be implemented by the national legislature and the national military. The recommendations provided in the RR guidelines working list therefore attempt to consolidate and summarize those recommendations from the five main documents, which are believed to be applicable to RR efforts solely. The thesis will attempt to indentify the extent to which these recommendations allow for activities, which can be conducted by the local programs. In addition, more focus is placed on evaluating and including recommendations from the more recent documents. In particular, the issues included in two recommendations and addressed in Wessells and Musila's research will be closer examined - recommendation 9.3, looking at how case study programs apply the restorative justice principle and recommendation 9.6, examining how programs seek and apply traditional methods of healing in their work with the communities. It should be noted that codification of rape as a crime against humanity and the abolition of amnesty for those committing crimes against children, are outside the scope of this thesis and will therefore not be discussed in greater detail.

III. Analysis of the RR Guidelines Working List

The previous section provided the discussion and analysis of the individual nine guidelines. Further, it identified which recommendations could be more applicable in aiding the RR programs conducted by local non-governmental organizations. It could be seen that not all recommendations have equal weight in their implementation feasibility through non-governmental organizations. Bearing this in mind and recognizing that the question to be answered in this thesis seeks to find tools and programs to best achieve long-term rehabilitation and reintegration, it is important to revisit the guidelines and to analyze how they are conducted on the programmatic NGO level and why. This analysis will aid the final case study analysis in two ways. First, it will contribute toward more focused clarifications while in the field by concentrating on those recommendations and guidelines which assist long term RR. Second, it will show which guidelines require a network approach, and how this network can be realized to contribute towards achieving RR of each child.

As a general rule, the thesis adopts the notion, that crucial elements contributing to a child's successful reintegration and rehabilitation have been confirmed through their

reoccurrence in the literature and are educational and economic prospects for the future, acceptance and involvement of the community and of the family, and holistic healing of any injuries sustained during their involvement with the armed groups.[335] Also, the thesis supports Jareg's view that the rehabilitation and reintegration efforts only begin at the transit center, but to be truly successful, need to involve the respective community and the family of a child and provide long-term follow-up activities.[336] Considering these assumptions, it becomes easier to observe which of the nine guidelines can contribute towards the success or failure of the RR initiatives conducted by local non-governmental organizations.

The recommendations in the guideline 1: *Setting the age of a child and prohibiting recruitment of those younger than 18*, fulfill the international law norms and standards, and as such, it would be significant to observe whether their implementation produces the desired results, because the inclusion of different age groups only to an extent influences the long-term results of RR efforts. As such, it will be observed whether programs cater to 18 and below, how they include young adults in the programmatic implementation and with what results. In addition, it will be important to find out how they conduct their programs when considering different age groups, and how that effects successful reintegration if they do involve the age group between 18 and 24, designing special activities to address their reintegration and rehabilitation. This is of particular interest because this age group often disappears between the gap of child and adult DDR initiatives.[337] Involving them in the programs and showing how they are affected by the inclusion can contribute to validating the recommendation 1.2, and confirm why the inclusion of young adults up to age 25 would be necessary.

In the case of the guideline 2: *Encourage Local, National and International Coordination of DDR Programs*, it can be observed that most all recommendations address initiatives which require involvement of national government, international organizations such as UN and in some instances of peacekeeping missions and the military of a respective country. Further, this guideline addresses some of the peace-building endeavors, which are outside the scope of this thesis. Therefore, as discussed in previous section, some of the recommendations will be given a greater weight during the observations than others. However, though important to see to what extent and why programs implement the recommendations within this guideline, it should be noted that these will be considered as additional activities,

[335] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 1-9; Stott, "Out of sight, out of mind?," 68-70.
[336] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 1-9.
[337] *IDDRS*, Chapter 5.20.

rather than main programmatic efforts to achieve reintegration and rehabilitation. Though coordination of efforts and development of common links and approaches can contribute towards success of the program, often non-governmental organizations will participate in this coordination, but have no primary leadership role. As such, they have limited influence on how well the coordination efforts, the common approach and its implementation are administered. Furthermore, as RR programs, they will often not be involved in any disarmament and demobilization activities, and even less in sensitization efforts of non-state actors for the release of children. And in cases where they are, the success with which they achieve release of children, though important to RR efforts, will not be included in the evaluation of the success of a program.

The opposite is the case of the guideline 3: *Family Tracing, Reunification and Support during RR efforts*, which addresses in detail the general assumption of the acceptance and involvement of the child's family in the reintegration process. Since children will eventually leave the transit center, and return to either immediate or extended family, the environment which awaits them there will greatly influence whether child can reintegrate and transition back to a civilian life.[338] If a child can feel accepted and safe, it will be more prone to respond positively, which will contribute toward its rehabilitation and in a long run, its reintegration. It is therefore important to observe how programs address the recommendations. In addition, it will be important to observe how and in what format programs assist families through training, consultation and follow-up activities.

Similar will be the case with the guideline 4: *Community based Support and (re-) recruitment Prevention*. Just as much as a child will need the acceptance of his or her own family, he or she will also depend on the acceptance and support of the community in order to completely reintegrate. In addition, the program will only be able to actively continue its involvement with each child for a period of time, due to its limited human and financial resources. If properly rehabilitated and trained, the community of the child could continue where program had to stop.[339] Therefore, successful long-term reintegration will greatly be influenced by the proper fulfillment of the recommendations within this guideline. In particular, it will be important to observe to what extent programs utilize elders and tribal leaders to help the reintegration efforts, and how programs address this coordination and network through the community leaders.

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[338] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 189.
[339] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 199.

The guideline 5: *The Special Case of a Girl Child*, with its recommendations will also play an important role in finding out how programs aid reintegration of the girl child. Though no distinction or level of importance will be made in this thesis between the programs which aid boys from those aiding girls, the discussion in the previous section showed that programs in the past had a challenging time in properly addressing the special reintegration needs of a girl child. These most often were linked to traditional views and harmful gender role customs. While all RR programs have a challenging task, this task becomes even more challenging when attempting the reintegration of girls, because their involvement with armed groups also involves additional physical and psychological injury, and possible rejection by the family and community. As can be noticed, these are two of the three general assumptions, which would need to be achieved in order for programs to successfully achieve RR. Since girls constitute a great percentage of returning child soldiers, working through gender prejudices is crucial to successfully achieving rehabilitation and reintegration.[340] This includes the discussion on how programs work with the communities to address issues of rape, and of young mothers.

When considering the guideline 6: *Medical Assistance to Children with Disabilities and other Health/Physical RR efforts*, it is important to assess how programs provide for basic health care of each child, and how they address any long-term health provisions, especially once children return to their families and communities. As programs might not be able to provide for health service within their own programs, it might be interesting to assess how they coordinate such efforts with other programs or health care providers. This guideline is considered as an important indicator of successful reintegration and rehabilitation, because children cannot be rehabilitated and reintegrated if their basic health needs are not met. Without such provision, it might be impossible for the child to assume regular activities, contribute to family and community life, and eventually reintegrate back to life he or she knew prior to abduction. In addition, this guideline also touches on aspects of other guidelines, such as building down traditional prejudice in cases of rape and disabilities, and it should be observed how programs implement them in the communities to which children return.

The next two guidelines, guideline 7: *Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects* and guideline 8: *Education, Vocational Training and Livelihood Initiatives* can both be viewed as key elements towards successful reintegration and

[340] Farr, "The Importance of a Gender Perspective to successful DDR," 33-34. For further discussion see also Jeannie Annan and Ana Cutter Patel, "Critical Issues and Lessons Learned in Social Reintegration: Balancing Justice, Psychosocial Well-Being, and Community Reconciliation," http://ciddr.org/documentos/51_CIDDR_essay3.pdf (accessed July 13 2009).

rehabilitation of children. While guideline 7 considers recommendations in various areas, so as to provide a holistic approach to healing children, guideline 8 purely addresses the provision of catch-up education and vocational training in order to provide children with prospects for the future. Next to helping children gain social and emotional acceptance of their family and community, the opportunity for education or learning a skill can be viewed as an important tool in helping them rehabilitate.[341] The above discussion of the guideline showed that children who have hope for the future react differently to any challenges they face during the RR initiatives. Education or skill training affords them with this hope, as it equips them with a possibility to be financially independent, to gain self-esteem and to channel their negative or aggressive emotions, producing positive results. Coupled with a psychosocial approach, children are allowed to utilize their strengths to benefit their community, work through their weaknesses and fears in a safe, nurturing environment and are given an opportunity to use their experiences from the bush to assist peers and help others. This all contributes to building a stronger self-esteem, giving a child the strength to gain a different self than that which identifies him or her with a soldier. Therefore, if the other guidelines did not exist or were not implementable, it would be deemed highly important by this thesis that these two are conducted in addition to family and community efforts to achieve successful RR.

In addition, guideline 7 is the only guideline to mention recommendations regarding the transit or interim centers, where children will spend their first weeks or months, after demobilization and prior to their return to the community and family. Even though a stay at these centers can be viewed as a time out, it is important that there are general guidelines how they are to carry out their work, because they can set the tone and influence the rest of program's success.[342] As such, the recommendations urge that a stay in such centers should be short, while centers important role should be in providing comprehensive support to the returning child, meaning focusing on developing programs and initiatives to be addressed with the family and the community, providing role models that children, and parents can look up to and reach out to, and strengthening the peer network, so that children are able to support each other. From this short list, it can be noticed, that the recommendations clearly point that if child's reintegration and rehabilitation is to have a long-term effect, the programs need to provide means to continue implementing in the communities activities which they started in the centers.

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[341] Yuhki Tajima, "Background Paper on economic Reintegration," (paper presented at the *CIDDR,* May, 2009), 22-24, http://ciddr.org/documentos/51_CIDDR_essay4.pdf (accessed October 13, 2009).
[342] Beah, *A Long Way Gone*, 126-192.

Final guideline, guideline 9: *Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms* is highly important in the RR of child soldiers. However, due to the nature of this guideline and its associated recommendations, there is a component of legislature which cannot be performed by local non-governmental organizations, but rather vests with the national army and the national government of a country. Upon further examination of the recommendations, only two of six can be implemented successfully on an NGO level, thereby contributing to successful RR of children. Both recommendations again point towards the necessity of involving the community in the reintegration and rehabilitation of a child. In addition, they show that local and traditional beliefs have a great impact on processing crimes and providing punishment for them, and can assist or impede the rehabilitation success of the child, if not addressed properly. In other words, while national legislature might clear child of any crimes committed while soldiering, the traditional justice mechanisms might still demand some healing and cleansing process before this child can be accepted by the family or the community.[343] As mentioned above, the acceptance and the approval of the family and the community play an immense role in child's RR. While these two recommendations have a significant role, the guideline as a whole will not be viewed as a principal indicator on the success of NGOs rehabilitation and reintegration initiatives.

IV. Conclusion

During a conflict situation, children who serve voluntarily and involuntarily suffer in order to promote cause of the non-state actors.[344] This reality, though unfair, is hard to be completely eradicated. To prevent their escape, leaders often deceive and threaten them.[345] With little to no knowledge of their rights, frightened by the repercussion and punishment they expect to receive for their involvement in the military activities, children often have no other option but to subdue themselves to their abductors.[346] Once they are demobilized, the fears which held them in captivity need to be built down properly to allow them to transition to civilian life and become valuable contributors in their communities.

[343] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 194-195.
[344] Linda B. Miller, *World Order and Local Disorder: United Nations and Internal Conflicts.* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967), 35; Dodge and Raundalen, *Reaching Children in War*, 72.
[345] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," 160.
[346] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 104-105.

The driving force in aiding this transition has to be a more coordinated reintegration and rehabilitation effort, which constitutes portions of greater peace-building initiatives. The aim of this chapter was to capture guidelines and recommendations which contribute to the long-term success of the reintegration and rehabilitation efforts, and through that create a comprehensive guidelines list. This was achieved by cross-examining the main child protection documents to narrow the list to those specifically addressing child RR and offering recommendations on the ten most prevalent RR topics and areas of interest and concern. It was identified that five main documents, namely the *Machel Report, Cape Town Principles, IDDRS, Paris Principles* and *Machel+10 Strategic Review*, provide more detailed and specific suggestions towards designing and implementing successful RR. To allow for a more structured, in-depth case analysis in subsequent chapters, these recommendations were extracted from each document, grouped according to the ten topics of interest, and then evaluated against each other. By conducting the extraction and consolidation of the recommendations, it was possible to produce a working list for each of the areas of interest. Because of their similar concepts, the first two areas were merged together, producing a set of nine areas, or guidelines that drive the analysis of the cases.

Finally, a discussion of guidelines' individual relevance in RR local initiatives took place, to discern which guidelines will be of more particular interest during the case studies and should therefore be more closely observed and investigated. The following two chapters will present the individual case studies and analyze how these guidelines are being utilized and why. It is expected that the individual case studies will show which recommendations and guidelines have greater influence on the success of the RR efforts, contributing toward final validation of Jareg's theory and the applicability of the developed RR guidelines working list in the programs observed in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and Northern Uganda.

Chapter 3
Case Study: The Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale (CEPAC) Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo

"I look at these children and realize they are the future of my country. But, if I cannot help them create a better present, what future will they and this country have?"[347]

Edmond Pinos

I. Introduction

The *Machel Report* ignited the development of standards and guidelines in the field of child RR. The circumstances in countries experiencing armed conflict influenced their further development, however, while prepared theoretically, little practical testing and evaluation has been done due to how recent their development has been. The aim of this chapter will be to do such by presenting and analyzing a case study from eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The study was conducted in September and October 2007, in the Beni region of the eastern DRC, focusing on the work conducted by a local NGO, the Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale (CEPAC/CRN).

This chapter has been divided into two main sections. First, the background information, such as summary of the situation and the conflict, as well as the relevant groups will be presented. In addition, this chapter will outline the general structure of the program. The second part of this chapter will focus on an analysis of the implementation of the nine guidelines and their recommendations.

During the visits and stays in the Beni region, it was possible to conduct open-ended interviews with seven transit orientation center (in French CTO) social workers, eight CEPAC/CRN staff, as well as two CRN Norway staff. In addition to these formal interviews, conversations were conducted with 18 children with the support of social worker translators. From the children and youth spoken to, six were still at the CTO, eight in the Children's Clubs, and four reintegrated, owning a shop or atelier. To protect them, as they wished to remain unnamed, where applicable, only initials will be included in the footnotes.

[347] Edmond Pinos, Director CEPAC/CRN CTO, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 8, 2007.

II. Background

Rich in soil and natural resources, the area of today's eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo experienced fierce exploitations already during its colonial era.[348] The abrupt independence, which the country gained in 1960, resulted in chaos and continued exploitation under the leadership of Mobutu Seke Seke. Concerned more with the prestige and personal gratification, Mobutu changed its name to Zaire and ruled with greed.[349] The country was politically, economically and socially weak, giving rise to warlords and freedom movements in each corner of the country. In addition to the struggle for power within, the borders were ill protected, enabling more than half a million Hutus to flee into the eastern region of the country after the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, creating additional chaos in the region. The Rwandan Tutsi armies, supported by the army of Uganda, invaded the country, making their way deep into the heart of the continent, with the excuse of pursuing the perpetrators of the Rwanda genocide. They overthrew Mobutu in 1997 and installed Laurent Kabila in his place, hoping to have found a puppet leader in him. However, the allies soon became rivals and by 1999, the country was an "immense carcass being hacked to pieces," with every invader finding a "local warlord willing to gouge out diamonds, gold or coltan in return for guns and ammunition."[350] What followed were years of carnage, displacement and starvation. As such, situated at the rim of the Ituri Forest to its east and the Virunga National Park to its west, the North Kivu region and with it the Beni County has been the main cross roads of all the armed hostility and has experienced fierce fighting and pillaging. While most uprising and fighting calmed down by 2006, the pockets of armed groups still remain and threaten the region's fragile peace, a home to an estimated 713,000 internally displaced people.[351]

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[348] Richard Dowden, *Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles* (London: Portobello Books, 2008), 366. Africa: Democratic Republic of the Congo, "Economy," CIA World Fact Book, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html (accessed November 12, 2009).

[349] See King Gordon, *The U.N. in the Congo* (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1962).

[350] Dowden, *Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles*, 364.

[351] Relief Web, "170000 people in Beni, DR Congo, finally gain access to drinking water," Relief Web, http://wwwnotes.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/c7ca0eaf6c79faae852567af003c69ca/c798c1ffb84315be49257097001a7df8? (accessed November 20, 2007): "Though fast growing area, there is no exact census on the population in the town of Beni itself. Estimation made by MONUC ranges between 60.000 and 70.000. This number changes and varies depending on the presence of UN and associated organizations, as well as NGOs who operate from the town of Beni." GIS Expert, UNDP, "Population and Location in North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema," OCHA, http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/%28httpInfoFiles%29/EEB5CDCD12F36D518025709F0053BEBB/$file/IDPs%20North%20Kivu%20Apr%2004.pdf (accessed September 10, 2010): "It should be noted that statistics show IDP movement, and are estimations. The actual population statistics are not available due to constant movement and displacement in both the North and the South Kivus, affecting the Beni County, the most northern of the North Kivu Counties."

Trying to assimilate all the different armed groups into one uniform, official army, the United Nations Mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) has been deeply involved in the *brassage* process in the eastern DRC since 2005.[352] However, spillover effects from the conflicts of the neighboring countries, and the quantity of various rebel groups, which have been hiding in the bush of the surrounding rain forests, make the process challenging. Most of these groups are small armies, such as Mai-Mai, or "water-water" warriors.[353] However, others are remnants of the Rwandan genocide, or groups from other neighboring conflicts, who use the tropical forests as a hideout.[354] The numbers of armed groups which have been activate and created since 1997 has changed, with current estimations of about 20 different groups operating in the Kivus. The quantity of groups, and different agendas which lead their fight, make it difficult to bring complete stability to the region and monitor effectively what is occurring on the ground at any time.[355]

Together with the other armed groups which have moved deeper into the Ituri forests, many of the Mai-Mai rebel groups have and still recruit Beni children and youth. The director of the case study program, Edmond Kyali Luanda Pinos estimated that about ten to fifteen percent of children currently living in Beni have been associated with the armed groups

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[352]In the efforts to dismantle the rebel and Mai-Mai groups, the DRC government under President Kabila announced the *brassage* process, through which the armed groups were being fused into the national military. The process allowed those, who decided to discontinue their military service to be taken into the official DDR process according to the procedures developed by the UN/MONUC, and other international bodies at the negotiation table. Through *brassage*, many groups remained in the active military service and were granted amnesty. The formal process faced many challenges.

[353] --, "Who's Who Among Armed Groups in the East," All.Africa.org, http://allafrica.com/stories/201006151000.html (accessed September 7, 2010). The term mai-mai describes groups who believe that 'magic' water makes them unbeatable and provides them with greater protection. Such groups are usually small ethnic militias, who use local recruits and have little to no professional military background.

[354] --, "Who's Who Among Armed Groups in the East." Some of these groups continue the struggle between Tutsis and Hutus in the eastern DRC, with two main and most organized groups, Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP). Others such as Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri/Popular Front for Justice in Congo (FRPI/FPJC), Front for the Liberation of Congo (FPLC), Allied Democratic Forces/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF/NALU) and Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), have crossed over from Uganda into the east DRC. However, while the first two are fighting for resources and control of some of the areas, the last one uses Congo population for its so called 'holy war' war against the government of Uganda. More discussion on the LRA will be provided in the subsequent chapter. It should be noted that Allied Democratic Forces/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF/NALU) operates near Beni, and has been said to have been dormant until April of 2010.

[355] Jason Stearns, "List of Armed Groups in the Kivus," Congo Siasa Blog, posted June 9, 2010, http://congosiasa.blogspot.com/2010/06/list-of-armed-groups-in-kivus.html (accessed September 2, 2010). See also "Who's Who Among Armed Groups in the East." Currently, it is estimated that there are ten known Mai-Mai rebel groups and additional nine other armed groups, which camp and fight in the eastern DRC. However, the number of Mai-Mai groups can only be estimated and changes. These groups usually receive the name through their leader or the area from which they come (Mai-Mai Jackson's Group, Mai-Mai Cheka, etc).

between 1996 and 2007.[356] This number sounds somewhat low however the percentage only accounts for those who are still minors, and therefore fall under the category of children. Most of the 'children' who have fought at some point during the 11 years are young adults today. And some are still in the bush, fighting. It is difficult to give a precise account, but official statistics given by the UN, estimated in 2003 that "tens of thousands of children" were associated with armed groups in DRC alone. In 2004, a more precise number was issued, estimating that "about 30,000 children" were abducted in the eastern part of the country, to "comprise up to 40% of some non-state armed groups."[357]

The Beni community has worked hard with the help of the international organizations to bring peace and stability, making the town and the area full of walking disarmed, demobilized and for the most part, reintegrated young people. One can easily spot the presence of these organizations, as their many vehicles dot the landscape of the Beni region. Even more, local initiatives have sprung in the years since 1996, as there is a growing desire among the local population to assist abolition of child recruitment, as well as to find ways to call for peace. So far, it has been only a fragile peace, and fighting continues all around eastern DRC, hampering any stability, economic revival and growth.[358]

III. Program conducted by Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale (CEPAC)/ Christian Relief Network (CRN)

Established in 1921 by Swedish missionaries, *Communauté des Églises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale*, referred to as CEPAC, has been one of the "largest deliverer of health and educational services in north and south Kivu for many years."[359] Funded and supported by a Norwegian NGO, the Christian Relief Network (CRN), who has been working with CEPAC since 1995, a local chapter of CEPAC expressed interest in assisting returning children, and opened a rehabilitation and reintegration program in Beni in 2003. Covering a radius of about

[356] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 12, 2007.
[357] Watchlist Report on Children and Armed Conflict, "Struggling to Survive: Children and Armed Conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo," Watchlist and OCHA http://watchlist.org/reports/dr_congo.php (accessed November 27, 2008).
[358] Human Rights Watch, "Renewed Crisis in North Kivu." *Human Rights Watch* 19, no.17A (2007). Though the fighting in the immediate surroundings of Beni have diminished since 2007, the constant renewal of tensions in the neighboring Kivus regions since 1996 until 2010 contribute to instability, reinforcing the numbers of demobilized ex-combatants, among them child soldiers.
[359] Christian Relief Network, "CRN's Partner's in DR Congo," CRN, http://crn.no/page?id=1586 (accessed November 29, 2007).

200 km from its headquarters, the program was comprised of one of the four operational CTOs (center transit orientation) in the North and South Kivu region, and a cluster of vocational training centers. While the transit center was situated in the town Beni, the vocational training centers were scattered along the axis line, and situated in the villages and townships such as Beutembo, Lubero, Vayana, Mabuku and Erengite. Two additional operational CTOs in the North and South Kivu regions were managed by UNICEF in Goma, 250 km south of Beni, on the border with Rwanda, and one in Bukavu.

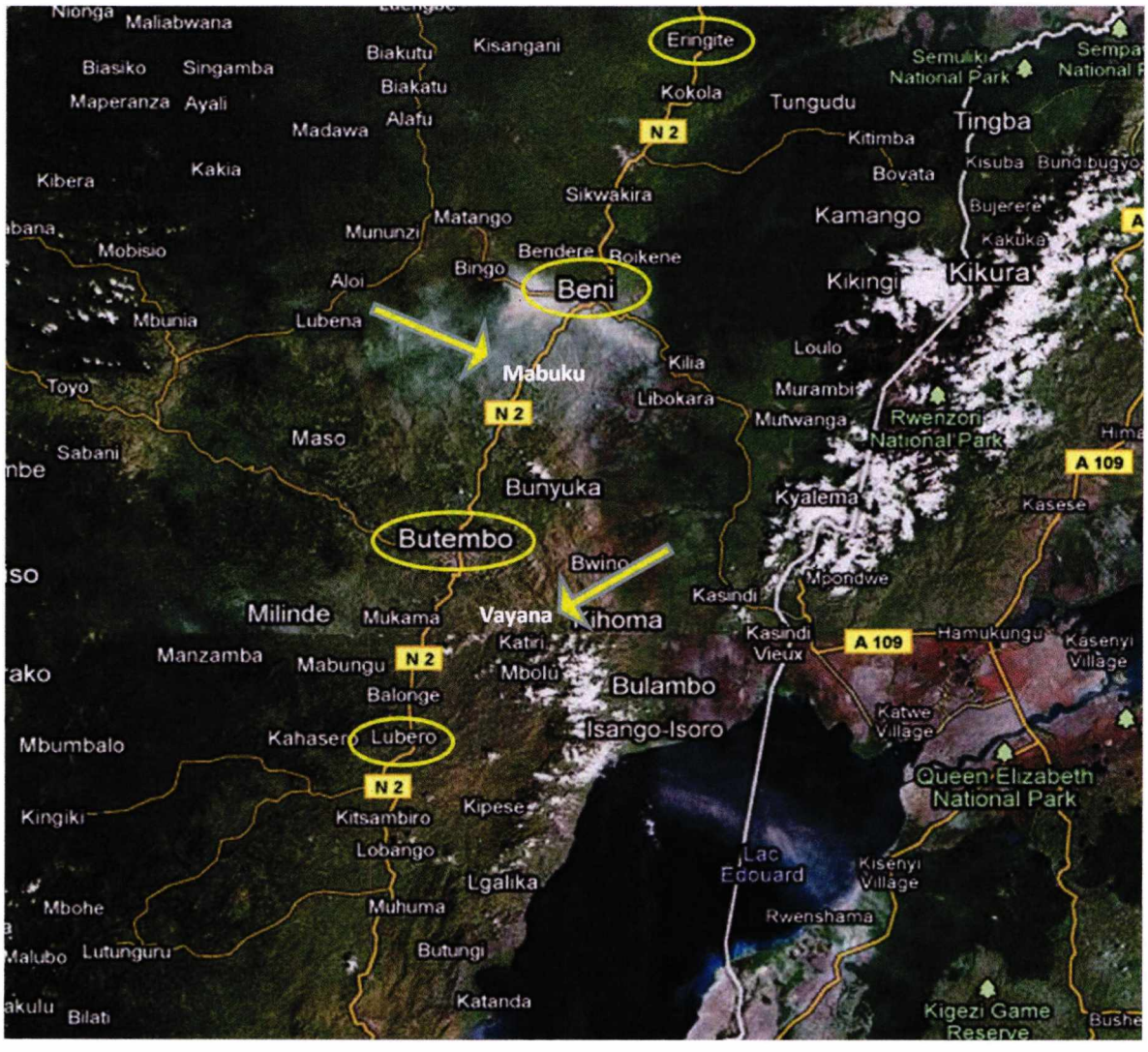

Figure 13: Map of Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Circled townships indicate places where CEPAC/CRN has established Children's Clubs. Some of the places cannot be located on the map (such as Vayana, situated deep in the forest 20km from Butembo, and Mabuku, situated in the middle between Beni and Butembo along the N2 – arrows point out their location). Maps courtesy of Travelblog, org and Googlemap, taken 22 August 2010.

CRN, whose primary focus has been the Great Lakes region since its inception in 1993, chooses regional and local partners and supports them from their headquarters in Oslo by providing funds and transferring necessary guidance to enhance the knowledge of the local community.[360] It is important to note, the CRN does not prescribe to their local partner how to accomplish their work, but rather serves as a support system to the work proposed and developed by these local partners. The structural chain which CEPAC and CRN build can be seen in Figure 1.

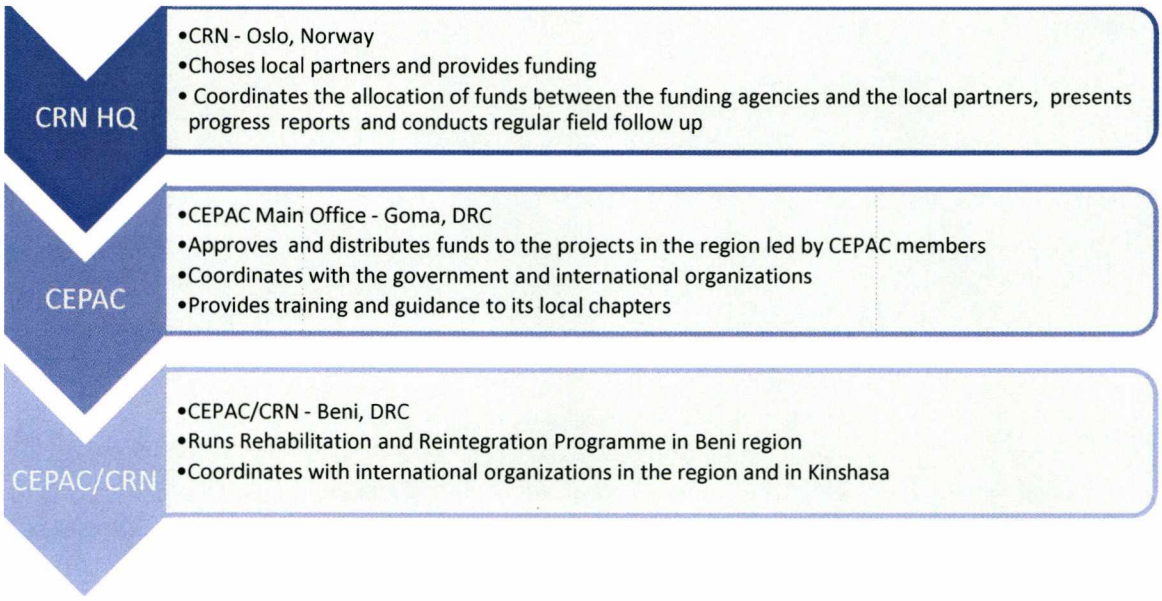

Figure 14: The structure of the CEPAC/CRN program.

The CEPAC/CRN rehabilitation and reintegration program

CEPAC has developed a strong network in the region and accomplishes more on the ground than a foreign NGO would. In addition, the NGO employs local staff, creating jobs in the region and aiding the economic development of East DRC. For these reasons, the CEPAC/CRN program receives general acceptance in the region. Since the program was launched, until mid October 2007, when study was conducted, it contributed to official reintegration of about 3000 children.[361] This statistics only takes into account the children who have gone through the official reintegration program at the CEPAC/CRN CTO in Beni and the

[360] CEPAC and CRN run co-jointly other programs in the Goma area.
[361] CRN, *Annual Report* (Oslo: N.p. 2006). The number is an approximation given during the time of observations by the CRN personnel on the ground.

vocational training centers, or Children's Clubs, as they are called within the program. However, to obtain complete statistics, which estimated to be much higher, it should be added that the program also accepted children who have auto-demobilized and then took part in the vocational training conducted at the Children's Clubs. The final number took a rapid incline during the period between November 2007 and April of 2008, because the program, capable of accommodating 50 children, started receiving greater numbers of children as a result of coordinated disarmament efforts by MONUC and UNICEF.[362]

In cooperation and coordination with the national army, MONUC, Save the Children and other NGOs present in Beni, CEPAC/CRN contributes to the lobby and sensitization efforts amongst Mai-Mai rebel and armed groups, which have not surrendered or dissolved yet.[363] Once these non-state armed groups disarm or surrender, they undergo a strict assessment before being assimilated into the national army. A comprehensive list of all their combatants is produced, highlighting in particular those who are children or are considered young adults. Those who had reached the age of maturity while fighting are given a choice to remain in the national army or to take part in the formal DDR process.[364] The combatants, who are still recognized as "children" according to the internationally adopted standards, are discharged from their military service and sent to transit centers. Colonel Emmanuel Kimputu, who explained the process at the time of the interview in 2007, commented that "this selection process was not as easy as it sounded." He recounted that many children provided false age, hoping to remain with the military, because it was a familiar environment. Since very few to almost none of the children and adolescents involved in the *brassage* possessed personal cards or any other type of documentation, it was "difficult to know whether they were under age or not."[365] Once all children have been separated from the rest of the armed group, the list is forwarded to the NGOs and programs in respective areas, after which children are sent to a transit center closest to the area where the group was captured or demobilized. Beni was a home to three CTOs in the past; however, CEPAC/CRN center was the only CTO still fully

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[362] During the field study, I participated in a meeting conducted by the Child Protection Officer UNICEF and the Save the Children, where the coordinated disarmament effort was first being introduced to the various small NGOs in the region. Interested in the outcome of this meeting I followed up via email in April 2008. Aime Noel, e-mail, received May 3, 2008. Following the email I consulted the media – see ABC News, "200 children freed from Congo Rebels," ABC News, http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/11/18/2093940.htm. (accessed November 18, 2007).

[363] International Crisis Group, "Conflict History: DR Congo," International Crisis Group Report, www.crisisgroup.org (accessed November 19, 2007).

[364] Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimputu, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 5, 2007. CONADER has been in charge of adult demobilization until end of 2006. Their presence in Beni and in Kinshasa since January 2007 is more symbolical and based on advocacy and coordination support of local NGOs.

[365] Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimputu, interview, October 5, 2007.

operational at the time of observations, and it has continued its work as of beginning of 2010.[366] While Save the Children Beni office replaced their center by a "foster-parent" program, the CTO run by CONADER closed down beginning of 2006.[367] Having been the only CTO in the area, CEPAC/CRN CTO was always full to its capacity, with at least 35-50 children accommodated at any given time.[368]

The CTO was supported by 12 local staff members, who worked with the children at the CTO and six reintegration agents, who conducted family tracing and sensitization work in the communities and with the families. In addition to the staff working in the CTO, there were one to two teachers in each of the Children's Clubs, with additional support to the program from the CEPAC regional offices in Goma. The director of the program, Edmond Pinos was a Mai-Mai rebel himself, as well as served as a health minister for the Kivus regions under Laurent Kabila. He felt compelled to leave that post, because he believed that the children were "the future of his country," and that he would "be doing more for his country and the future of it by helping the children," than staying at his high paying post.[369] The network developed and respect gained during his time in office, as well as the fame he held among the rebels assisted Pinos in his function as a director of a rehabilitation and reintegration program, advocating successfully for and achieving a high release rate of children from various Mai-Mai groups. Similarly to him, each individual staff member working with the CEPAC/CRN had a unique story, which contributed to the program they run.

Still operational in 2010, the program continues its main activities in the transit center, vocational training centers and in the communities with 35 program staff, among them six teachers, and six reintegration agents.[370]

Transit Orientation Center (French acronym CTO)

CEPAC discussed and consulted organizations such as Save the Children and the UNICEF offices in Kinshasa during the establishment and creation of the transit center in Beni. However, while following their basic directive and general stipulations how a transit

[366] Aime Noel, CRN Representative in Kivus, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 8, 2007. Aime Noel, e-mail, received 12 and 16 February 2010.
[367] Save the Children Program Manager, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 9, 2007. CONADER CTO closed early 2007, but was running coordination efforts. It was rumored that reason for closure was misplacement of funds.
[368] On average, the CTO receives 50 children each month; however this fluctuates drastically from month to month.
[369] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 4, 2007; Aime Noel, interview, October 4, 2007.
[370] Aime Noel, e-mail, received March 11, 2010.

center should be managed and what facilities and programmatic activities it should provide, CEPAC took liberty of setting up the center according to its own outline, and consulting the children on the layout, and specific details on center's provisions.

This can be seen through some of the activities they conduct. As in all centers run by UNICEF and UNICEF affiliated programs, upon a child's arrival to the CTO, the social workers, together with an assistant nurse from the local hospital, conduct basic health checkups, searching for any signs of emotional, mental or physical injuries. In parallel to the health checkups, the staff conducts interviews with the children, in order to gain as much information about the child's family and community. The medical checkups and interviews are conducted to assess whether more professional assistance would be needed to assist with the family tracing and reunification process. Children who arrive with severe emotional, psychological or physical injuries and ailments are not treated at the CTO but sent to the local hospital, as the staff does not have the required skills and expertise to do such. As such, early recognition of any serious conditions has been important and effectively implemented to ensure easier conduct of the program on day to day basis.

One of the main aims of the CTO is rehabilitation through provision of opportunities for the children to show and act more childlike than they did during their previous military lifestyle. During their 3-month stay at the center, children are encouraged to talk, play, to laugh and groom with one another. But in addition, as Sakina Hingana, the head social worker at the CTO explained, children are being taught to be accept responsibility and accountability for their own actions, attitude, as well as for their personal hygiene and the cleanliness of the center.[371] On a day to day basis, children take part in various learning activities. While some centers opted for a traditional class setting in the past, teaching basic math, as well as reading and writing as part of their rehabilitation program, children at the CTO in Beni are exposed to an informal class environment. In this casual class approach they learn in small groups and open discussion workshops about personal hygiene, HIV and other diseases, social behavior and interaction, respect for elderly, etc.[372] Topics are mainly tailored to the needs of each

[371] Sakina Hingana, Head social worker, CEPAC/CRN CTO, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 9, 2007.
[372] Sakina Hingana, interview, October 9, 2007. For examples of other centers' setting, see *Study on the impact on children of armed conflict.* For specific example on Sierra Leone, see Michael Wessells, *Child Soldiers*. See also Beah, *A long way gone*. See also Dodge and Raundalen, *Reaching Children in War*. See also Neil G. Boothby and Christine Knudsen, "Children of the Gun," *Scientific American* 282, no. 6 (2000):60-65. See also UNICEF, "Abductions in Northern and South-western Uganda: 1986-2001," *Government of Uganda and UNICEF Pamphlet* (2001). See also Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide." See also Mareike Schomerus, "A Hard Homecoming: Lessons Learned from the Reception Center Process in Northern Uganda" (PhD diss.,

particular group staying at the center, not excluding gender-based topics, with the primary goal to teach the children how to interact with one another and help them resolve prejudices they might have towards each other. This is an important activity, and has a priority in all of the center's conduct, since the CTO is mixed, both in gender and in affiliation with armed groups. Having been set up as a village, the center has no security provisions, such as fence or alarm systems, nor does it employ any guards. To avoid any outbursts of hostility, boys and girls are educated early on to interact with one another, despite their armed group affiliations.[373]

Figure 15: The Transit Orientation Center, Beni, DRC: Children at lunch and playing. Pictures taken on 9 October 2007 (Picture two courtesy of CRN Norway, taken on 8 October 2007).

Family Tracing and Reunification

As soon as the CTO staff has obtained sufficient information about the child's family, they forward it to the reintegration agents, who trace the family and the community of each child. In general, family tracing is conducted in parallel to the rehabilitation of the child in the CTO for a couple of reasons. The tracing activities can be challenging and time consuming, given the distances, the poor road infrastructure, and village accessibility. In addition, during the conflict, families move around, and have often relocated to a neighboring district, village or community. Therefore, tracing them might take longer and should be given sufficient time. Finally, once families have been traced, they might be in need of rehabilitative work themselves before they are sensitized to accept their child back in.

Makerere University, 2006). See also Martin Bell, *Child Alert: Democratic Republic of Congo: Martin Bell Reports on Children caught in War* (New York City: UNICEF, 2006).

[373] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 9, 2007; Sakina Hingana, interview, October 9, 2007; Aime Noel, interview, October 9, 2007.

CEPAC/CRN reintegration agents and staff coordinate all tracing efforts with Save the Children and other smaller NGOs, who are part of their regional programmatic cluster.[374] Relying on the Save the Children's network and experience in the family tracing efforts, reintegration agents receive regular basic training, and can coordinate through Save the Children with other international organizations involved in the tracing and family reunification efforts.[375] Their main assignment is to communicate with village leaders or officials and to help with the community sensitization and rehabilitation work. In addition, they speak to families whose children are still missing, spread the news via radio, word of mouth and distribution lists with children's names.[376]

Once the family or relatives have been traced, the reintegration agents inform the CTO, and conduct any family rehabilitation and sensitization needed in the community.[377] CEPAC/CRN reintegration agents rely greatly on the help of the community leaders, as they are not able to visit all the communities on regular basis. The lack of follow up infrastructure, and the inability to conduct more frequent visits and coordinate rehabilitation efforts with the community and the family are some of the greatest challenges reintegration agents encounter.

Figure 16: After enduring a five-hour drive on a dirt road, children and mothers listen to the briefings by the reunification agents, and receive the release certificates at the Children's Club in Vayana, DRC. After the official meeting, the mothers are singing a welcome song to their returning children. Pictures taken on 10 October 2007.

[374] Save the Children Beni office is the cluster leader for Eastern DR Congo. A cluster is defined as a group of NGOs in the field of child protection, who meet on weekly basis to coordinate their efforts and update one another on the respective NGO's achievements, challenges and needs.
[375] Aime Noel, e-mail, received August 16, 2010.
[376] Reintegration agents, CEPAC/CRN, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 11, 2007.
[377] Salome Ntububa, Protection Program Advisor, CRN, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 4, 2007. Ten axes represent the lines covering several villages scattered through the deep forest.

Community Based Reintegration Activities

After having spent 3 months in the center, the children return to the communities, and where possible, undertake an eight- to twelve-month vocational training at a 'Children's Club,' the name that Beni staff created to name their training centers, nearest to their village. While the directive for vocational centers or catch up school and training facilities has been stipulated and mandated to all NGOs in the field by the UNICEF and the national government, the concept of placing and managing the clubs within the communities came from the CEPAC/CRN staff in Beni. The clubs serve as learning grounds to replace the lost years of education and offer vocational training in carpentry and tailoring. But, even more important, the clubs provide safe zones for both the child and the community. Because there is some continued connection to the program, the children feel less apprehensive, and at the same time, the community has a way to observe children's progress and reduce any fears regarding child's behavior, without having to be directly involved in it at all times.

At the time the study was conducted, CEPAC/CRN was managing seven Children's Clubs in the area: Erengeti (sometimes also spelled Eringite) Carpentry and Tailoring Clubs, Vayana Carpentry and Sewing Clubs, Mabuku Tailoring Club, Beni Tailoring Club, and Butembo Tailoring Club.[378] CEPAC/CRN strategically placed these clubs along the axis where most of their returnees were coming from. Through them, the program oversaw the reintegration efforts, teaching children further valuable lessons on transitioning to civilian life, in addition to teaching them a marketable skill. While most carpentry clubs were occupied by boys, and tailoring clubs by girls, there was no directive stipulating that these were gender based, and the program encouraged both genders to participate in vocational training programs they were interested in. In this respect, children were sensitized to not assume the stereotypes and ridicule someone if he or she decided to participate in a vocation which did not seem "gender appropriate."[379]

[378] Aime Noel, interview, October 12, 2007.

[379] Carpentry and tailoring teachers, interview by author, Erengeti, DRC, October 5, 2007. Reintegration agents, interview, October 6, 2007; Edmond Pinos, interview, October 6, 2007; Salome Ntububa, interview, October 6, 2007.

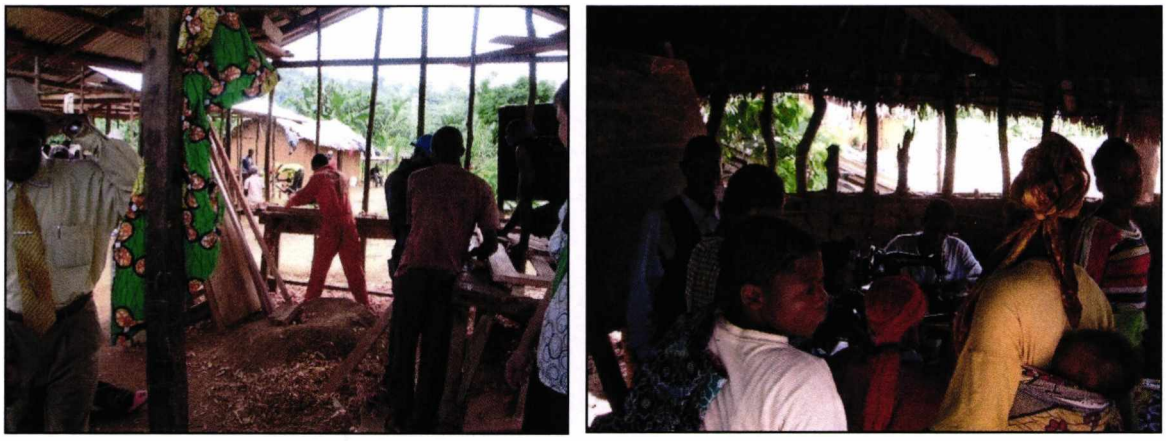

Figure 17: Children's Club in Erengeti, DRC. It can be noticed that there is a boy participating in the tailoring training, showing that traditional gender roles were not propagated by the program, but rather encouraged pursuit of vocation of interest despite its traditional gender association. Pictures taken 5 October 2007.

Next to Children's Clubs, other limited activities conducted within the community could be observed, such as coordination efforts and updating of the reintegration agents and teachers through the community elders, graduation ceremonies performed at the centers, with the inclusion of parents (mainly mothers), and casual check up on the child and the family.[380] Finally, it should be noted, that the teachers often assumed the role of mediators between the community and the child, as well as in the resolution of any conflicts with the family of the child.[381]

Follow Up and Monitoring

The moment children return home, they become primarily responsibility of families and the local community leaders.[382] However, the program envisages, that the reintegration agents, and, if time and resources allow, social workers, conduct follow up with the children and the community every 3 to 4 months. Such follow up consists of open ended interviews with the leaders, parents and the children to resolve any conflicting issues. The reintegration agents also check on children and young adults who opened shops to find out about their progress. Regular follow ups however, occurs only for the Children's Clubs in the vicinity of Beni town.

[380] Graduation Ceremony Observations at the Beni Tailoring Club made October 7, 2007.
[381] Carpentry and tailoring teachers, interview, October 5, 2007; Teachers CEPAC/CRN Vayana Children's Club, interview by author, October 10, 2007. CEPAC/CRN Tailoring Children's Club teacher, interview by author, October 11, 2007.
[382] 75 percent of the children which have gone through CTO in Beni in the past four years have undergone the same process: CTO, Children's Club and community reintegration.

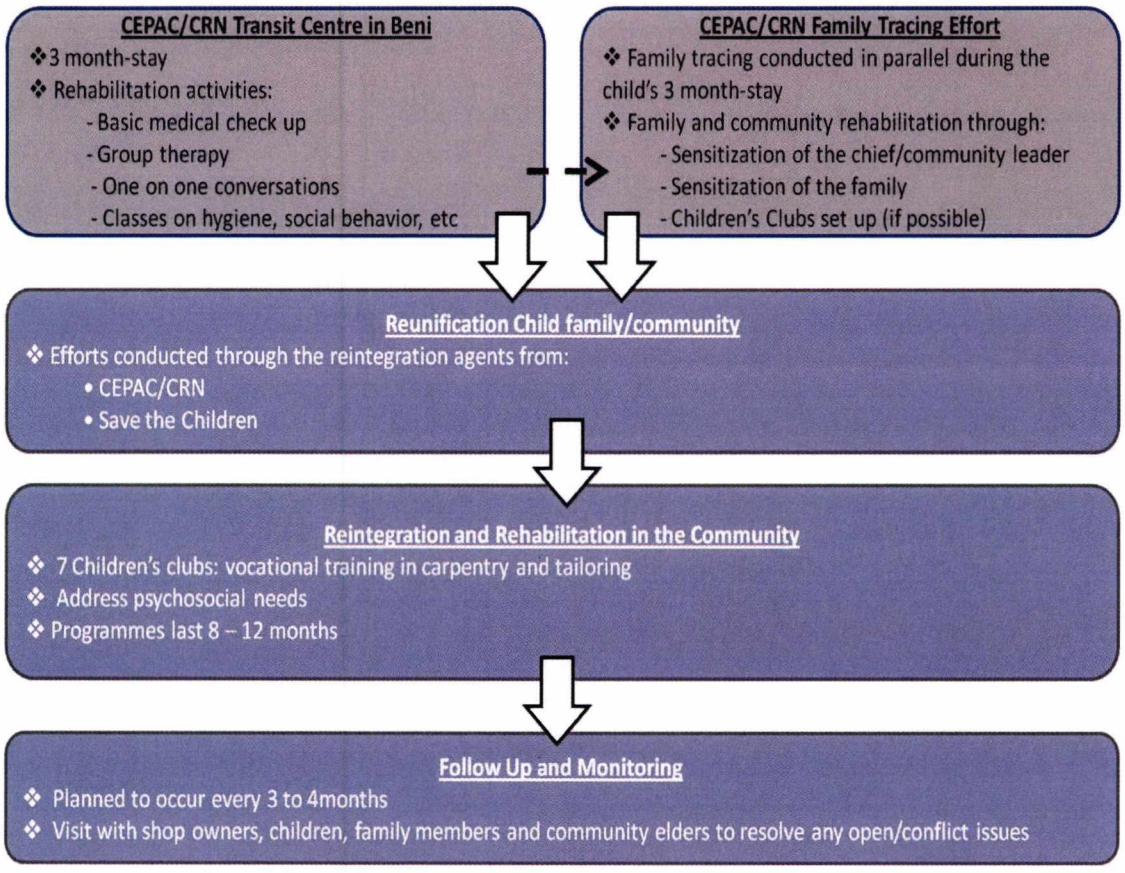

Figure 18: Summary of the structure and main activities of the CEPAC/CRN reintegration efforts.

IV. Case Study Analysis

The focus of this section will be to conduct the analysis of the programs according to the guidelines and their recommendations. As the program conducts some auxiliary activities as well, they will be indicated within the guidelines. Such activities are sensitization and coordination activities, and broader DDR initiatives in the region, which do not fully fall under the jurisdiction of the program. It should be noted that these activities, while reflected in the discussion and viewed as extra efforts, are not primary points of analysis in the thesis, as they address topics which are outside the scope of this thesis.

Guideline 1: Set the age of a Child at 18, prohibiting all forms of recruitment for those Younger

Though aspects of the *CRC* still remain partially unresolved, the national and local government of the DRC has shown great interest in proper interpretation and implementation

of this guideline. This proper interpretation from nation and international institutions is also visible in the program conducted by the CEPAC/CRN.

Just as stipulated by the recommendation 1.1, all children younger than 18 were allowed to participate in the program. Since most disarmament efforts are conducted through MONUC, whenever a group surrenders or dissolves, all those younger, or believed to be younger than 18 are separated from the adult fighting forces, and inevitably sent to the CEPAC/CRN program. In addition, as indicated by the *IDDRS*, MONUC received the directive and was separating young adults between ages 18 and 25, from other adult fighters, giving them the choice whether to remain in the national military or to demobilize. Those who chose the second option were sent to the CEPAC/CRN CTO.[383] As such, the decision on the age delineation for participation in the program was more directly controlled by the MONUC and the national army, then by the program. However, the CEPAC/CRN program encouraged the participation of all young adults up to ages 24. Such participation did not only mean attendance at the CTO, which was mandatory by the national legislature to avoid any prosecution of the returning child, but also the involvement of the young adults in Children's Clubs, and community based activities, if any available. In two of the clubs visited, 5 boys and 2 girls in their early twenties participated in the vocational learning activities, while one 22-year old also worked as an assistant to the teacher.[384] There have so far never been cases of youth older than 24 attending the program.[385]

The staff perspective on the recommendations in this guideline was quite clear. Because they experienced that the young adult groups was the most challenging group to rehabilitate and reintegrate, their inclusion into the official RR programs was considered a crucial factor to benefitting the community and helping the youth.[386] They felt that allowing older than 18 to participate refocused their attention to more meaningful activities, and helped them release at least some negative tensions and the feelings of guilt. Community leaders confirmed this to an extent, noting that there was a stark difference in the attitude and ease of dealing with those older than 18, who did participate in some formal RR programs, and those who auto-demobilized without opportunities to participate in any programs.[387]

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[383] Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimputu, interview by author, October 5, 2007. Edmond Pinos, interview, October 6, 2007. Aime Noel, e-mail, received 12 February 2010.
[384] Observations conducted on 10 and 11 October 2007.
[385] Bent Ronsen, CRN Director, interview by author, Bergen, Norway, April 14, 2007.
[386] Erengeti teachers, interview, October 5, 2007; Staff at the CTO, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 11, 2007. Aime Noel, e-mail, received February 12, 2010.
[387] Community elder, interview by author, Vayana Club, DRC, October 11, 2007.

While involving the age group between 18 and 24 in the CEPAC/CRN program was regarded beneficial, because it replaced the negative feelings and the sense of hopelessness and eased the difficulty the national army was experiencing in separating those ages 17 through 19, at the same time putting everyone in one program brought its own set of challenges.[388] First, it was noticed that the number of children and young adults released to the program created a burden on the resources available, contributing to the lack of ability to accommodate everyone's needs and dedicate equal attention to all. Besides the financial burden, working with greater masses than the CTO's capacity allowed for, led to physical and emotional exhaustion, and feelings of inadequacy of some of the staff.[389] In addition, while staff claimed that they had little to no security problems, the MONUC, who had its offices close by the center, was constantly aware of a security threat such a great number of children and young adults could pose on the staff and the community.[390]

Second, Pinos noted that placing all the children and young adults together in one program created hierarchies at times. In the case of the CEPAC/CRN CTO, he claimed that the older children assumed protective role towards the younger children, however, such hierarchies could have a negative turn out.[391] Conducting classes and activities for children of such age differences (the youngest boy in the CTO being 11 and the oldest 23) was found challenging, despite it being exciting and requiring an innovative and creative mind set.[392] It was also noted that older girls were perceived as less threatening than older boys. While staff did not have any incidents or gender based violence towards female staff and the girls at the center, one female social worker conveyed in a conversation, that she felt quite insecure and afraid of the older boys and the young male adults during her first months at the center. However she agreed with other female social workers that they were never in real danger.[393]

Thus, the inclusion of the ages younger than 18 and in particular between 18 and 24 was confirmed as a necessary step to address the needs of the group which otherwise would remain marginalized, this guideline would need to be adapted to provide more specific recommendations how to cater to the different age groups. In the case of CEPAC/CRN, the

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[388] Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimputu, interview, October 5, 2007.
[389] CTO staff, interview. From October 2007 through February 2008, the center received on average about 100 returnees every three months. However, its infrastructure can accommodate about 50. Aime Noel, e-mail, received February 12, 2010.
[390] MONUC Child Protection Officer, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 4, 2007.
[391] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 9, 2007; Nick Stargardt, "The subjectivity of children in the Second World War" (Presentation given at the Conference *Children and War: Past and Present*, Salzburg, 30 Sept- 2 Oct 2010).
[392] Sakina Hingana, interview, October 9, 2007.
[393] CTO staff, interview, October 11, 2007.

interpretation of this guideline was to put all children and young adults in one program, without age and gender distinction. The guideline should however recognize that one program might not be able to accommodate all ages, and indicate this.

	Set the age of a Child at 18, prohibiting all forms of recruitment for those Younger
1. Programs should include all children and youth below age of 18	- Demobilization and distribution of children conducted by MONUC and national army - Follow directive of national legislative and international law - CEPAC/CRN also follows the directive and fulfills recommendation 1.1
2. Programs should also cater to those between 18 and 24, where needed	- As per 1.1 also fulfilled through national army and MONUC, CEPAC/CRN supports national directive

Figure 19: Summary of guideline 1 observations

Guideline 2: Encourage Local, National and International Coordination of DDR Programs

The effectiveness of the CEPAC/CRN in the region is a result of productive coordination among local, national and international stakeholders. However, CEPAC/CRN does not assume a leading role in coordinating efforts among various stakeholders, but during the field study, it was obvious that it participates in all of the coordination activities in the region as a member of the Beni Working Group. The leadership in coordinating demobilization and programmatic efforts is conducted by UNICEF, MONUC and Save the Children, as well as by OCHA. As such, CEPAC/CRN attends weekly and monthly meetings at the OCHA office in Beni, where different elements of NGOs RR work are discussed, information and latest updates from the field are distributed, and any concerns and issues addressed. In addition, the CEPAC/CRN management travels to Kinshasa to participate in regular meetings every 4 to 6 months, which are conducted by UNICEF and the national government.

While observing their work, it was apparent that the coordination with the national army, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), MONUC and smaller Beni NGOs was in accordance with the recommendations 2.1 through 2.4 (*coordination of DDR programs among the UN, specialized agencies and civil society; sensitization of non-state actors to be conducted as a joint effort; link between peace-building DDR programs and RR efforts, w/o dependency on the progress of the first; and development of common approaches and strategic links*). CEPAC/CRN management recognized that the

coordination enhanced the overall success of their program.[394] Two events highlighted this statement. First, the coordination proved meaningful to avoid the competition among the organizations. CEPAC/CRN's program experienced the brunt of such competition on more than one occasion. Because of Pinos' past and involvement with Mai Mai groups, CEPAC/CRN had a good standing with different rebel groups, which in the past requested that the released children be sent to the CEPAC/CRN program. Such requests contributed to hostility and occasional disputes among the NGOs, disturbing the DDR coordination efforts. Placing great value on establishing good working relationships with other programs in the region, CEPAC/CRN persuaded the particular rebel groups to release their child soldiers to other programs.[395]

Second, as CEPAC/CRN was unable to perform all RR related activities alone, the coordination with various entities enabled them to achieve more goals. Two such examples were observed during the field study. The first example was the special meeting arranged by MONUC Child Protection Officer and Save the Children to coordinate the anticipated disarmament and demobilization activities which took place in the region in the final two months of 2007.[396] The main aim of the meeting was to coordinate efforts and achieve a more systematic release of girls from the Jackson's rebel group camp, also entailed as a recommendation 2.6 of this guideline.[397] Though the release and demobilization was led by MONUC and UNICEF, CEPAC/CRN took a very active role in aiding the coordination of the process as one of the few NGOs which ran a full CTO program at the time. The second example was the coordinated reunification activity with Save the Children, which took place on 10 October 2007. Because of the number of children which needed to be transported to the Vayana Children's Club, where they were to be officially discharged and returned to their families, CEPAC/CRN conducted the reunification in cooperation with the Save the Children

[394] Bent Ronsen, interview, April 14, 2007; Edmond Pinos, interview, October 9, 2007; Sakina Hingana, interview, October 5 and October 9, 2007; Aime Noel, interview, October 9, 2007; MONUC Child Protection Officer, interview, October 8, 2007.
[395] Bent Ronsen, interview.
[396] Observations during a meeting at the Save the Children Office, Beni, DRC on October 12, 2007.
[397] Jackson's group was one of the mai-mai rebel groups. They had decided to dissolve into regular national army, but one main stipulation to allow the brassage process was the release of all f the girls. The questions to be answered all addressed coordination and logistics such as delineation of roles, responsibilities, placement of the children and girl-specific RR, before the green light could be given to the army and MONUC to continue the brassage process.

officers. Upon further follow up, it could be observed that reunification activities are always conducted co-jointly with the Save the Children office in Beni.[398]

It should also be noted, that the CEPAC/CRN not only coordinated its effort with the local and national entities, but it also attempted to involve children in the decision-making process, as recommendation 2.5 suggests (*Encourage participation of youth in decision-making process*). Though a onetime event, such decision making is a unique feature of this particular program and should be briefly mentioned here. While the overall set up of the RR programs, with activities and programmatic infrastructure they should maintain is a directive which reaches the NGOs from the offices in Kinshasa, it leaves room for interpretation of day to day business and the details of the programs' actual design.[399] As such, CEPAC/CRN felt compelled to involve the children in the set up of the center and the Children's Clubs, which led to a CTO and vocational training centers, which are unique to other programs in the region.[400] Children's suggestions led to a village-like set up, including an open fire cooking area, communal eating area, a dried grass fence, communal clean up and care-taking of the center and everyone's input and participation in daily chores, and program specifics. These arrangements were strongly criticized by international child protection organizations at first, because they did not reflect the envisaged international norms and standards.[401] CEPAC/CRN kept the layout as designed by children with the reasoning that it helped the children remember the life they knew before their bush experiences and resembled the infrastructure they will return into, and was thus an important aspect of the rehabilitation psychology, encouraging greater self-discipline and renewing children's trust. While in general, the children responded with greater diligence and accountability, there were occasional incidents and acts of rebellion to draw adults' attention to children's special needs, such as hunger.[402]

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[398] Save the Children Program Manager, interview, October 12, 2007; Reintegration agents, interview by author, October 11-13, 2007.

[399] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 14, 2007; Aime Noel, interview, October 14, 2007.

[400] Bent Ronsen, interview, April 14, 2007.

[401] Bent Ronsen, interview, April 14, 2007.

[402] For the coverage of the story of one such incident, see also Christian Relief Network, "Not too proud to kneel before the children," CRN Website, http:www.crn.no (accessed March 20, 2008), as told to us by Pinos: "Children from our last group saw two MONUC soldiers one day, approaching the center in full gear. The children thought that the soldiers were coming to get them because they were rowdy the previous day and destroyed the roof of the boys' hut. In their bush-mentality, they organized themselves swiftly and ambushed the soldiers, took all of their weapons and ammunition, and tied them to a tree at the center. All the efforts of the staff to make the children release the soldiers and return the weapons confiscated were fruitless. I had to come to negotiate with the children personally. I knelt in front of them and asked them to release the soldiers. They agreed to let the soldiers go, but would not return the weapons and the ammunition until they were given two goats in return. Meanwhile, the incident was escalating, as MONUC threatened to get involved. So, what else could I do? I went to the market and bought two goats, and presented them as MONUC's "ransom" for the ammunition. The children had not had meat for weeks, so they seized the opportunity to barter for some."

	Encourage Local, National and International Coordination of DDR Programs
1. Coordination of DDR programs among the UN, specialized agencies and civil society	- CEPAC/CRN travels to Kinshasa to participate in regular follow up and coordination meetings with the UNICEF and national institutions - Participate in weekly and monthly meetings with OCHA, MONUC, national army, child protection NGOs and international organizations
2. Sensitization of non-state actors to be conducted as a joint effort	- Sensitization work not active aim of the program, but conducted in coordination of activities with the national army and MONUC
3. Link between peace-building DDR programs and RR efforts, w/o dependency on the progress of the first	- N/A
4. Develop common approaches and strategic links	- N/A
5. Encourage participation of youth in decision-making process	- During the designing of the CTO layout, children were involved in the decision making and planning activities - No other decision making process evident, and no child participation
6. Create special measures to achieve release and RR of girls **See also Guideline 8**	- Auxiliary activity conducted as a joint demobilization and sensitization effort

Figure 20: Summary of guideline 2 observations

As the examples show, the implementation of guideline 2 and its recommendations greatly vests in the hands of national and international entities. However, while MONUC and OCHA did not hold CEPAC/CRN responsible for implementation of all of the recommendations outlined in this guideline, CEPAC/CRN's active participation in the areas where they could contribute to the success of the CEPAC/CRN program itself, but also to the smoother operationalization of the national and international RR agenda efforts in the area and the region.

Guideline 3: Family Tracing, Reunification and Support during RR Efforts

There have been many developments in the implementation of family tracing and reunification in the past 10 years.[403] The most significant can be seen in the recommendation 3.1, calling for programs to conduct tracing activities as soon as possible. Trained and supported by Save the Children in this effort, CEPAC/CRN recognized the value of involving family in the RR efforts of the child from the start of the program, and has therefore been conducting tracing activities in parallel to conducting rehabilitation of the child at the CTO.[404]

[403] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," 127-164. See also Christian Relief Network, "Review of Christian Relief Network and Projects supported through CRN financed by Norway in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda," CRN Website, www.crn.no (accessed June 17, 2007). See also Kostelny, "What About the Girls?" and Wessells, "Child Soldiers, Peace Education and Post conflict Reconstruction for Peace."
[404] Reintegration agents, interview, October 11, 2007.

The staff confirmed that an adequate family reunification was one of the prime prerequisites for the release of a child from the CTO.[405] However, the reintegration agents commented that tracing activities were challenging and time demanding, which is why CEPAC/CRN coordinated their efforts with Save the Children.[406] In addition to having greater resources available, Save the Children had more experience, which helped CEPAC/CRN achieve a 95% tracing and reunification success. One example is representative of the many challenges and success of the tracing activities.

While speaking to a boy, KN (full name withheld), it was discovered that at the time of his abduction he was only seven. Having fought and moved frequently with the Mai-Mais for five years, he arrived to the CTO in Beni at the age of 12. He only spoke his local tongue, and when asked about his family, he stated that "he thought he had some siblings," and could "vaguely remember his mother."[407] His surname gave some indication about the tribe and the axis from which he could be coming.[408] When we first met at the beginning of October 2007, he had been in the center for two months, and reintegration agents were still searching for his family without much success. In late November of that year, after much detective work, his family was found and the boy was successfully reunited with his mother.[409]

However, while important, tracing represents only one aspect of the guideline 3. Besides working with limited information to trace families, recommendations also stipulate that reintegration agents have the responsibility of preparing the reunification of the child with its family, and addressing any concerns.[410] One such concern could be stigmatization, and in the case of girl soldiers, banishment from the rest of the community. Reasons for this are various, and range from cultural beliefs to fears that the child will be too aggressive and uncontrollable, or that its return and presence would place the community in danger of repercussion from the rebel groups or continued re-recruitment.[411] CEPAC/CRN faced two such extremes since it began operating in 2003.

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[405] Social workers, CEPAC/CRN CTO, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 8, 2007.
[406] Reintegration agents, interview, October 11-13, 2007.
[407] KN (full name withheld), interview by author at the CTO, Beni, DRC, October 6, 2007.
[408] Axes are chosen geographically in such a way to cluster a set of villages and populated locations along a straight line. There are ten different axis within the Beni region, which are covered by individual agents. Most agents cover more than one axis, which often leaves little time for follow-up activities.
[409] Aime Noel, e-mail, received November 14, 2007.
[410] Valuable lessons were learned from centers in other countries, such as Angola, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka, on how vital it was to conduct family and community sensitization and support in order to increase the success of child's reintegration. For more detailed information on this topic, consult Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 186-187.
[411] BK (full name withheld), interview by author at Mabuku Children's Club, DRC, October 11, 2007. This boy went through the CTO in Beni and during his 3-months, the family asked whether he could be returned to relatives, because there was much unrest in the villages where they lived. He was then, after his time at CTO in

In the first case, the family reunification was not possible because of the atrocities committed by the child. Having joined a Mai-Mai group voluntarily, as a sign of allegiance, he killed his own father and raped his sisters. The family and the community strongly refused to take him back. The boy was destitute at the center for almost 8 months, until the reintegration agents traced a distant relative who took the boy.[412] This example demonstrated two concepts. First, sometimes, despite all the efforts on the part of the program, some recommendations cannot be implemented. In this case, while recommendation 3.2 (*(Re-) establish contact and an emotional bond with the family*) could not be achieved, it should not be regarded as a failure of the program to implement the recommendation. Second, each guideline provides multiple recommendations and that should be present in the list to allow flexibility of the programmatic implementation and avoid the "either or" thinking which sometimes exists within the discourse.[413] However, at the same time, it should not be expected that all the recommendations are implemented for the program to be successful or considered effective. In the case of CEPAC/CRN, the reintegration agents were trained by Save the Children to implement the guideline by following the recommendation 3.3 (*If no immediate family-first search for extended family and relatives, then for foster home within the community, as a last options for foster home elsewhere*) when immediate family was not willing to take a child in.

Second case was that of an 18-year old boy which was met at the center. He had already been there for 12 months, because there was intensive fighting in the region of his home.[414] Though the family did not reject the child, due to political and safety situation, the reunification was not possible. The staff refused to send him back to the location where he

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Beni, relocated to Mabuku, where his uncle lives. For discussion on the different cultural beliefs enveloping around the rehabilitation of child soldiers, see also Wessells, "Assisting Angolan Children Impacted by War: Blending Western and Traditional Approaches to Healing," in *Coordinators Notebook: An International Resource for Early Childhood Development* 19 (1996): 33-37. In his article, Wessells discusses some of the traditional stigmatizations which accompany the returning child in other regions of Africa. He also discusses how other programs address this issue. For more information, see Wessells, *Child Soldiers,* 152.

[412] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 6, 2007. Gro Bockmann Randby, CRN Deputy Director, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 7, 2007. After much negotiation the community accepted to take the boy in, but the family could not, primarily because of the trauma his sisters experienced having been raped by him. They couldn't imagine living in the same house with him. In this particular situation, CEPAC/CRN chose to also address the issue of vulnerable girls, and opted to search for extended family. The boy was relocated with a male relative.

[413] Rivard, "Child Soldiers and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programs," Wessells, "Trauma, Culture, and Communities."

[414] Ishamel Beah remarks this same issue in his book, *A long way gone*. He describes how a friend of his, who was in the bush with him and then went through the center with him, ended up being re-recruited because his family refused to take him in (see pp. 180). At a later stage in the book, we learn that this same friend was killed in the bush during a raid. According to the Colonel Kimputu and just as in Beah's book, many children in eastern DRC, if not taken back in by the community, family or relatives, end up being re-recruited. Unfortunately, an accurate number and percentage of re-recruitment in the DRC is not available.

would have been caught up in the conflict and possibly recruited again. As there were no relatives in safe areas, the boy remained at the center and supported the staff by taking care of the new arrivals. While the first case was a good example of how recommendations' flexibility can be utilized in the best interest of the child, to produce positive results from a practical challenge, the second example is more problematic. Keeping the boy in the center 5 times longer than what the program prescribed, though meant in a good way, was a failure to implement the guideline, because it contributed to stopping the boy's progress. In addition, even though he helped with the newcomers, the boy was not perceived and did not feel as part of the staff, which meant that he filled an additional spot, in the long run placing burden on the financial and human resources at the CTO.[415] This example, however, highlighted that sometimes theory does not work in practice. Not being able to reunite with family, community, or relatives, the boy had nowhere to go. Setting him out into the street would have only meant a complete failure of everything CEPAC/CRN was attempting to do. Their reaction was therefore mostly correct, even though it meant an additional burden on the staff. One possible option would have been to coordinate with Save the Children, and place the boy in the foster program. At the time the study was conducted, no such coordination took place. Whether it was discussed at later stages could not be answered. But, this example pointed toward an additional challenge that RR programs such as CEPAC/CRN faced in the region. The instability and continuous fighting often stood in the way of successful implementation of the guideline 3 recommendations. In following up on how this instability and continuous fighting reflected on other children in the program, it was found out that out of 15 boys spoken to at least half were relocated by the reintegration agents to live with relatives out of fear of possible retributions or re-recruitment by the Mai-Mai.[416] Speaking to three of the CEPAC/CRN reintegration agents while shadowing a reunification convoy of 20 boys and 3 girls on their trip to Vayana, it was inquired how they managed to do the tracing and reunification work they conducted.[417] All three agreed that their primary resource were the local and community leaders.[418] The coordination with them created synergies required to trace families and relatives of the children, and to help families and communities with any rehabilitative work they needed. It seemed apparent that tracing and reunification work could

[415] CTO staff, interview, October 11-13, 2007; Edmond Pinos, interview, October 14, 2007.
[416] Children at Children's Club, conversations, Erenegeti, Mabuku and Beni, DRC, October 5-11, 2007.
[417] Reintegration agents, interview, October 11-13, 2007. All reintegration agents were elderly. The youngest was in his early fifties, and the oldest in his late sixties. It seems that the age plays a significant role in their work to sensitize community, especially as they seek to gain the favor of the community elders.
[418] Social workers, interview, October 13, 2007; reintegration agents, interview, October 12, 2007.

not be accomplished without the elders and the leaders in the community. According to the CEPAC/CRN staff, the respect and network the community leaders and elders brought into the reintegration agents' efforts was a crucial resource for the success of the reunification of the child and the family.[419] Once the reintegration agents left, the elders took the lead in following up and helping both the family and the child establish the bond in the challenging moments of a child's return. While speaking to the agents about this, it was obvious that they did not know that they were utilizing elders because there was an internationally developed standard recommending it, but they followed the training received by Save the Children, and what they knew worked best through years of experience.[420] The conversations with the agents confirmed that this guideline and the subsequent guideline (*Community-based support and (re-)recruitment prevention*) worked hand in hand in the case of CEPAC/CRN and validated the assumption made in chapter 2, that recommendations in guideline 3 can only be fulfilled to an extend without the utilization of the guideline 4 recommendations.

During the conversations with the reintegration agents and Pinos, it could be noticed that the program struggles to implement the recommendation 3.6 (*Conduct regular follow-up*). The reintegration agents admitted that the follow-up was almost non-existent the farther one went outside of Beni town. In the case of children living near Beni town, the follow-up and monitoring were conducted regularly, and had a positive, long-term effect. Children interviewed living in the vicinity of Beni all confirmed that the follow-up visits from the social workers and the reintegration agents helped them deal with the challenges of transitioning back to civilian life.[421] While some struggled to make a living, others had their own small businesses, and commented that it was important to have someone listen to them, if nothing else. However, a follow-up that took place covered only a small percentage of all the children who have gone through the center since 2003 until the time that observations were made.[422] While the program itself stipulated that a regular follow up should be conducted every 4 to 6 months for at least a year after the children have left the CTO, often only a limited number of follow ups took place. Most common reasons were that the follow up activities were challenging, because the communities were scattered across the area, locations were quite

[419] Social workers, interview, October 13, 2007; reintegration agents, interview, October 12, 2007.
[420] Reintegration agents, interview, October 11, 2007 .
[421] Girl mother, BA (full name withheld), interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 8, 2007 (returnee for 18 months). Girl mother, TT (full name withheld), interview by author, Beni, DRC October 13, 2007 (returnee for 12 months).
[422] Follow up has been possible mainly with those children who have stayed in the areas surrounding the town Beni. From the 3000-4000 children who have gone through the CTO, follow up has been possible for an estimate of about 400 children.

remote and to an extent still unsafe. Any travels to certain areas involved careful considerations of the situations on the road.[423] In addition, the sheer number of children to be followed up with was an additional difficulty. Finally, the communication lines, such as phone or internet were scarce or non-existent in the rural areas, making any kind of follow up almost impossible.[424]

The examples show that while CEPAC/CRN is not able to implement all of the recommendations of this guideline on its own, it utilizes the help and network of the community elders and leaders to conduct tracing and reunification efforts. Its work also shows that for this guideline to be implemented successfully, it is not necessary for programs to fulfill all of the recommendations, but to be flexible to adapt and to recognize the program's limits and possibilities. However, while not all recommendations can be conducted, other research and statements from some of the children and young adults show that regular follow up, especially to children who were not able to participate in the Children's Clubs was viewed as important and should be given a greater importance.[425] While follow-up activities could not be conducted too often, in order to help the children detach themselves from the CEPAC/CRN staff and the program, they need to take place so that children do not feel abandoned.[426] During regular follow ups, it could be recognized if there are concerns in the community or in the home timely, and contribute to fulfilling the recommendations 3.4 (*Assist family with social support*), 3.5 (*Conduct sensitization and training on how to deal with aggressive behavior within families*) and 3.7 (*Consult families and children on their rights and duties*) by conducting mediation and conflict resolution activities. In addition, besides the effects a follow-up could have on a child, it also affected the program. Follow-up was an important aspect of CEPAC/CRN's reporting. Irregular follow up meant lack of information, which meant challenges in preparation of final reports, which led to donation cuts, and frustration at the CRN Headquarters in Norway.[427]

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[423] In fact, the terrain vehicle and the driver had to return to Uganda and from Uganda travel to Rwanda, to cross the border into DRC there, where he was able to meet the CRN staff, who flew out to Goma, as the roads were unsafe.

[424] World Bank and various Telecommunication companies (CELTEL, VODAFON, etc) have invested millions in the mobile network set up, enabling most Congolese to use a mobile phone. However, the difficulty of reception in the deep rain forest is an issue which still needs to be addressed.

[425] Lorena Arocha, "*Kadogo* - Agency, resilience and recovery of ex-child soldiers in the Congo" (presentation given at the Conference *Children and War: Past and Present*, Salzburg, 30 Sept- 2 Oct 2010).

[426] Arocha, "*Kadogo.*"

[427] Bent Ronsen, interview, April 14, 2007.

	Family Tracing, Reunification and Support during RR Efforts
1. Begin family tracing as soon as possible	- Fulfill the recommendation
2. (Re)establish contact and an emotional bond with the family	- Where possible, reintegration agents establish the first contact in coordination with the community leaders - Rely on the work of the community leaders to aid family and child reestablish the emotional bond
3. If no immediate family- first search for extended family and relatives, then for foster home within the community, as a last options for foster home elsewhere	- CEPAC/CRN primary focus in reuniting child with immediate or extended family - CEPAC/CRN does not work with foster programs (Placement into foster home is conducted by Save the Children, however no coordination of effort)
4. Assist family with social support	- Little direct involvement, rely on community leaders
5. Conduct sensitization and training on how to deal with aggressive behavior within families	- Reintegration agents conduct basic training and sensitization workshops when they begin their tracing activities in a community
6. Conduct regular follow-up	- Limited regular follow up – program's greatest challenge
7. Consult families and children on their rights and duties	- Basic discussion conducted with the children during their stay at the CTO - Limited discussions with families – seen as responsibility of the community leaders
8. Provide children with proper documentation	- N/A - MONUC provides children with release certificate

Figure 21: Summary of guideline 3 observations

Guideline 4: Community-Based Support and (re-)recruitment Prevention

While initial reintegration and rehabilitation programs in the 1990's were more formal, lasting 8 to 12 months, in a closed center environment, equipped with educators, military and medical staff, past studies show that a community-based rehabilitation process has a stronger effect towards successful reintegration.[428] The academic research reflects the comprehensive working list's guidelines, acknowledging that the transit or interim centers should only be a short transit stop, and that more focus should be given to community based RR initiatives.[429] While some of the standards did not exist at the time that CEPAC/CRN developed the Children's Clubs, they were aware of the failures of other programs in the region, and did receive general directives in the meetings conducted in Kinshasa to dedicate their efforts to developing a program which would help the children reintegrate into their communities. Their interpretation of such help was to open Children's Clubs, or vocational centers in different areas, with an aim to not only provide vocational training, but also venues for continued social

[428] One example of the lessons learned from Sierra Leone rehabilitation and transit centers can be found in Beah's book, *A long way gone*, 135-137, 145-149.
[429] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 180. Aime Noel, interview; Edmond Pinos, interview, October 12, 2007.

behavior tutoring, community sensitization, networking and moral support by teacher and peers.[430]

CEPAC/CRN's main reason for operating the clubs in the community was to help strengthen the bond between the child and the villagers. This was obvious in the example of the Children's Club Eringite, where parents and villagers passed by to watch children working and learning. Speaking to one mother, it was found out that her boy was abducted when he was 10 and had spent six years in the bush. She was very grateful for the program, as she did not have the financial means to provide for his education as a mother of seven.[431] She did comment when asked whether it was challenging to have him back, that she had to bribe the village authority with one goat so that villagers would not harass her boy.[432] Upon further follow-up it was discovered that she lived in a surrounding village which was not covered by the CEPAC/CRN program. This example showed how important it was to sensitize and utilize community leaders to ensure positive and good community-based RR of the children. However, it also showed that while sensitization of some elders was vital, further initiatives needed to be conducted to create a network and systematically reach out and sensitize even the most remote areas. As CEPAC/CRN did not have the human resources and the network, they were not able to cover all the villages to which children returned and conduct sensitization work. This example raises a question whether it should be the responsibility of one program to conduct sensitization efforts, or whether it is a responsibility of local and national authorities to stop any harassment without expecting a "service" bribe regardless of the extent of CEPAC/CRN's involvement in the community. While one single program such as CEPAC/CRN can attempt to sensitize communities in which it works, it alone cannot change attitudes and minds of people.

During the observations, it could not be confirmed whether the recommendation 4.2 was implemented, as it was not evident that there is an active involvement of the youth in any programmatic developments in the community. Such inclusion would require that CEPAC/CRN consults children on programs and activities which could be conducted together

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[430] Aime Noel, e-mail, received August 16, 2010.

[431] Mother, MAM (full name withheld), interview by author, Children's Club Erengeti, DRC, October 6, 2007.

[432] Mother, MAM (full name withheld), interview, October 6, 2007. After speaking to this mother, the CRN staff and the researcher learned that some communities were more accepting than others, and that in some communities children had a challenging time adjusting. The surrounding villages were not happy that internally displaced and vulnerable children (IDPs), as well as pygmies have been placed together with the ex-child soldiers, which caused some "uncomfortable" encounters between the adults and the children. Police regulated everything, but used the opportunity to gain personal benefits from it. This mother observed what was going on and according to Aime's opinion felt it was safer to pay the bribe prior to her boy returning, rather than to run into a risk of her son getting into trouble, running away back to the bush or being mocked.

with the communities to help the community itself develop. It was therefore apparent that the clubs themselves were the main tool with which CEPAC/CRN was able to contribute to the community-based reintegration and to support local initiatives, as per recommendation 4.5. As there was a high demand for participation in the clubs, and high demand in opening the clubs in other areas and villages, it was clear that CEPAC/CRN was strained. The program funded the teachers, supplied the materials and the tools used in the clubs, and if required provided basic finances for the meals during the day. While such an act was indeed greatly supporting the communities, it did not completely reflect the essence of the recommendation to support local initiatives. It led one to pose two questions: one concerned the real educational value, which will be further addressed in the guideline 8, the second concerned the amount of responsibility the community is given. As no local initiatives besides the Children's Clubs could be observed to help the reintegration efforts of children in the community, it appeared as if the CEPAC/CRN's program alleviated the community's financial and mentoring burdens for their returnees and neediest children. CEPAC/CRN management verified this and commented that the villages in which the clubs were run had very little infrastructure, tools or means to support the reintegration activities.[433] They further stated that villages were chosen because of their lack of infrastructure and any educational facilities. In other words, the Children's Clubs filled a void which the community was not able to fill itself. However, while lacking means and tools, CEPAC/CRN teachers and reintegration agents also indicated that community leaders coordinated all of the efforts with the program, and took great interest in conducting advocacy with the community and the families in those same communities.[434] In addition, the CEPAC/CRN management also confirmed that the Children's Clubs have never been set up in a village without prior consultation and in agreement with the community leaders, to avoid any stigmatization and logistical challenges. This also meant consultation with the community leaders regarding inclusion of any vulnerable children in the community in the Children's Club training and activities, as well as sensitization of these leaders to address and deal with any possible prejudices and harmful practices.[435] A general acceptance and support by one such community elder could be observed in Vayana, who was heavily involved in organizing the reunification meeting which took place on 10 October 2007, summoning the parents, and villagers who would come to prepare the meal and welcoming the

[433] Aime Noel, e-mail, received February 12, 2010. Aime Noel, e-mail, received August 16, 2010.
[434] Erengeti carpentry club teacher, interview, October 6, 2007; Reintegration agents, interview, October 11, 2007.
[435] Aime Noel, e-mail, received February 12, 2010. Aime Noel, email, received August 16, 2010.

children. He showed great enthusiasm during the ceremony of handing the release certificates to the children, and was quite familiar with the reintegration agents and Save the Children officers. In this one case, it could be observed that there was a relationship of trust between them. Another example of such coordination and familiarity was observed among the teachers, management and the local authorities during the graduation ceremony of girls from the tailoring club in Beni. As it was not possible to meet the elders in all of the other locations where CEPAC/CRN has Children's Clubs, the thesis relies on the two examples observed and the statements of the CEPAC/CRN personnel. As was mentioned earlier this coordination with the community elders was a direct lesson learned from previous programs, which CEPAC/CRN observed. In addition, through the training received by Save the Children and the continuous coordination with MONUC, OCHA and the national institutions, the importance of working with the local authorities has been imprinted upon CEPAC/CRN management's minds. Thus, while there is no direct knowledge that this is a recommendation from international standards on child rehabilitation and reintegration, CEPAC/CRN knows that it is of importance to the national and international stakeholders, has seen its practical value and confirmed its role in their work.

While CEPAC/CRN's Children's Clubs are a valuable tool to help a community see the rehabilitation and reintegration process of children, there is a lack of program's involvement in local initiatives, which would greatly benefit the long term reintegration of the children. Such initiatives are to an extent reflected in the recommendation 4.3 and 4.8, in addition to those discussed previously. Setting up child networks, besides helping children communicate and strengthen each other, could be seen as a tool to support the development of (re-)recruitment initiatives on a community level. Teaching and supporting the communities to take on initiatives and responsibility might alleviate some of CEPAC/CRN burdens' and possibly contribute towards changing attitudes.

	Community-Based Support and (re-)recruitment Prevention
1. Programs to be developed together with the community-coordination between NGOs and elders/leaders	- In discussion with community leaders CEPAC/CRN sets up Children's Clubs in the community - All efforts agreed in prior with the community elders/authority
2. Include youth in community programmatic development	- No evidence that the youth is engaged in the programmatic development in the community
3. Assist community in setting up community-based child networks	- No evidence that there are any community-based child networks outside the Children's Clubs
4. Conduct sensitization and training in the community	- Occurs as an initiative within the guideline 3 - Mainly conducted through the community elders and leaders
5. Support local initiatives	- No active involvement besides the regular activities in Children's Club
6. Assist communities in conflict management	- Conflict management addressed through the local leaders and elders - CEPAC/CRN has limited knowledge of successes of the mediation conducted by elders
7. Conduct long-term monitoring and follow-up through local leaders rather than individually focused monitoring	- Limited follow up, but coordinated with the local leaders - Information collected through the reintegration agents and through the teachers at the CCs, as much as possible
8. Support development of (re)recruitment prevention programs and community-based initiatives	- No evidence that CEPAC/CRN is involved in development of any re-recruitment prevention programs outside of the advocacy and sensitization work they conduct through reintegration agents and community leaders

Figure 22: Summary of guideline 4 observations

Guideline 5: Special Case of a Girl Child

Ever since a joint effort was initiated by the organizations working in the Beni region to sensitize rebel groups to the provisions of the *CRC*, more girls have been released from the bush.[436] However, the release of girls still remains a daunting task; many rebels do not view girls as combatants and are not as ready to release them. MONUC Child Protection Officer confirmed this by stating that for every 12 boy soldiers released only 1 girl soldier was set free.[437] The number of girls still held captive is uncertain, but is estimated to be very high.[438] According to Colonel Kimputu, within any rebel group, girls constitute 30% of child combatants. While there are no exact figures, the Multi-Country Demobilization and

[436] MONUC Child Protection Officer, interview, October 4, 2007.
[437] Save the Children Program Manager, interview, October 9, 2007; MONUC Child Protection Officer, interview, October 8, 2007.
[438] United Nations, "UN Statistics," United Nations Website, http://edition.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/africa/11/17/congo.child.soldiers/ (accessed November 6, 2007). According to the UN statistics issued in 2007, around 29,000 children have been demobilized and separated from armed groups in Congo since 2004. The estimated number of those still fighting ranges between 2000 (UN estimation) and 4000 (DRC National Army). Among the children who were interviewed, only a few girls escaped and were auto-demobilized; the number of auto-demobilized boys was drastically higher. Unfortunately, it was not possible for the author to find out even an estimated number of girls which escaped and returned to villages on their own. Possible reasons why more boys auto-demobilized could be that girls feared the judgments of the community, and often returned with a child, which made the escape more dangerous and difficult.

Reintegration Program (MDRP) released a statistic that 30,219 children were demobilized in DRC until December 2006. In that same statistic, the MDRP claimed that out of that number about 2,600 were female demobilizations. Considering the continued abduction of children, especially of girls in the region since the statistics and estimates have been made, this number could easily be higher, showing the dire need for more concerted focus in the implementation of the guideline 5's recommendations.

CEPAC/CRN has not been able to accommodate girls in a separate CTO. They were therefore housed in a separate building at the CTO with a ratio 3:2 of boys to girls, and an average intake of girl mothers less than 10 per group. The girls' stay in the CTO was seen as a safe zone because their reunification and reintegration conducted by CEPAC/CRN faced more challenges than that of boys.[439] In some communities, the girls were stigmatized, and those returning with children had little prospects of marrying.[440] Through the training and advocacy work with the OCHA, MONUC and Save the Children, CEPAC/CRN staff, acknowledged their dedication to fulfilling the recommendations 5.1 and 5.2 (*Special attention to reunification needs of girl soldiers* and *Girls to benefit from the RR efforts*) and 5.4. (*Conduct sensitization and empower women in the community*).[441] During the field study there were 8 CEPAC/CRN female staff members present, in addition to one female deputy director from the regional office in Goma. These women served as an example of leadership and encouraged the returning girls, in particular girl mothers, to take part in vocational training and learn a trade, or seek further educational opportunities. Most often girls chose to participate in tailoring, because they perceived this as an easier trade and one they could identify with.[442] CEPAC/CRN worked together with Save the Children and other organizations, to ensure that each girl that had finished her vocational training in tailoring was provided with a sewing machine and starter material (if possible) at the end of her vocational training period.[443]

[439] Reintegration agents, interview, October 11-12, 2007; Girl mother, BA, interview, October 8, 2007; Girl mother, TT, interview, October 13, 2007.
[440] Girl mother, BA, interview, October 8, 2007.
[441] CEPAC/CRN female staff, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 12, 2007; Salome Ntububa, interview, October 12, 2007.
[442] Girl mother, BA, interview, October 8, 2007; Girl mother TT, interview, October 13, 2007.
[443] CEPAC/CRN female staff, interview, October 12, 2007.

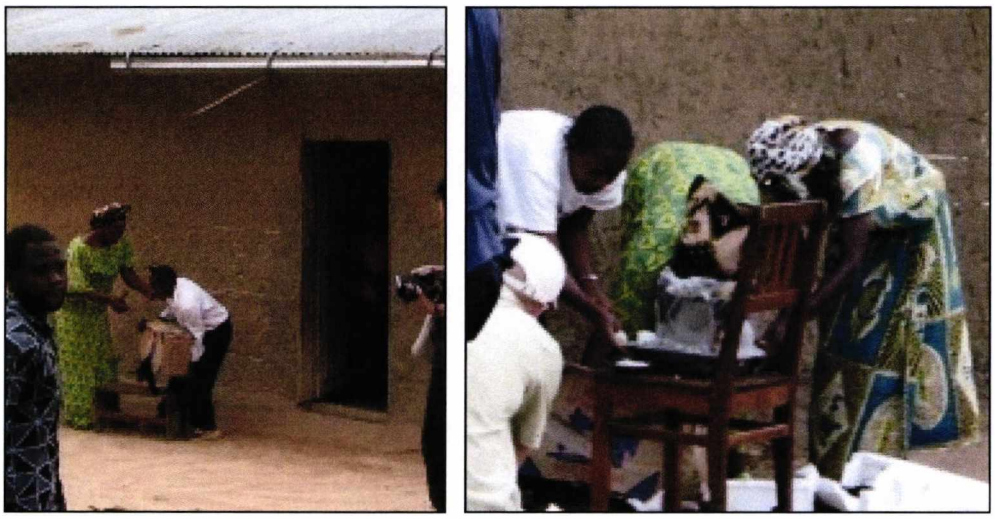

Figure 23: Girls and their mothers are unpacking the sewing machine received at the graduation from the CEPAC/CRN Children's tailoring Club in Beni. Pictures taken on 7 October 2007.

Such options were not always accessible to the boys who participated in the same tailoring training. While sewing machine could be identified as a symbol of gender segregation, it was meant as an act of empowerment which CEPAC/CRN was able to provide. Just the sheer fact of owning a sewing machine in communities, which had little themselves, raised the status of the girls, helping them to be financially independent to an extent – a concept which will be further discussed in guideline 8.[444] The machine foremost gave the girls a new concept of a self, and helped them gain the respect of the community at their return.[445] The CEPAC/CRN management recognized this respect and a new sense of self as the most important factors to the reintegration and rehabilitation of the girls in their communities.[446] What it meant to the girls could be observed during the graduation day of girls in Beni Children's Club. They clapped their hands in pure joy, and examined their newly received sewing machines. One mother stated that she could now "smile, because her daughter was gone for many years, and when she returned she looked sad. But now, she was happy and laughing," making this day a very "joyous day in many years."[447]

[444] CEPAC/CRN female staff, interview, October 12, 2007.
[445] Sakina Hingana, interview, October 7, 2007; Salome Ntububa, interview, October 7, 2007.
[446] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 6, 2007; CEPAC/CRN female staff, interview, October 12, 2007; Salome Ntububa, interview, October 12, 2007.
[447] Mothers following the graduation of girls from the Beni CEPAC/CRN Tailoring Children's Club, interview by author, Beni, DRC, October 7, 2007.

Figure 24: Graduation Day Children's tailoring Club, Beni, DRC. The mothers have been invited to participate in the graduation and the distribution of the sewing machines. Pictures taken on 7 October 2007.

While the sewing machine were meant to be a symbol of emancipation and self fulfillment, it alone cannot be viewed as a measure enough for the recommendation 5.4 to be implemented and should not be seen as a tool to empower women, as it builds on further stereotypes. In addition, it is questionable whether it provides for long term reintegration of the returning girls. Two examples illustrate this. Some of the girls spoken to, who had been through the training and back in their communities over 6 months, stated that they faced many difficulties upon their return. One had to relocate to find work, as people in her home community refused to hire her sewing services.[448] The other girl said that she had enough work, but that she was alone and that any hopes of finding a husband in the community were in vain.[449] Both interviews were conducted in smaller villages near Beni town, and both girls returned to the community with a child. These two examples showed that despite the CEPAC/CRN's efforts, more needed to be done to influence the attitudes of individual members of the community in the interest of the children.

It should also be noted that awarding sewing machines to the girls created a gender base discrimination toward the boys, because it signaled that boys did not have special reunification needs and thus providing them with starter kits was not as vital. Considering the above mentioned examples, it might be necessary for programs such as CEPAC/CRN to consider the implementation of the recommendations 5.1 and 5.5 in such a way, that while aiding the girls, they do not discriminate against the boys. The efforts conducted with an aim

[448] Girl mother, BA, interview, October 8, 2007.
[449] Girl mother, TT, interview, October 13, 2007.

to promote a new sense of self and gain renewed respect of the community are vital factors; however, they should not be viewed as gender specific, since they apply to the special needs of boy soldiers as well.[450]

Similar observations could be made in regards to the recommendation 5.2 (*Establish support programs to deal with emotional and physical consequences of rape*). While CEPAC/CRN did not have resources and knowledge to deal with consequences of rape, it did coordinate with the local hospital and the HIV/AIDS clinic in Beni, as well as with the special clinic in Goma, to address any physical and psychological injuries to the victim. However, in conversations with the staff, it was evident that the topic of rape was immediately associated with girls, and as such, the program and its activities were catered to specifically address them.[451] The consequences of rape among boys were not considered, because the staff was not aware of any such cases.[452] However, while disclosure has still been a taboo, the boys do become prey of sexual abuse during their involvement with armed groups.[453] As such, some research might dispute whether this recommendation should be part of the recommendations to address only special needs of a girl child.

The recommendation 5.3 (*Include girl mothers in livelihood and vocational training programs*) could be viewed as a recommendation specific to a girl child, because girls who have become mothers while with the armed group will always return with their child and take responsibility for it. In the areas in which CEPAC/CRN operates, the joy of the motherhood is tainted by the knowledge that there has been a breach to the traditions, and mothers, as the two cases previously mentioned exemplified, seemed to experience a harder time during their RR process. According to the recommendation 5.3, education is an important long term denominator. CEPAC/CRN supports this notion, and as highlighted by all the CTO workers spoken to and Pinos, feels that one way to empower mothers is to provide them with opportunities to learn a trade, and be financial independent from their community, family or strangers.[454] However, to be effective, such provisions of trade should allow options to training, as well as facilitate child care. CEPAC/CRN does not have means to provide for day care, but however, if mothers do not have where to leave their child, the children can be taken

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[450] Sheila Narrainen, "The gender perspective and the right of boys during conflict" (presentation given at the *Conference Children and War: Past and Present*, Salzburg, 30 Sept- 2 October 2010).
[451] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 6, 2007; CEPAC/CRN female staff, interview, October 12, 2007; Salome Ntububa interview, October 12, 2007.
[452] See footnote 452.
[453] See Jareg, "Crossing Bridges."
[454] See footnote 452.

to the center. While this is not a perfect solution, considering the infrastructure that exists, it is a manageable way to allow girl mothers to receive the training, without leaving their children unattended or giving up on training because they have no one to care for their child. Of course, the level of retention and ability to focus with the child present at the Children's Club is also questionable. Girl mothers who have gone through the training commented that having their children with them did not disturb them during the training to the level that they could not focus. As there was no other data available on this topic, the thesis relies on the testimonials of these mothers.

Special Case of a Girl Child	
1. Special attention to reunification needs of girl soldiers	- CEPAC/CRN reintegration agents conduct sensitization of the family, and the elders on the gender based violence - Girls/Young women always receive a sewing machine kit at the end of their training to make them independent and increase their status in the community
2. Establish support programs to deal with emotional and physical consequences of rape	- CEPAC/CRN program does not have resources to deal with such consequences, but coordinates with local hospital to treat the girls' injuries (see also guideline 6)
3. Include girl mothers in livelihood and vocational training programs	- Girl mothers also adopted into the CEPAC/CRN CTO program - Advance to the vocational training programs, children either taken to the center and left to play with other children or taken care of by families of the girl mother - Also take girl mothers in the community who have been identified as vulnerable children in the community
4. Conduct sensitization and empower women in the community	- CEPAC/CRN employs women as teachers and staff members, and gives them leadership and managerial responsibility
5. Girls to benefit from the RR efforts	- No differentiation between the CEPAC/CRN activities and programs for girls and boys - Coordination of RR efforts in the region for the benefit of the girls (see also guideline 2) - CEPAC/CRN conducts special sensitization of armed groups to achieve release of the girls
6. Grant girls access to education and schooling and provide vocational training and income earning opportunities	- No evidence that girls who participated in CEPAC/CRN were able to continue with formal schooling - Encouraged to participate in the vocational training in the Children's Clubs
7. Ensure confidentiality	- CEPAC/CRN ensures confidentiality to both boys and girls - In the cases of HIV/AIDS treatment is conducted in the hospital in Beni – bound by Hippocratic Oath - No private/personal information is divulged or discussed among the social workers and children, but only discussed between the designated social worker and the child he/she attends to

Figure 25: Summary of guideline 5 observations

In cooperation with the national government and the international organizations, which avidly advocate for girl's rights and inclusion in the DDR process, CEPAC/CRN greatly

pursued gender based equality and coordinated with the community leaders to ensure that girls were receiving proper treatment and were helped during their participation in the Children's Clubs. Nonetheless, it was clear during the observations, that despite their efforts, there were cultural and traditional stigmas, which remained and needed to be addressed by local and national government as an additional initiative in order for the guideline 5 to be fully implemented on the ground.

Guideline 6: Medical Assistance to Children with Disabilities and other Health/Physical RR Efforts

As mentioned earlier, while CEPAC/CRN CTO and the Children's Clubs don't have the facilities nor the medical staff to treat serious health cases, they do coordinate with the local hospital in Beni, and conduct a basic medical assessment of each child upon admission to the program, as recommendation 6.1 (*Provide child-focused basic health services in the communities and centers*) suggests. In addition to the coordination with the hospital, there is a medical nurse at the center, who can perform basic medical checkup, and take care of small injuries, light cases of malnutrition and dehydration.[455] Serious cases of starvation, physical injuries, psychological traumas, malaria, or other diseases, have to be admitted to the Beni hospital.

It should be noted, that while the RR program in Beni does not have the medical facilities and personnel, the regional CEPAC network has been a provider of health services in the Eastern DRC since its inception, and with its 135 health centers and four hospitals, it can provide assistance to the CEPAC/CRN RR program at any given time.[456] As such, it is not required for the program to maintain a health clinic at the CTO or in the Children's Clubs, as it can utilize the help of CEPAC's health centers across the region.[457]

While Mai-Mai groups are not known for physical torture, for cutting limbs, or scalping people in their ranks, there is a prevalence of rape in the region.[458] It is not uncommon for the children to return infected with HIV/AIDS, or to suffer from sexually transmitted diseases.[459] The cases of severe physical injuries and HIV/AIDS were treated in

[455] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 5, 2007; Sakina Hingana, interview, October 5, 2007.
[456] See Christian Relief Network, "Local Partners," CRN Website, http://crn.no/Partners/Local+partners (accessed Sept 4, 2010).
[457] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 6, 2007; CEPAC/CRN female staff, interview, October 12, 2007; Salome Ntububa, interview, October 12, 2007.
[458] Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimbutu, interview, October 5, 2007; Edmond Pinos, interview, October 13, 2007.
[459] Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 60.

the AIDS hospital in Beni. The hospital is not affiliated with CEPAC, however, it has a well established working relationship with the regional network and in particular with the RR program, since CEPAC/CRN's deputy director Aime Noel is also principal deputy director of the AIDS Hospital in Beni. Through this cooperation, more rape victims could be treated than as in the past, where the worst rape cases were forwarded to the CEPAC/CRN's hospital in Goma, which specialized in reconstructive surgery (such as fistula surgery), a very dangerous and unsafe travel due to instability in the region.[460]

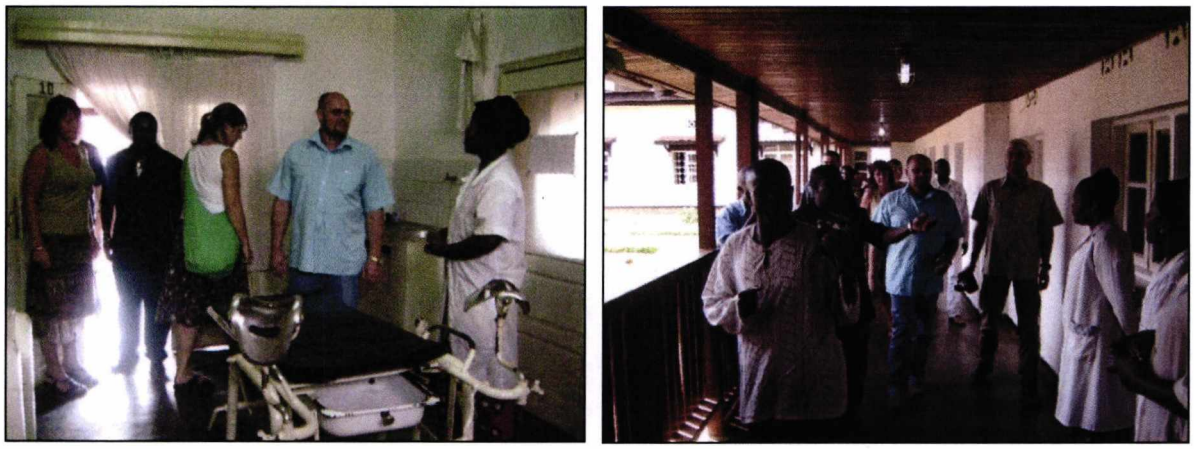

Figure 26: AIDS Hospital in Beni. Pictures taken 9 October 2007 (Photos courtesy of the CEPAC, Goma).

Thus, even if CEPAC/CRN RR program does not have the facilities or the means to implement the recommendations in this guideline, through their standing arrangements with the regional CEPAC network and the AIDS Hospital, they are able to respond quickly to any health concerns children might have. An example can illustrate this. While speaking to a young girl at the tailoring Children's Club in Eringite, she mentioned that she was feeling quite ill, not being able to concentrate. Staff quickly recognized that she was running a high fever, alarmed others and organized transportation to the hospital, where she was treated promptly.[461]

The network established to provide medical assistance to the children, while not conducted by the RR program itself, greatly aids the fulfillment of the recommendations in this guideline. However, it should be noted, that while international organizations, such as Save the Children and UNICEF conduct advocacy in the region and provide local NGOs with

[460] Aime Noel, e-mail, received December 29, 2008. For more information on reconstructive surgery, see Christian Relief Network, "Fistula Treatment," CRN Website, www.crn.no.
[461] Aime Noel, e-mail, received December 29, 2008; Salome Ntumbe, interview, October 9, 2007.

the basic training on how to deal with medical and health issues, it could be observed that CEPAC/CRN implemented the recommendations in this guideline because the importance of the provision of health services is embedded in its regional network's structures. This is therefore one of the guidelines whose recommendations were implemented even before the recommendations were drafted.

	Medical Assistance to Children with Disabilities and other Health/Physical RR Efforts
1. Provide child-focused basic health services in the communities and centers	- CEPAC/CRN has a medical nurse, but no doctors at the center - Basic medical assessment conducted at the entry into the CTO - Serious cases taken to hospital in Beni and treated there
2. Ensure adequate rehabilitative care, including prosthetic limbs, wheelchairs, reconstructive surgery (if possible) etc	- Reconstructive surgery facilities available in Beni (and Goma) - No evidence that wheelchairs, helping aids, prosthetic limbs etc are used/available
3. Prevent separation of children with disabilities and institutionalization of children (addiction, aggressive behavior)	- No evidence that children with disabilities are separated, unless severe mental disability requiring special attention and highly qualified personnel
4. Support existing health services and improve response capacities to cases of HIV/AIDS, victims of rape, drug and alcohol abuse, etc	- Coordinate with the existing local health services and the AIDS hospital in Beni
5. Train staff to deal with more challenging cases	- N/A
6. Provide clinical support to treat physical injuries of rape	- In cooperation with the regional CEPAC network and the AIDS hospital in Beni, CEPAC/CRN is able to treat serious rape injuries

Figure 27: Summary of guideline 6 observations

Guideline 7: Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects

Most of the already mentioned guidelines are related or contribute towards psychosocial rehabilitation and reintegration. As some of the related recommendations have already been discussed, only certain aspects will be reiterated here.

Though the word "psychosocial" was fairly new to the CEPAC/CRN staff, it could be observed that the program catered towards a psychosocial RR.[462] While speaking to the CEPAC/CRN staff, the local staff talked about attempting holistic RR, which indicated that they were not aware of the fact that such work was another interpretation of a psychosocial concept present in the international standards developed.[463] The regional female deputy director however, was aware of the word, its meaning, and even more of its practical

[462] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 11, 2007.
[463] CTO social workers, interview, October 7, 2007.

implementation points. She brought this knowledge with her from previous employments with international organizations, such as UNICEF and World Vision.[464] Thus, while not aware of the term itself, the local chapter did receive guidance on what concepts and elements were important in their implementation of RR activities through the regional staff, and regional staff was aware of psychosocial concepts through INGOs and UNICEF.[465] As such, the program did not focus solely on psychological aspects of reintegration, as the examples of the previous guidelines showed, but used CTO and the clubs as tools to aid the psychosocial rehabilitation and reintegration of children.

The CEPAC/CRN program could be considered as implementing the recommendation 7.1 (*Include traditional, cultural and child development perceptions, as well as political and social realities of the region in the program development –always to reflect the best interest of the child*) successfully, not only because it is staffed by locals, but also because it's director and some of the staff were themselves involved with different Mai-Mai and armed groups in the past. Being local to the area allows the staff to understand the situation, and the circumstances of each child better than internationally recruited staff. In addition, because they are locals themselves, they are aware of the underlying traditional, political, and religious customs and perceptions, and have therefore greater aptitude in responding to them. In addition, staff covers many languages, which aids the work and builds greater trust with the children. Finally, because some of them have been involved with armed groups, they have knowledge of how such groups operate, which aids in the development of the proper activities at the CTO. All these contribute to psychological wellbeing of a child. However, at the same time, it could be perceived as dangerous to employ ex-combatants, as children might be frightened by them, only perpetuating possible traumas. However, the example of Edmond Pinos, the director shows that such assumptions are not justified. Once a combatant himself, he has many contacts in the ranks of Mai-Mai groups still fighting.[466] Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimputu confirmed during an interview that his previous involvements with the Mai-Mai was an advantage, and not an obstacle, stating that he had worked with Pinos for many years, and that they have had a very successful coordination of the child DDR efforts, because Pinos "was a good man and cared for the future of the children."[467] In addition to the

[464] Salome Ntububa, interview, October 5, 2007.
[465] Salome Ntububa, interview, October 5, 2007.
[466] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 6, 2007. The author first heard about Pinos's prior involvement with armed groups through conversation with Bent Ronsen and Gro Bockmann Randby, CRN Norway, interview, April 14, 2007.
[467] Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimputu, interview, October 5, 2007.

Colonel's words, many stories confirmed that Pinos's history contributed in at least two positive ways. First, his experiences and the knowledge of the combat and the life in the bush granted him a special standing among the youth, especially the boys. This was an important element of preserving discipline at the center. Second, in addition to children's respect, Pinos enjoyed great respect and authority in the region. Together with the MONUC and Save the Children, his program was contributing sensitization of the armed groups' leaders, amounting to the release of children, in particular girls, from some of the most challenging rebel groups. Such can be viewed as a great success story, as he has been known for walking into the camps of notorious leaders and achieving release of all the girls - an act which cost some people their lives.[468]

However, the overall fame of his program has not been achieved solely through his efforts and example, but also because all of his staff could be seen as dedicated and positive role models, as per recommendation 7.3. Though Pinos's role as a director is prominent and unique, it does not diminish the necessity of good staff. With the structure and versatility of the program, it would have been impossible for one person alone to hold the entire program. The life experiences that each of the staff brought with them were vital to the effective conduct of rehabilitation and reintegration work in the region, especially because they received minimal training, were mostly not taught and educated social workers, psychologists and teachers, and relied on the intuitive deduction and knowledge based on experiences when designing programs and working with the children.[469] Wessells observed similar issues in his research, which confirms that work in this field requires training, but often must be accompanied by knowledge and in-depth understanding of the culture, circumstances and the setting.[470] In the case of CEPAC/CRN, their role modeling and positive influence on the children could be observed through the change of behavior and attitude. Children who entered the program frightened, angry and suspicious or with health problems, relaxed and left the CTO with a more child-like attitude.[471] It was also observed that there was a relationship of trust with the staff, much laughter and ease of interaction. However, it was also apparent through statements of few returnees, that they relied, and to an extent, began depending on the

[468] Bent Ronsen, interview, April 14, 2007; Gro Bockmann Randby, interview, April 14, 2007; Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimputu, interview, October 5, 2007.
[469] Social workers, interview, October 6, 2007; Edmond Pinos, interview, October 6, 2007.
[470] Wessells, "Child Soldiers, Peace Education and Post-conflict Reconstruction for Peace," 366.
[471] Bent Ronsen, interview, April 14, 2007; Gro Bockmann Randby, interview, April 14, 2007; Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimputu, interview, October 5, 2007.

CTO staff, which made their return to the community challenging.[472] All the statements were collected from children living in communities far away from Beni. This shows that while attempting to build a relationship of trust and be a role model, there is a greater need to focus on providing role models within the community, and help children receive support through a network of peers, if at all possible, to avoid causing reunification challenges through created dependency toward a particular staff member. One way to create that balance could be by implementing recommendation 7.8 (*Children to stay in the interim centers as short as possible*). While the stay in the center is not long per say, deciding how long a child stays at the center could depend on the tracing and reunification possibilities, rather than be defined by duration. In the CEPAC/CRN's case, the recommendation could be fully implemented, because the actual length of stay was prescribed by the national government.

Implementation impracticality could also be observed in the recommendation 7.4 (*Centers should provide comprehensive support to the returning child*). It would be challenging to implement a recommendation which did not outline what was meant by the terminology 'comprehensive support,' leaving space for much false interpretation. While the CTO provided support to the children through counseling, recreational activities and play (recommendation 7.9), it did neither provide individual therapy nor other psychological treatment, partly because such activities were identified as ineffective by programs in the past, and CEPAC/CRN was encouraged by the government and UNICEF in Kinshasa to not conduct such efforts. If providing psychological treatment or individual therapy is considered part of the comprehensive support, this would then mean that the recommendations 7.5 and 7.4 are in conflict with each other.

In addition, while the concept of the clubs was developed following the recommendation 7.2 (*Develop socio-economic and livelihood incentives*), as well as the recommendations in the guideline 8, and the directive from the government in Kinshasa, the extent to which CEPAC/CRN is able to fulfill this recommendation is limited. Children's Clubs provide children with an opportunity to learn a vocational skill and at the same time provide them with a livelihood incentive. Those who have been at the club longer and have gained enough skills to work as an independent team, receive small orders from the villagers, and earn by doing it pocket or "soap" money, as they call it.[473] Similar is the case in the

[472] Girl mother, BA, interview, October 8, 2007; Children at Children's Club, interview, Erengeti, Mabuku, DRC, October 5-11, 2007.

[473] One of the boys explained that they called the pay received the "soap money," because soap was so rare in those communities and for the wages received they could afford to buy some soap.

tailoring clubs. Learners, mainly girls, will often times receive small hemming and fixing up orders from villagers for a small fee. In addition to earning money and gaining a sense for running a small business (as per recommendation 8.6), taking job orders helped children recognize their place in the community, contributing to socio-economic incentives, relaxing the tensions, and prejudices which might exist upon child's return.[474] However, this is an example of only one such incentive. CEPAC/CRN is not able to provide any other livelihood incentives, an issue which will further be discussed in the guideline 8.

Outside of the Children's Clubs CEPAC/CRN can encourage, but has not attempted to directly influence what the community does to provide opportunities for children to find meaningful outlets, create socio-economic and livelihood incentives, and participate in the community development.[475] What the program has been doing successfully however was to include the auto-demobilized children in the vocational training at the Children's Clubs. Such effort has always been coordinated with the local leaders, contributing to a percentage of about 15 to 20% of auto-demobilized children participating in the Children's Clubs training at any given time. In addition to inclusion of vulnerable children, and as mentioned earlier, of girl mothers, CEPAC/CRN is able to implement the second half of the recommendation 7.5 (*...adopt all inclusive approach in the community-based programs*) and the recommendation 7.6 (*Cater programs to deal with officially demobilized and auto-demobilized youth*).

It should be noted, that the staffs' dedication to the children, and their example in the communities could be considered as most important aspects of the CEPAC/CRN's psychosocial RR efforts. In all of the visits, children lightened up when the CTO staff or reintegration agents were present. Considering how much of psychosocial issues can be resolved through the simple friendship concept, it reinforced the need for regular long-term monitoring and follow-up. However such a friendship concept should be transitioned towards the community, enabling children to find a person of trust in the community rather than falling back on the CEPAC/CRN staff. The danger of not doing it, could lead to possible challenges in the reintegration of the child.

[474] Erengeti Carpentry Children's Club teacher, interview, October 6, 2007.
[475] For more on the topic of activities in traditional setting to help children, see Wessells, *Child Soldiers.*

	Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects
1. **Include traditional, cultural and child development perceptions, as well as political and social realities of the region in the program development –always to reflect the best interest of the child**	- Because employing locals, the staff is aware of and sensitive to the traditional and political realities and builds it into their activities to address them effectively - Biases balance out well through the equal distribution of gender, as well as through tribal representation (with staff local to Beni, come from different regions, and cover different languages)
2. **Develop socio-economic and livelihood incentives**	-No other incentives exist outside the Children's Clubs, which provide basic livelihood incentives and skills training
3. **Train staff, local leaders and teachers and provide positive adult role models and strong peer support network**	- CEPAC/CRN staff serve as adult role models to the children (as stated by the children) - Training of local leaders mentioned in guideline 4 - Training of staff conducted by Save the Children (while an international organization, the training reflects the guidelines according to the international standards) - No evidence of an organized peer support network, however interaction of youth possible through the Children's Clubs
4. **Centers should provide comprehensive support to the returning child**	- Limited support provided during CTO stay, reunification process and vocational training at the Children's Club - Counseling possible at all times at the CTO and during vocational training - Follow-up scarce, therefore little to no support after graduation from the Children's Club
5. **Avoid individual therapy and adopt all inclusive approach in the community-based programs**	- No individual therapy at the center or during the program - Effectively include internally displaced and vulnerable (auto-demobilized) children in the Children's Clubs activities, in coordination with the local leaders - see also guideline 5 on the issue of girls
6. **Cater programs to deal with officially demobilized and auto-demobilized youth**	- Children's Clubs accommodate auto-demobilized children - Receive certificates of release and RR at the end of the vocational training
7. **DDR programs for children to be separated from adult programs**	- Successfully conduct only child minded RR program
8. **Children to stay in interim care and centers as short as possible**	- The length of the CTO stay prescribed by the government and the UNICEF office - Stay at the CTO allows for proper tracing and family sensitization
9. **Provide recreational activities, sports, theatre etc**	- Recreational activities and sports embedded in the CTO stay - No evidence that theatre, musical presentations or plays are organized by the community - Children's Clubs provide the venue, but do not organize theatre and sports (personal effort of children to organize such events)

Figure 28: Summary of guideline 7 observations

Guideline 8: Education, Vocational Training and Livelihood Initiatives

The instability and the breakdown of the regular school system in many areas in the Beni region made it difficult for the government to provide children with proper education. While there are elementary schools in the cities, such as Beni, Butembo and Eringite, there was no infrastructure to provide basic elementary education in smaller villages scattered across the rain forest. This led UNICEF to sponsor a "Back to School" campaign, which was

initiated in 2007, with the objective to reach most of east DRC children.[476] However, the continued fighting led to displacement of children and teachers alike, and has hindered the success of the campaign. This also meant that there were limited possibilities for the returning children to receive catch up education and enroll in schools. According to MDRP's statistics up to75% of the children released by the end of 2006 had been provided with vocational training and educational opportunities in the entire country.[477] The quality of such training can however be questioned, as there were very few vocational training opportunities in the region at the time the observations were made.[478] Save the Children Beni Office Manager stated that the combined efforts of their office and CEPAC/CRN were some of the few initiatives in the region for implementing the guideline 8. Thus, Children's Clubs have been viewed as important socio-economic and educational tools, and can be seen as an answer to the recommendation 8.2 (*Develop programs which will have a link between education, vocational training and income-winning opportunities*). Children participating in the vocational training confirmed the importance which Children's Clubs and the role an opportunity to participate in vocational training played in their lives.[479] Entering the program with no knowledge and little vision for what the future could bring, children graduated from the clubs having learned a skill, planning their financial future – in other words, hopeful and daring.[480] In an ideal setting, these clubs would have focused only on the children who have missed formal education. However, they have been accommodating up to 75% of all the children in the communities where they exist.

Having observed the insufficiencies of programs in the past, and in coordination with the UNICEF in Kinshasa, as well as with Save the Children and CRN in Norway, CEPAC/CRN did not have provide any cash or financial subsidies, as it felt it was counterproductive both for the children and the program, thereby implementing the recommendation 8.5 (*Do not provide cash or instant material assistance*). However, to address the challenges that some children, in particular girl mothers, auto-demobilized and physically disabled children faced, Children's Clubs coordinated with their families and the

[476] UNICEF, "Back to School Campaign in eastern DRC," UNICEF, www.unicef.org/media/media_41993.html (accessed February 24, 2010).
[477] MDRP, "DRC Fact Sheet," MDRP, www.mdrp.org/drc.htm (accessed March 4, 2010).
[478] While in Beni, the author met an American business man who was working for a furniture franchise. Extracting the wood from the region, the franchise also offered training in forestry for the workers and their families. In addition, some textile production, weaving, small business management and other similar training was offered to adult women. However, this was only one effort available to the adults.
[479] Children at the Children's Clubs, interview, October 6-11, 2007.
[480] Erengeti carpentry Children's Club teacher, interview, October 6, 2007; Reintegration officers, interview, October 10, 2007.

community leaders to include them in the training activities (as per recommendation 8.3). As was mentioned earlier, while CEPAC/CRN was not able to provide day care for the children of the learners, they did attempt to sensitize family or community members to take in children, so that girls could participate.[481] If that was unfruitful, girls were allowed to bring their children to the training, where children set nearby, playing together while the girls participated in the training. While not an ideal setting, it was the last resort option, allowing girl mothers to also participate.

As mentioned during the guideline 7 discussion, during the training, children were also able to take orders for a small fee, which was used to teach them small business management, in addition with providing them basic pocket money. However, such orders also contributed to the daily life in the club, since it added to the funds for the food and for the materials used during the training.[482] It should be noted, that while children were able to utilize and strengthen their leadership, organizational, team management and accountability skills, which they could have gained during their time with the armed groups, the Children's Clubs' teachers never emphasized that these soft skills were product of their involvement (see recommendation 8.8), but rather attempted to build up a child as a part of rehabilitative effort and point out his or her strengths as an individual rather than ex-soldier.[483]

However, while being able to implement other recommendations, the program lacked implementation of the recommendation 8.4 (*Do not provide training in jobs which are hazardous or not needed in the labor market*). The great disadvantage of CEPAC/CRN clubs was that they offered training in only two possible skills, tailoring and carpentry. These two vocations had been identified as most beneficial and most cost effective training opportunities by the international organizations and were adopted by the RR programs.[484] As such, CEPAC/CRN mirrored what programs did in the past, and received support from Save the Children to conduct such training.[485] Thus, no market study was conducted to find out whether these two vocations were still marketable and in demand, or whether there were other vocations that could be trained. And exactly this is what the recommendation anticipated. Besides versatility of vocations, CEPAC/CRN faced a challenge in providing the level and

[481] Reintegration agents, interview, October 6-11, 2007.
[482] Erengeti Carpentry Children's Club teacher, interview, October 6, 2007; Edmond Pinos, interview, October 12, 2007.
[483] Sakina Hingana, interview, October 5, 2007; Aime Noel, e-mail, received February 12, 2010.
[484] Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration during an Ongoing Conflict," 503.
[485] Save the Children Program Manager, interview, October 9, 2007; Social workers at the CTO Beni, interview, October 5, 2007; Edmond Pinos, interview, October 6, 2007.

quality of the training needed. Working with limited materials, each club had 3 to 4 training stations, and accommodated at least 35 children in the program each month. Though the program lasted 8 months, the chances to practice and apply the learned were few. As eastern DRC is known for its wood, such as mahogany, carpentry could be utilized in the region, but such carpentry and wood handling would require specialized training, which was not available. As a result, carpentry, which can be potentially hazardous, as well as tailoring were in greater supply than needed in the communities and the region. The shop owners interviewed, commented that while they were able to make ends meet, they were frustrated that they were never able to procure enough work, to keep them steadily busy.[486] In addition, one of the boys owning a carpentry shop felt his training was very basic, and did not allow him to branch out and try changing the products he could offer, and showed signs of frustration that there were no in-depth training opportunities available to him anywhere in the region.[487] These examples raised an important point. Despite CEPAC/CRN's efforts to provide vocational training, the frustration that children who had gone through the training and established shops displayed could have been seen as a potential hindrance to achieving their RR.

The interviews and the observations showed that education and provision of livelihood opportunities can be viewed as one of the most important tools for successful RR in DRC. Conducting regular studies, as stipulated in the *IDDRS* to assess the job market, and cater vocational training according to the demand trends was not feasible, but would be of great importance to the RR efforts. However, the conduct of such studies was challenging due to security issues, as well because the market was almost non-existent. Both agriculture and mining, which build the two largest industries in the region, were completely disturbed by constant fighting, displacement and exploitation.[488] In addition, vocational training, as addressed earlier, should only be an alternative for regular education, not a replacement. Without reassurance of stability and peace in the region, the guideline 8, no matter how well implemented by CEPAC/CRN, will always be lacking.

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[486] CRC (full name withheld), interview, near Vayana, DRC, October 8, 2007; Girl mother, BA, interview, October 8, 2007.
[487] CRC, interview, October 8, 2007.
[488] World Factbook, "Congo, Democratic Republic of – Industry," Central Intelligence Agency, www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html (accessed February 25, 2010).

	Education, Vocational Training and Livelihood Initiatives
1. Develop age-appropriate and catch-up educational programs	- None exists
2. Develop programs which will have a link between education, vocational training and income-winning opportunities	- Lack of diversity of training creates instability between supply and demand, creating more supply than needed
3. Involve children with disabilities and girl mothers in the programs-provide child care for the mothers	- All children involved in the training opportunities - No day care opportunities for girl mothers possible however, they can bring their children along if there is no one in the community to leave the child with (see also guideline 5)
4. Do not provide training in jobs which are hazardous or not needed in the labor market	- No studies available what the actual demands in the labor market in the region could be - Carpentry potentially hazardous - Tailoring and carpentry adopted as possible vocations from other programs
5. Do not provide cash or instant material assistance	- No cash or subsidies provided to the children - Girls provided with a sewing machine at the graduation (see also guideline 5)
6. Provide apprenticeship and earning opportunities	- Both apprenticeship and immediate earning opportunities in the Children's Clubs
7. Abolish school fees and use educational system to teach behavioral and political realities and to raise awareness on issues of concern	- Issue cannot be addressed by CEPAC/CRN
8. Create educational opportunities for children to utilize positive skills gained while associated with armed groups	- Some skills children utilize, such as leadership, responsibility, team work and team management could have been first learned during association with the armed groups

Figure 29: Summary of guideline 8 observations

Guideline 9: Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms

The issue of juvenile justice and its proper application has been a grim topic in the international setting.[489] While a challenging issue, the DRC has shown exemplary attitude toward restorative justice system and many of the child soldiering issues are closely monitored in the region by MONUC Child Officers.[490] The country placed moratorium on the death sentence, then lifted in 2002. Despite it no children or young adults have been executed since then, as the peacekeepers ensured that no death sentences were executed in the case of child soldiers.[491] In the Beni area, MONUC coordinated all justice mechanism and demobilization activities together with the national government.[492] Through conversations with the UN OCHA, MONUC Child Protection Officer, Save the Children and the national army representatives, it was very clear that the international standards on the juvenile justice were

[489] See Wessells, "Child Soldiers," 217-224 on *Community Reconciliation, Justice, and Protection.*
[490] MONUC Child Protection Officer, interview, October 12, 2007.
[491] Human Rights Committee, "Human Rights Committee Takes up Report of Democratic Republic of Congo; Experts Say Greater Effort Needed to Guarantee Fundamental Rights," Human Rights Committee, http://www.unis.unvienna.org/unis/pressrels/2006/hrct674.html (accessed March 6, 2010).
[492] Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimbutu, interview, October 5, 2007.

highly respected and efforts coordinated with the local and national NGOs to reflect them in their programmatic implementation. As such, UN OCHA, MONUC and the military closely coordinated with CEPAC/CRN. The officers were not aware of any retribution or self-justice acts by individuals towards children and young adults in the CEPAC/CRN's program. In fact, they stated that in accordance with national legislative and international standards, all who were forced into military service, child and adult alike, were pardoned and rehabilitated through the restorative justice principle, unless charges against them existed through these official organs.[493]

CEPAC/CRN, though having adopted the notion of restorative justice, did not have an active role in the implementation of the recommendations 8.1 (*Establish age limit below which children cannot be charged*), 8.2 (*Do not treat children as deserters and do not apply death sentence*), and 8.5 (*Avoid detaining children and youth*), and 8.7 (*Include the age group 18-24 in the juvenile justice system – as per guideline 1*).[494] As such, only the aspects where the program was able to adopt the restorative justice principle and implement it in their activities will be discussed.

MONUC, the national army and CEPAC/CRN coordinated the release of the children, providing all the children and young adults with an official certificate of release and demobilization. In the case of the auto-demobilized children, the certificate was distributed at the end of their vocational training at the Children's Club. Before the national legislature, the certificate has been viewed as a child's strongest ally.[495] Issued by national authorities the certificate was an official verdict that the child was found innocent, and was cleared from all charges before the law.[496] While CEPAC/CRN was not aware in particular of the recommendation 9.4 (*Seek alternatives to judicial proceedings and provide children with highest standards of safeguards and reconciliation mechanisms*), the certificates could be

[493] The charge for adult soldiers would be issued for following cases: (1) if higher rank in the armed group, (2) knowledge of gross atrocities committed out of free will, and (3) existence of allegiance with the ideologies of the armed non-state actors.

[494] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 9, 2007; MONUC Child Protection Officer, interview, October 12, 2007.

[495] See footnote 493.

[496] See footnote 493; see footnote 495; Aime Noel, interview, October 12, 2007. The demobilization certificate is issued in coordination with the national army, and signed by CEPAC/CRN staff and the respective local authorities. Through interviews conducted with children who have been through the club's training and who have since opened their own ateliers in Beni area, the author has heard testimonials of how much the ability to support themselves, their children (girl soldiers, DM, 18 years old and SK, 17 years old; boy soldiers CRC, 22 years old, AC, 21 years old) and their family has changed them. The author followed up with the social workers, who have kept in close touch with these children, or young adults, who supported the statements mentioning how difficult these children had it at first. Interviews by author, October 8, 2007.

viewed as CEPAC/CRN's interpretation of provision of safeguards and alternatives to judicial proceedings.

	Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms
1. Establish age limit below which children cannot be charged	- Issue cannot be addressed by CEPAC/CRN - Effort closely monitored through MONUC and the national army[497]
2. Do not treat children as deserters and do not apply death sentence	- Issue cannot be addressed by CEPAC/CRN
3. RR programs to adopt the restorative justice principle and be applied always in the best interest of the child	- CEPAC/CRN program mirrors restorative justice principle - Traditional healing in some communities, Christian values adopted to show child's "change"
4. Seek alternatives to judicial proceedings and provide children with highest standards of safeguards and reconciliation mechanisms	- The CTO time and the demobilization certification used as the alternative to judicial proceedings - No other form of judicial proceedings against returnees younger than 22[498]
5. Avoid detaining children and youth	- Issue cannot be addressed by CEPAC/CRN
6. Use local approaches and traditional healing mechanisms	- The presentation of the demobilization certification acts as a 'healing' ritual - Reintegration agents conduct sensitization work and address the concept of healing by comparing the activities in the program with the local and traditional justice and healing mechanisms
7. Include the age group 18-24 in the juvenile justice system –as per guideline 1	- Issue cannot be addressed by CEPAC/CRN - Children under 22 are not charged provided they were still under 18 when they joined or were abducted - Depending on the atrocity committed the 22-24-year olds might be placed under the juvenile justice system – restorative justice applied in such cases

Figure 30: Summary of guideline 9 observations

The recommendations within this guideline which CEPAC/CRN was aware of and pursued with great fervor were recommendations 9.3 (*RR programs to adopt the restorative justice principle and be applied always in the best interest of the child*) and 9.6 (*Use local approaches and traditional healing mechanisms*). Besides providing the demobilization certificates, CEPAC/CRN worked closely with the community leaders to sensitize them to the notion of restorative justice. Such sensitization included explaining the purpose of the CTO program, explaining how the 3-month stay cleansed and purified the child. While CEPAC/CRN is a Pentecostal network and was therefore applying Christian values, such as repentance, remorse, forgiveness and atonement in their programs and activities, the program

[497] MONUC Child Protection Officer, interview, October 12, 2007.
[498] Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimbutu, interview, October 5, 2007.

was aware of the diversity of religious and indigenous beliefs.[499] As such, it attempted to rectify possible animosities towards children by teaching the notion of healing and using local approaches and comparing the traditional healing mechanism with the activities performed by the program. CEPAC/CRN's implementation of the recommendation 9.6 had a positive response. In some cases, reintegration agents confirmed that additional rituals and ceremonies were requested and performed by the elders upon the return of the child; however, these occurred rarely in the communities where CEPAC/CRN worked, since about 70% of the population was Christian.[500]

It should also be mentioned, that the implementation of the guidelines 3 and 4 contribute towards developing alternatives to achieve healing and restorative justice within the communities. As such, because CEPAC/CRN could not implement many of the recommendations of the guideline 9, its work with the families and communities was even more important as it needed to be designed in such a way to introduce the juvenile justice concepts adopted by the national legislature.

V. Conclusion

The chapter presented the case study conducted in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, analyzing the rehabilitation and reintegration program run by CEPAC/CRN. It could be observed that CEPAC/CRN coordinated on multiple levels with the national and international stake holders, as well as with local leaders to implement its objectives. Due to this coordination of effort it was aware of the most international guidelines and their recommendations. In a few cases however, as was shown in the guideline 7, while complying according to the training and directive of the national government and the international stake holders, the local staff was not aware of the proper terminologies, or the international documents and standards. In other cases, their activities, while reflecting the recommendations, were more a result of a self-made, intuitive construct, which evolved through experience and existed even before CEPA/CRN was encouraged to apply the

[499] World Factbook, "Congo, Democratic Republic of – Religion," Central Intelligence Agency, www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html (accessed September 11, 2010). According to the CIA World Factbook 50% of the population is Roman Catholic, 20% of the population is Protestant, with 30% of population equally distributed among Kimbanguist, Muslim, syncretic sects and indigenous beliefs.

[500] Edmond Pinos, interview, October 12, 2007; Aime Noel, interview, October 12, 2007; Reintegration agents, interview, October 11-12, 2007; Vayana and Mabuku Children's Clubs teachers, interview by author, October 9-12, 2007.

recommendation in its program by the international or national entities. Such was the case with the guideline 6.

In addition, the observations and the analysis showed that successful implementation of the guidelines did not automatically require successful implementation of all the recommendations within that guideline. In fact, it could be observed that implementation of all recommendations within a guideline was often not possible, as guidelines provided a list more comprehensive than what local NGOs can be mandated to do in a community and a region. In addition, the comprehensive list provides a wide range of areas, which require greater resources than what an NGO such as CEPAC/CRN is able to afford. However, exactly because they did not implement all of the recommendations within each guideline, the case of CEPAC/CRN's program showed that it is not necessary for a program to infinitely prolong them all in order to be successful in its rehabilitation and reintegration work. Even more, the case showed that there were guidelines and recommendations which bear more importance to successful rehabilitation and reintegration of children than others, and that programs should be carefully tailored to address them resourcefully and efficiently. Such was the case of the guidelines 3 and 4, addressing the networking and support within and through families and communities, as well as guideline 8, discussing education and vocational efforts. In addition, it was recognized that guideline 2, while not within the direct responsibility of CEPAC/CRN leadership, was an important vehicle to coordinate and achieve success in implementation of other guidelines.

Just as success did not depend on the implementation of all recommendations within a guideline, the success did not occur by solely fulfilling all of the recommendations. It was observed that while CEPAC/CRN invested much energy in the implementation of the recommendations in the guidelines 3, 4, 7 and 8, their programmatic interpretation still led to partial deficiency, caused by various variables. An example of this could particularly be observed in the recommendations 3.3 (*Assist family with social support*), 4.5 (*Support local initiatives*), 4.6 (*Assist communities in conflict management*), 4.8 (*Support development of (re-) recruitment prevention programs and community-based initiatives*), 7.2 (*Develop socio-economic and livelihood incentives*), 8.1 (*Develop age-appropriate and cat-up educational programs*), and 8.4 (*Do not provide training in jobs which are hazardous or not needed in the labor market*). While it would be wrong to say that CEPAC/CRN failed, these recommendations have been identified as vital contributors towards rehabilitation and reintegration of children, and would need further adjusting to be fully and successfully

implemented in the region. As the discussion showed, some of these recommendations would also require support of the national and international actors, alongside CEPAC/CRN's programming changes (for example 8.4) to be truly effective. But, local NGOs such as CEPAC/CRN can contribute to that by shifting their focus or coordinating with other institutions and NGOs, to widen out the aspects or the RR work which they cover. A successful example of such coordination was observed in the implementation of the guideline 6. The RR program in Beni did not have facilities to provide medical assistance for any serious injuries, as well as to address any health and mental issues. But, through its regional network and coordination, it utilized other available resources in the region to address any these issues promptly. Another example of such coordination was observed in the implementation of the guideline 5, and in the efforts to coordinate with Save the Children, MONUC and other NGOs in the region to address the special case of the girl child. In fact, the vigor with which CEPAC/CRN addressed the recommendations pertaining to the situation of the girl child was exemplary. Realizing that a local NGO will also have its own set of biases and traditional prejudices, the program worked through its biases in the favor of the gender sensitive issues. CEPAC/CRN's efforts to include women, and give them responsibilities and leadership, to empower the girls and provide each of them with a sort of immediate bread-winning opportunities by providing sewing machine and starter kits, and by allowing the girl mothers to participate in the vocational training, even if that meant bringing the children to the Children's Club, can be viewed as a positive lobby to raise the awareness of gender based discrimination which still persists in the region and to change attitudes.

It should also be noted that CEPAC/CRN's interpretation of certain recommendations pointed out the interdependent nature of the recommendations and how the recommendations could be jointly implemented to achieve more results with the same amount of energy and resources. This was especially shown through the activities at the Children's Clubs, which contributed towards guideline 4, guideline 7, and guideline 8 at the same time. This is why in reverse, deficiency of the program in implementing one of the core recommendations or guidelines can also slow down the success of other guidelines, as was observed with the recommendation 3.6 (*Conduct regular follow-up*). In the case of CEPAC/CRN this one weak point in the program created a domino effect, not because of a lack of reporting and statistical data to be presented to the national and international bodies, but because the program did an excellent work to build up young people, to provide them with positive role models and to instill in them attitude change, which subconsciously also led to emotional connectivity and

dependence, only to cut from the gained positive influences too sudden.[501] Once children were back in their communities, the sudden removal of CEPAC/CRN staff and no opportunities for contact led to frustration and challenges in the community. As such, this recommendation could also affect recommendations within the guidelines 3 and 4, but also in 7. In addition, while not the most important aspect of the recommendation, regular follow-up could provide more exact statistical data, which is currently lacking, especially in the case of the Eastern DRC region.[502] Lack of accurate information also hinders the appraisal process of the progress and effectiveness of the CEPAC/CRN's RR initiatives and its further development on a programmatic, national and international level.

Finally, it should be remembered that with the resources and the knowledge base, there is only so much CEPAC/CRN can do alone in the region. With the nature of the conflicts in the region, CEPAC/CRN can act as band-aid, but it also depends on the more active involvement of the national authorities to achieve peace, and allow for a revival of the educational and socio-economic infrastructure. CEPAC/CRN gave its best efforts to be a remedy to at least a handful of children and their respective communities, but it was not the panacea nor was it equipped to be the solution itself.

[501] Gro Bockmann Randby, interview by author, October 4-5, 2007.

[502] Achvarina and Reich, "No Place to Hide," 127: In the opening paragraph, they use the wording "estimates at the time suggested"; Kostelny, "What about the Girls?," 37: Kostelny gives an estimate of 30 to 40 % of child soldiers being girls; Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 57: authors use the estimation given by the Human Rights Watch, which circulates in many other documents – 30.000 child soldiers in this article in Uganda alone. Wessells uses the same statistic for the global account, having taken it from other published articles, see Wessells, "Child Soldiers, Peace Education and Post-conflict Reconstruction for Peace," 363. Having a complete statistical record of actual recruits is to an extent an impossible task, as many armed groups abduct children on weekly basis. Without being able to enter into their camps, the UN and its associated organizations do not have an access to that data. However, finding the exact data on the actual numbers of children rehabilitated and reintegrated throughout different programs, though a daunting task, could be achieved if a proper framework was developed and installed in the region.

Chapter 4
Case Study: Give Me a Chance (GMAC) Northern Uganda

"The best way to get these children out of the war is to give their lives a meaning and to provide them with tools to succeed."[503]

Robert Otema Amolo

I. Introduction

The previous chapter showed some of the challenges present in a specific program for rehabilitation and reintegration of children in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The program analyzed was a local initiative supported by a regional network. Linking local, national and international efforts, the program attempted to produce the best possible RR in the region.

To help the assessment of the effectiveness of the international guidelines and standards, this chapter will add to the information already gained by presenting a second case study, which was conducted in Northern Uganda with the *Give Me a Chance* (GMAC) non-profit organization. The collection of information and the conduct of interviews to learn more about the GMAC Kasese transit center took place in October 2007, followed by observations of the GMAC Kalongo rehabilitative and reintegration vocational training center in July 2008.

As in the previous chapter, there are two main parts of the chapter. First, background information and the overall structure of the GMAC program will be outlined. This will then be followed by the analysis of the implementation of the nine guidelines and their recommendations.

During the data gathering stage in 2007, interviews were conducted with 3 transit center staff members, the Kasese coordinator and the GMAC National Program Director. During the observations in 2008 in the village of Kalongo, in addition to the interviews with the GMAC National Program Director, it was possible to conduct open-ended interviews with the director of the GMAC Kalongo program for vocational training, two regional coordination officers, 5 GMAC Kalongo center teachers, and 2 CRN Norway staff. In addition to these interviews, participated in various classes and training activities during the week took place. Throughout this participation, daily conversations with the learners in the program took place, in addition to 7 formal interviews, always in the presence of their teacher and the regional

[503] Robert Otema Amolo, GMAC Kalongo Director, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, July 4, 2008.

coordinator. Finally, an interview with one young adult boy who had gone through the GMAC program and owned a small business was conducted. To protect the identity of those who wished to remain anonymous, only initials will be provided in the text.

II. Background

Following Kampala's road in a north-northeast direction, it is easy to observe the invisible border which divides Uganda into two halves, one that has lived in relative peace and the other that has experienced destruction, abduction and continued turmoil in the past two decades.[504] This invisible line tells the story of the country quite vividly. The territory to the south, once inhabited by the Buganda kingdom, was colonized by the British Empire in the late 1880s.[505] During their colonial rule, the British expanded the territory, incorporating the lands of other conquered tribes and imposing a "degree of stability" among the warring clans and tribes.[506] Knowing that the Acholi and Langi, who occupied what is now north Uganda and south Sudan, were fierce warriors, the British drew a line between today's Sudan and Uganda in the middle of both the Acholi and Langi land to weaken them and appointed officials from the "most advanced tribe," Baganda, to rule the colony.[507] However, the northerners did heavily populate the British military, which granted them a certain status and created a general peace among the tribes during the British colonial period. When Uganda gained its independence in 1962, the British attempted to institute democracy by placing officials from both the southern and the northern tribes in administrative posts, an act which was short lived. Milton Obote, a Langi from the north, overthrew the president in 1966, ushering in the dictatorial reign of the country.[508] Obote employed many officers and soldiers from the Langi and Acholi during his reign in order to control the fury of the Baganda, who sought to establish the Buganda kingdom again. While they enjoyed Obote's protection during his reign, when Obote was overthrown in 1971, Idi Amin ordered that all Langi and Acholi officers be massacred.[509] While Amin's attempt to eradicate all northern officers was partially

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[504] Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck and Eric Stover, "Abducted: The Lord's Resistance Army and Forced Conscription in Northern Uganda," *Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkley and Payson Center for International Development, Tulane University* (2007), Executive Summary.

[505] Embassy of the Republic of Uganda, Washington DC, "A Brief Political History of Uganda," Embassy of the Republic of Uganda, http://www.ugandaembassy.com/about.html (accessed September 8, 2010); Dowden, *Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles*, 40.

[506] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 26.

[507] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 26; Dowden, *Africa: Altered States, Ordinary Miracles*, 40. Baganda is the term used to describe the member of the Buganda clan.

[508] Embassy of the Republic of Uganda, "A Brief Political History of Uganda."

[509] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 28.

done to win the favor of the southern Baganda, it was done out of fear of a possible coup. The "Acholi War," which has destroyed infrastructure and killed thousands in the past 25 years, was born as a consequence of this act of massacre.[510] Feeling that they have been treated unjustly, the Acholi and Langi formed a Uganda's National Liberation Army (UNLA), assisting Museveni and overthrowing Amin in 1979. Despite all of their efforts, however, the UNLA continued to see conspirators everywhere, torturing and killing thousands of civilians.[511] The UNLA's struggle for recognition and their grievances gave rise to a new style of leadership, namely that of spiritual mediums.[512] When Museveni disregarded the agreement reached with them and attempted to disarm and demobilize them, the Acholi saw this as an act of treason and felt confirmed in the 'visions' of their spiritual leaders.[513] Driven out of the capital, the Acholi retreated to their native north, forming anti-government groups to wage their "holy" war in the northern territory. The most prominent of these, which "by [the] 1990's [was] the only significant armed unit still fighting in the Acholi homelands," is the notorious Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a spiritualist rebel group led by Joseph Kony.[514] Until the LRA was forced to hide out in the forests of the neighboring DRC and Central African Republic in 2007, they operated mainly in the north from bases located in northern Uganda and southern Sudan.[515] Still seeing conspirators everywhere, and feeling that the Acholi have failed to support their war, the LRA has abducted an estimated 24,000 to 38,000 children, often as young as 7 year old.[516] In addition, the LRA has been responsible for the displacement of tens of thousands of people, mainly in the districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader, all in the north of the country. This is why when one reaches the Pader District, the long drives, frequent bumps and dirt roads are travelled mostly by the UN and international

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[510] UNICEF Child Protection Officer, interview by author, Kampala, Uganda, September 29, 2007. The term 'Acholi War' is often used in the south to describe what is happening in the northern part of the country. A general lack of interest or involvement on the part of people talked to on the streets of Kampala could be observed during the field trips in 2007 and 2008.

[511] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 29.

[512] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 29.

[513] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 30-33.

[514] Pham, Vinck and Stover, *Abducted: The Lord's Resistance Army and Forced Conscription in Northern Uganda*, 5; Allen, *Trial Justice*, 39; Thomas Harlacher, "Traditional ways of coping with consequences of traumatic stress in Acholiland," (PhD diss., University of Freiburg, Switzerland, 2009), http://ethesis.unifr.ch/theses/downloads.php?file=HarlacherT.pdf (accessed October 6, 2010).

[515] International Crisis Group, "Northern Uganda: The Road to Peace, with or without Kony," *Africa Report* No.146 (2008). The Juba Peace Process, which started in 2006 did not bring the hoped results, however, the national military was able to push the LRA out of the country. Still, as of July 2008 the peace in the north was fragile and LRA continued to abduct and to kill in the regions neighboring northern part of the country.

[516] Pham, Vinck and Stover, *Abducted: The Lord's Resistance Army and Forced Conscription in Northern Uganda*, 3. The estimate through the statistics collected from the reception and transit centers in Uganda as of April 2006.

nongovernmental and humanitarian aid agencies. The picture does not change anywhere in the northern, north-eastern and north-western countryside, all regions where the LRA is known to have attacked.

The IDP camps and transit and reception centers dot the landscape of the northern townships such as Kasese and Kalongo.[517] Kasese, home to 670,000 people scattered in smaller communities, is set at the foot of the Rwenzori Mountains in the north-west of Uganda.[518] The proximity to the border with the DRC makes Kasese an important stop in the DDR activities. Protected by the mountain chain, Kasese received many children who managed to escape from armed groups in both the DRC and Uganda. Kalongo, on the other hand, with a population of approximately 330,000 people, is in the middle of the Pader district in the north of the country.[519] Though before the conflict, it had become an important township and a hideout for those running from the LRA. This was mainly due to the presence of a hospital run by a Catholic Mission since the 1960s, which served as a fortress and sanctuary during the escalations with the LRA, affording shelter and protection to the locals and many others in the northern region.[520] Because of its protective infrastructure, Kalongo housed one of the largest IDP camps in the region, sheltering hundreds of people, including the night commuter children.[521]

At the time the observations were conducted, Kalongo was learning to adjust to the newly achieved peace. Though there had been almost no insurgences and attacks from the

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[517] Sometimes also refered to as Kalonga or Karongo.

[518] Kasese District Information Portal, "Kasese at a Glance," Uganda Communication Commission, http://kasese.go.ug/index.htm (accessed October 4, 2010).

[519] Mary McLoughlin, "Crisis in Northern Uganda," *The Goal Post* 4 (2004), http://www.goal.ie/GOALPost/GOALPost05.pdf (accessed October 4, 2010). The number of IDPs has halved since 2006, as there were approximately 36,000 IDPs in Kalongo end of 2006, whereas about 15,000 were still registered and remaining in the Kalongo village area in June 2008. Information received in conversation with GOAL Kalongo Project Manager, Chris Wadler, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, June 30, 2008.

[520] Dr. Ambrosoli Hospital and Mission staff, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, June 29-30, 2008. Robert Otema Amolo, interview.

[521] Gulu town has the highest IDP population in the region, however has not received a status of an IDP camp since the IDPs integrated into the fiber of the town's infrastructure. While Kalongo also has integrated their IDPs into the infrastructure, there are small concentrated pockets of camps manned by international organizations, which allow Kalongo to claim the IDP camp status. In addition to IDPs, the village received a number of regular night commuters, children who would come from communities deep in the bush and seek protection in the Mission during the night to avoid being abducted. Some of these children would walk miles to sleep at the shelter and then walk back home early morning to do their chores. See BBC News, "Photo Gallery on Night Commuters in Northern Uganda," BBC News, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/picture_gallery/05/africa_night_commuters/html/1.stm (accessed January 13, 2010). See also Allen, *Trial Justice: The International Criminal Court and the Lord Resistance Army*, 54-55.

LRA since 2006, IDPs feared returning to their lands and homes, making Kalongo in particular a very lively and crowded village.[522]

III. Program conducted by Give Me a Chance (GMAC)/ Christian Relief Network (CRN)

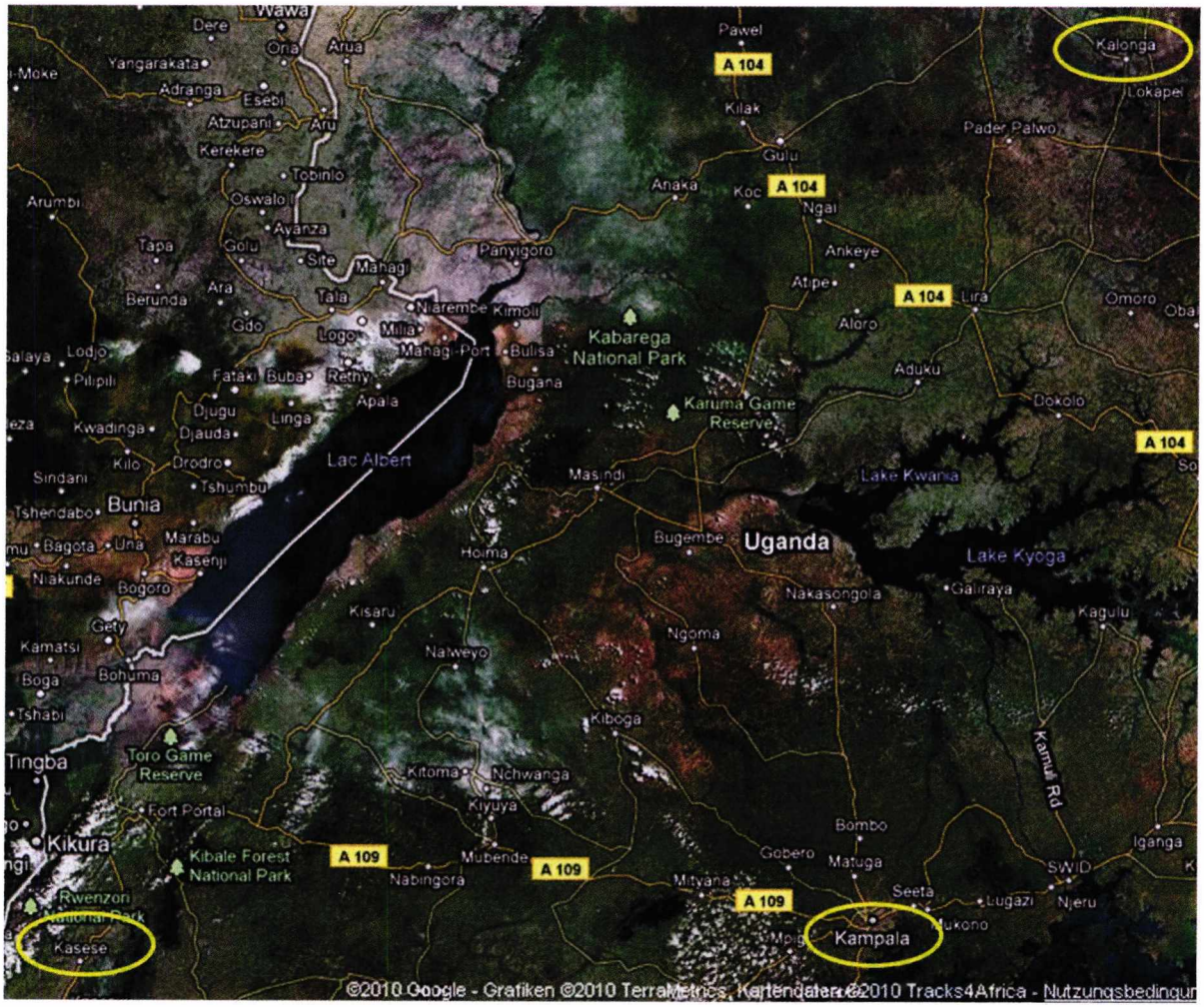

Figure 31: Map of Uganda and the locations where GMAC has its rehabilitation and reintegration programs. Maps courtesy of Travelblog, org and Googlemap, taken 29 February 2010.

Partnering with the CRN since 1997, GMAC's primary goal is to "promote the wellbeing of disadvantaged children and orphans in Uganda."[523] As such, GMAC's activities and programs cater to helping and working with the children in conflict with the law, running diverse rehabilitation and reintegration programs for those associated with non-state armed

[522] Pham, Vinck and Stover, *Abducted: The Lord's Resistance Army and Forced Conscription in Northern Uganda*, Executive Summary; for more detailed information on the history of the reigon, see also Allen, *Trial Justice*.

[523] Christian Relief Network. "Local Partners: GMAC," CRN, www.crn.no (accessed February 20, 2010).

groups, and conducting HIV/AIDS lobbying and sensitization work. Operating out of Kampala, GMAC covers the entire country, placing specific time-bound programs in the areas which need them the most. Such needs are identified through proposals and in coordination with the local GMAC chapters and the local authorities.[524] The organization has also set up several permanent programs in Kampala itself, mainly helping youth in conflict with the law, and in Jinja, where they assist females in conflict with the law. As was the case with CEPAC, CRN identified GMAC as a partner in 1997 and has since supported their work. While funding and monitoring progress on the ground, CRN does not prescribe how GMAC should conduct its work. The structural chain which GMAC and CRN form can be seen in Figure 12.

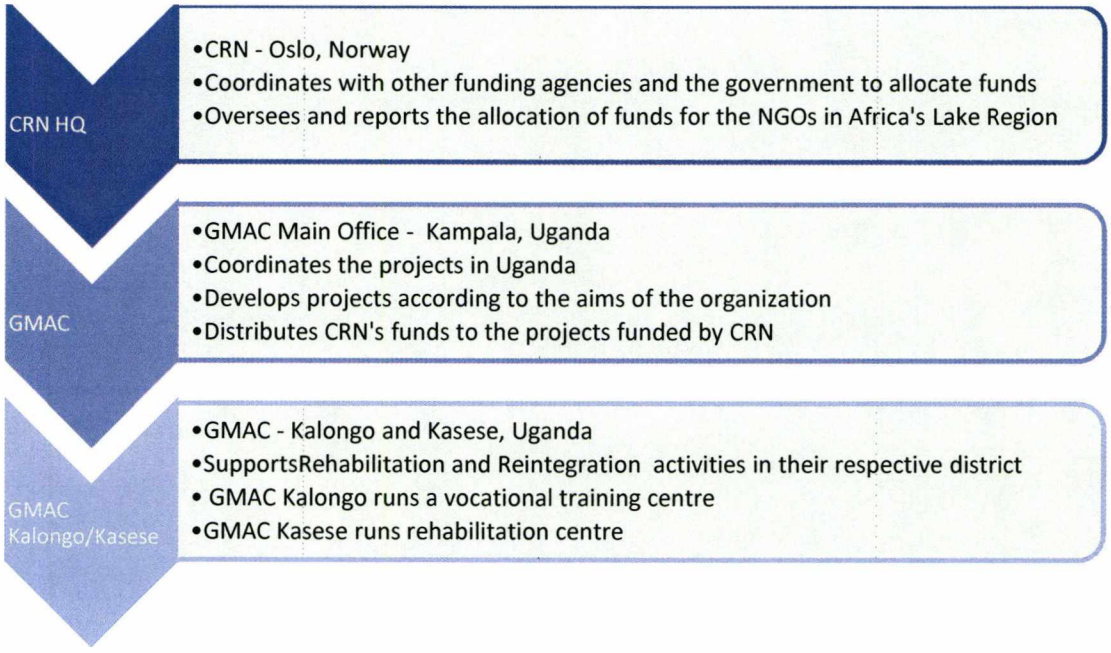

Figure 32: The chain structure of the program –Funded by the Norwegian NGO CRN, GMAC is a national NGO with programs that have a specific initiative and are supported on a local level.

The GMAC rehabilitation and reintegration program

Next to its permanent activities in Kampala and the area, GMAC manages time-bound and topic-specific programs. Such programs were the reception center in Kyanjuki, a tiny village next to Kasese, and the vocational training center in Kalongo, both specializing in work with children returning from the LRA.[525] These centers represented a network of

[524] Kenneth Kamese, GMAC founder, National Director, interview by author, Kampala, Uganda, September 27, 2007; Kenneth Kamese, interview by author, Kampala, Uganda, 27 July 2008.
[525] Kenneth Kamese, interview, October 2, 2007.

different rehabilitation and reintegration centers present in the northern Uganda. In addition to these programs managed by GMAC, UNICEF coordinated with various local NGOs, such as AVSI and GUSCO in Lira, Pader, Pujule and Gulu, in order to accommodate all of the returning children.[526] The influx of returnees in all of the rehabilitation and transit centers was high during the Juba peace talks from 2005 to 2006. However, by mid-2007, most of the centers had closed down because the LRA moved outside the country and any initiative towards demobilization of children with the LRA became difficult due to a sudden decrease in the number of children returning.[527] As such, the center in Kyanjuki/Kasese was operational until the end of 2007.[528]

The Kalongo vocational training center was set up by Robert Otema Amolo. As a secondary teacher, Robert knew "the ability which education has to change the mindset of young people for better" and wanted to provide some sort of training to the children returning to the north from the LRA.[529] The program started providing training in early 2007 and was operational until end of 2009.[530]

Because both the Kyanjuki/Kasese and Kalongo programs were far apart from the main office, GMAC employed regional coordinators who communicated with the local chapters and community authorities to ensure a standardized approach to GMAC's activities.

Reception (Transit) Center

In coordination with the national government and international entities such as the Amnesty Commission and UNICEF, all NGOs in northern Uganda set up their rehabilitation and transit centers to follow a similar pattern. As such, the GMAC reception center was designed to take children in for a period of 2 to 6 weeks, and at times up to 3 months. The staff also indicated that severe health and trauma cases were kept at the center until children were

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[526] UNICEF Child Protection Officer, interview, September 29, 2007.

[527] Save the Children Officer, interview by author, Kampala, Uganda, September 30, 2007. The officer was involved with the coordination of the release of children and women from the LRA's ranks in the lieu of the Juba peace talks.

[528] Kenneth Kamese, interview, July 2, 2008; Center for Health and Social Development, *Review of Christian Relief Network and Project supported through Christian Relief Network finances by Norway in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda*, (Oslo, N.p., 2002).

[529] Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 4, 2008.

[530] Robert Otema Amolo, e-mail, received April 27, 2010. The center closed in October 2009 because of lack of funds, as well as due to a general drop of returning children. As of April 2010, there are efforts in Uganda to adopt everyone into the school system - Kalongo Center is planning to utilize the facilities as a library and outreach center for the youth.

well enough to return to normal civilian life, even if it meant a stay beyond 3 months.[531] The center rehabilitated up to 150 children within a 12 month period, with girls constituting less than 10% of the participants. Out of these children, most were ages 11 to 18, with the youngest child being 9 years old and the oldest 18. Due to the basic infrastructure, the center housed girls and boys in separate dormitories but involving them equally in all of the recreational and programmatic activities.[532] A daily routine at the center included cleaning chores, games and sports, therapy, and classes, such as basic math, reading and writing.[533]

Staff reported that they felt the facilities were sufficiently equipped to accommodate all the children at any given time and that the safety measures were upheld in such a way that no staff member felt in danger at any given time.[534] However, no information could be solicited whether staff had any challenges or behavior issues with the children at the center. It should be noted that the center did not only employ formally trained and educated social workers but also had teachers who taught basic classes and did some skills training with the children as part of the rehabilitation curriculum and a psychologist who conducted individual therapy with the children in the program's beginnings.[535] This practice was later discontinued by a government directive and as a direct result of insufficient funds.[536]

Gender sensitive issues were addressed through individual therapy with each girl and through awareness-building activities in the community and at the center. The staff reported that in parallel to conducting rehabilitation work with the children, they conducted sensitization work with the communities in attempts to solicit more community participation in the rehabilitation efforts but felt that there was a general lack of interest.[537] In addition, once the families were traced, they were encouraged to participate in the rehabilitation of their children, visit them regularly, and take part in sensitization workshops.

Family Tracing and Reunification

During the demobilization process, national authorities and international agencies, such as the Amnesty Commission and the International Red Cross that specialized in tracing activities, collected basic information which allowed them to initiate the tracing of the family

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[531] APD, BUGE, JLDFP (full name withheld) social workers at the Rehabilitation Center Kasese, questionnaires, received September 28, 2007.
[532] See footnote 532.
[533] See footnote 532.
[534] See footnote 532.
[535] JLDFP questionnaire, received September 28, 2007.
[536] See footnote 532.
[537] See footnote 532.

and relatives of the child. This basic information was a determining factor to which rehabilitation or transit centers the child could be sent, as children were usually sent to the centers in the vicinity of their communities.[538] Additional information was gathered once they were received into the reception center to gain as much information as possible about the child's background. This information was then forwarded to the agencies to aid their tracing efforts. The reception center had limited influence and insight into the tracing efforts. However, once the family was traced, the center involved them in the reunification and sensitization efforts that were conducted at the center. Having the opportunity to visit with the child every week allowed for monitoring of progress and helped families and children to work through any issues or concerns with the support of trained staff members. The staff commented that families took keen interest in the program but sometimes because of expectations of cash rewards, which the Amnesty Commission distributed through the programs to the holders of the Amnesty Certificate.[539] No information was available whether the program discontinued such practices before the center closed down.

Community Based Reintegration Activities

The mandate of the GMAC Vocational Training Center (VTC) set in the Kalongo community was very straight forward. Its main goals were to provide vocational training to the children and young adults who had lost years of education through their involvement with the LRA and to further their rehabilitation and socio-economic reintegration into the community.[540] Because the center covered 19 sub-counties, coordination with the local authorities and community leaders was crucial to identify returnees which could not participate in regular school programs because of their age or the length of absence from school. Most of the children sent to the VTC had gone through one of the rehabilitation or transit centers in northern Uganda, but some were also auto demobilized and vulnerable children, or IDPs, in the area.[541]

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[538] UNICEF Child Protection Officer, interview, September 29, 2007; UNICEF Program Manager Gulu, interview by author, Gulu, Uganda, July 12, 2008.

[539] APD, questionnaire, September 28, 2007. For other examples see also MDRP, "In Focus- Reinsertion: Bridging the Gap between demobilization and reintegration," MDRP, www.mdrp.org (accessed March 10, 2007); Jeannie Annan, Christopher Blattman and Dyan Mazurana, "The Survey of War Affected Youth," *Feinstein International Center, AVSI Uganda, UNICEF Uganda*, http://chrisblattman.com/projects/sway/ (accessed May 25, 2010). Certificate was given to the children who have been officially demobilized and rehabilitated through a transit or an interim center.

[540] Kenneth Kamese, interview, September 30, 2007; Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 4, 2008.

[541] Gloria L, GMAC Regional Coordinator, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, July 2, 2008.

The basic facilities used by the program were provided to GMAC by the Dr. Ambrosoli Hospital in Kalongo in hopes of establishing a permanent location where learners could stay during their training to avoid walking long distances to participate in the training every day. Because these facilities were very basic, with two barracks accommodating up to 50 children each, the program decided to separate female learners from male learners and offered a two-month training rotation cycle.[542] This way each training cycle catered and housed only one gender. In the two years that the training programs were running, the GMAC VTC trained approximately 475 boys and 395 girls, including 15 girl mothers.[543]

Figure 33: Barracks where learners stay during their training at the center (Courtesy of Robert Seidl). Photo taken 6 July 2008.

Once the community and the leaders identified the children from their communities for a training cycle, GMAC VTC staff consulted with the child upon entry into the program. Through the counseling, the staff was able to learn more about the child and to address any rehabilitation needs. In addition, the information allowed the staff to identify talents, skills, and possible interests of each child and suggest the appropriate vocation.[544] The training occurred on a voluntary basis and children were given two weeks time at the center to decide

[542] See footnote 542.
[543] Robert Otema Amolo, e-mail, received April 27, 2010.
[544] GMAC VTC teachers, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, June 30- July 6, 2008.

whether they wanted to continue with a certain vocation or change to a different class.[545] During the remaining 6 weeks, the teachers conducted intensive daily training. In addition, some classes manufactured items that were sold in the community or took specific orders in order to help children interact with the Kalongo community and learn the basics of small business management and entrepreneurship.[546] Six vocational classes were offered every cycle, namely welding, carpentry, brick-laying, bakery, and tailoring.

In addition to allowing intensive, all-day training, the stay at the center allowed the teachers to gain greater insight into the concerns and challenges the children and young adults were facing in their reintegration attempts and to address them. In casual conversations staff talked to children about their time with the LRA, offered advice on any challenges children were facing in their families and communities since their return, and helped them cope with the demands of civilian life. Grave concerns were forwarded to the regional coordinator who coordinated with the community leader to sensitize him to the issues and through him the family of the respective child. If the staff recognized any physical injuries, the center forwarded that child to the nearby hospital for treatment.

Since the center was located centrally, the GMAC VTC invited families to visit their children at the center and to observe their progress. It also encouraged the children to visit with their families on the weekends.

The staff working at the VTC was composed of 85% teachers and social workers who have received formal training and basic RR training, learning more about behavioral patterns, signs, and ways to recognize and deal with possible PTSD in their learners. In addition to the GMAC VTC director, only one other teacher was a local man, while the rest came from other regions in Uganda. One of the teachers had also worked at the GMAC reception center in Kyanjuki before he switched to this center and was familiar with the GMAC rehabilitation policies and activities.[547] Though the center was situated in the northern part of the country where Lwo is the most widespread language and took in mainly Acholi and some Langi children, the primary targets of the LRA's abduction, all communication at the center was conducted in English because most of the teachers did not speak Lwo. As some of the children neither spoke nor understood English, one teacher and other learners helped translate. At times, communicating was a challenge and required innovative approaches.[548]

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[545] GMAC VTC teachers, interview, June 30.July 6, 2008; Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 4, 2008.
[546] Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 5, 2008.
[547] Sowedi N. Welding Teacher, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, July 3, 2008.
[548] Angela X. Bakery Teacher, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, July 5, 2008.

Upon completing the training, the learners receive a certificate of completion and are sent back home. In coordination with the community leaders, the center often helps set up possibilities for the children to use the learning right away. This, however, was not always possible. In the past, the center had presented each child with starting tools, kits, or materials but had to discontinue this practice due to financial constraints. The GMAC VTC director expressed hope of obtaining additional funding, which would allow him to procure some material for the most needy and present it to them on a case-by-case basis as part of the follow-up activities.[549]

Follow Up and Monitoring

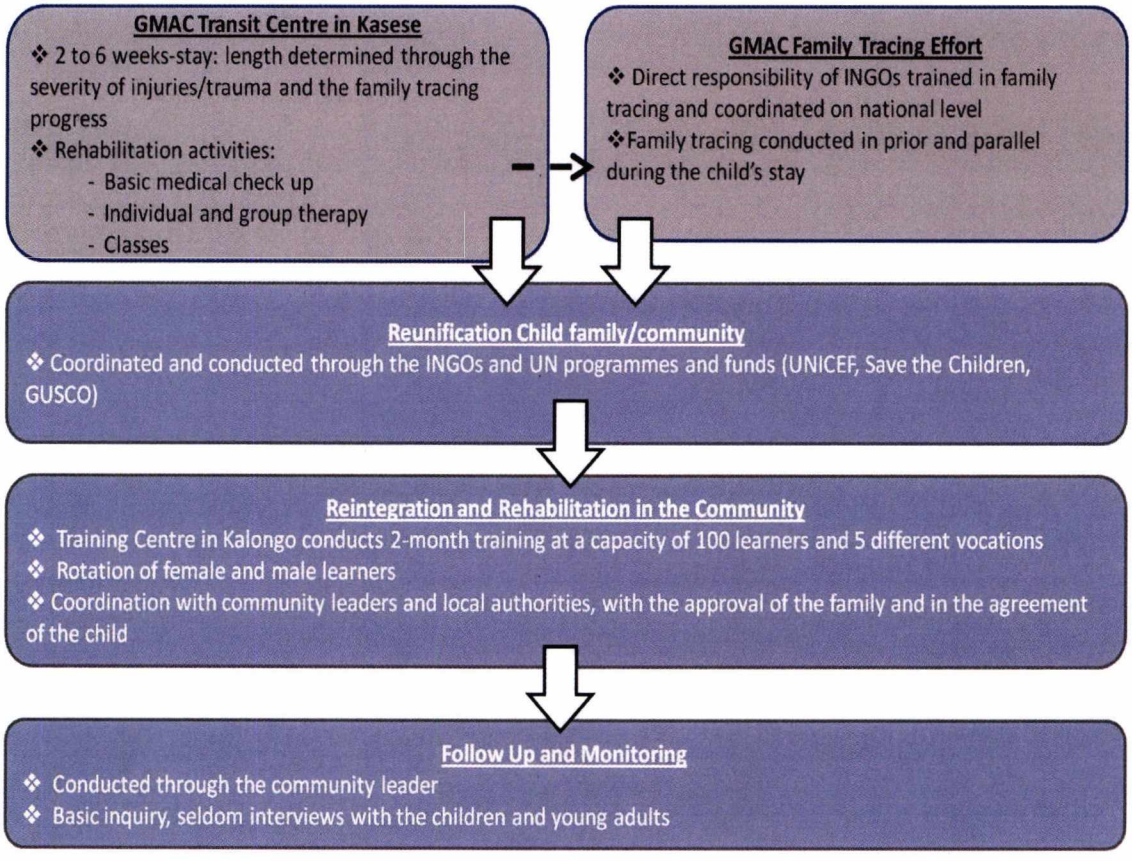

Figure 34: Summary of the structure and main activities of the GMAC rehabilitation and reintegration efforts

Both GMAC rehabilitation and the VTC program were designed to include follow-up every 4 to 6 months for at least a year after the completion of the training. This follow-up was

[549] Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 5, 2008.

to be conducted in addition to the regular updating in conversations with the leaders. However, the number of learners and the rotation speed made it challenging to keep up with follow-up activities as initially envisaged. Most follow-up occurred by inquiry through the community leaders without any systematic approach and at irregular intervals. As such it did not allow for any detailed information about the progress and the needs of each individual child that went through the GMAC vocational training.

IV. Case Study Analysis

The focus of this section will be on an analysis of the programs according to the guidelines and their recommendations. As could be seen from the brief description of the programs, there is limited implementation of guidelines in specific areas, such as in family tracing, medical assistance, and the juvenile justice system. As such, only a brief discussion of the elements implemented will take place.

Guideline 1: Set the age of a Child at 18, prohibiting all forms of recruitment for those Younger

As a signatory to the *CRC*, the government of Uganda places great value on education and supports the development of programs that go in hand with the parameter 1 of this guideline by involving youth up to the age of 18 in a variety of programs, as well as in academic and vocational opportunities.[550] All rehabilitation and reintegration programs in Uganda have adopted this notion; as such GMAC programs also included children up to age 18 in rehabilitative work, as per recommendation 1.1 (*Programs should include all children and youth below age of 18*) in addition to providing vocational training for children up to the age 26, as per recommendation 1.2 (*Programs should also cater to those between 18 and 24, where needed*). The GMAC staff recognized that the group between the ages of 18 and 25 was the most vulnerable in the northern region because it was born and raised during the conflict and had lost years of social behavior, childhood and formal education due to participation with the LRA, night commuting to safe zones, or because of displacement.[551] The teachers all confirmed that those most in need of vocational training were the returnees in the age ranges between 15 and 23 as most of them remained without any possibility of catching up their years

[550] Rita M. Byrnes, ed. *Uganda: A Country Study* (Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1990) http://countrystudies.us/uganda/35.htm (accessed April 12, 2010).
[551] Gloria L, interview by author, Kampala, Uganda, June 29, 2008.

of lost education.[552] This had many causes, such as the general breakdown of school infrastructure and the unavailability of schools in the areas they returned to, extremely long periods of absence from school or no school attendance during their lifetime at all.[553] Those who did not have any education or skills because they spent most of their life fighting with the LRA had a difficult time readjusting to civilian life and were the most troublesome group in the community. To combat these difficulties, the GMAC Kalongo program set a goal to provide vocational training to all young adults who wanted to participate up to the age of 26.[554] In discussions with the local and national authorities, as well as with the GMAC Main Office, their proposal was granted; however, neither the proposal nor the decision were made because of active knowledge of any other international guidelines besides the *CRC*, in this case particularly of the *IDDRS* recommendation to include the young adults ages 18 to 24 in youth RR programs.

	Set the age of a Child at 18, prohibiting all forms of recruitment for those Younger
1. Programs should include all children and youth below age of 18	- Reception center takes in children to age 18
2. Programs should also cater to those between 18 and 24, where needed	- VTC takes in children ages 15 through 26

Figure 35: Summary of guideline 1 observations

During the observations, it could be observed that most boys in attendance were between ages 17 and 22. The staff commented that on average 10 to 15% of program participants were young adults ages 22 through 26, while up to 85% of learners were ages 15 through 21. Only rarely did the center attempt to accommodate children younger than 12 because local authorities first did everything possible to place younger children into formal schooling programs. In the case of female learners, only 5 to 10% were older than 22; and very seldom were young adult females aged 25 accommodated by the program. The causes were multiple, starting with the fact that these girls were most often already mothers or were married, and when no community or family support was available, they were unable to attend the two-month training.[555] This will be discussed in more detail in the guidelines 5 and 8.

[552] See Save the Children Report "Rewrite the Future: Education for children in conflict-affected countries," *International Save the Children Alliance* (London: International Save the Children Alliance, 2006).
[553] UNICEF Child Protection Officer, interview, September 2007.
[554] Kenneth Kamese, interview, June 26, 2008.
[555] Gloria L, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, July 5, 2008.

It could be observed that the group of learners interacted well together despite their age differences, stating that life at the center was "so easy, as everyone is allowed to learn, and teachers and boys treat each other well."[556]

Guideline 2: Encourage Local, National and International Coordination of DDR Programs

The conflict in Uganda has been an internal conflict with a late spillover effect into neighboring countries due to the LRA's constant movement. Because of the LRA's complex nature and "political agenda," all negotiation, sensitization and coordination work with the LRA has been conducted through national channels with help from United Nations-affiliated and international organizations.[557] Though LRA officers engaged in discussions with individuals and private entities at times, the overall sensitization, disarmament and demobilization work was a dangerous task and therefore only reluctantly performed by smaller NGOs.[558] As a result of this, GMAC programs did not engage in official discussions with the LRA and left implementation of recommendation 2.2 (*Sensitization of non-state actors to be conducted as a joint effort*) to the national army. In addition, the implementation of recommendations 2.1 (*Coordination of DDR programs among the UN, specialized agencies and civil society*) and 2.6 (*Create special measures to achieve release and RR of girls)* was only applied in the RR coordination efforts with other NGOs and the INGOs in the area, as well as local authorities and communities.

Though GMAC programs did not have a leadership role in developing strategic links (see recommendation 2.4), they coordinated and reported their efforts to the other NGOs in the region, as well as the local community. The close working relationship with the local authorities could be observed in couple of instances. One example occurred while travelling to the village Kalongo. Passing through a sub-county which supplies youth to the training program, the local mayor saw the GMAC vehicle and recognized the regional coordinator in the car. He followed on bicycle because he wanted to discuss with her the upcoming plans and initiatives of the sub-county and get her opinion and advice. In addition, he wanted to inquire how the boys from his sub-county were doing, whether they were behaving and respecting their teachers, and ensure that there were open slots for an additional group of boys from his community in the next cycle of male learners. It was confirmed later on that such information

[556] Boy learners, James O, Okello F and Okello N, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, June 30, 2008.
[557] UNICEF Child Protection Officer, interview, September 29, 2007; Save the Children Officer, interview, September 30, 2007 ; Gulu District NGO Forum Director, interview by author, Gulu, Uganda, July 11, 2008.
[558] De Temmerman, *Aboke Girls*, 14, 15, 18, 23-25, 98-100.

sharing, communication and coordination with the local authorities and GMAC occurs regularly.[559] As such, the programs worked on implementing common approaches to further the rehabilitation and reintegration of the children in the region.

	Encourage Local, National and International Coordination of DDR Programs
1. Coordination of DDR programs among the UN, specialized agencies and civil society	- Coordination with specialized agencies such as Amnesty Commission, GUSCO, Save the Children and Int'l Red Cross - Meetings and coordination work with the local and regional authorities
2. Sensitization of non-state actors to be conducted as a joint effort	- Issue cannot be addressed by GMAC
3. Link between peace-building DDR programs and RR efforts, w/o dependency on the progress of the first	- Vocational program designed to sustain the peace-building initiatives by strengthening the RR and labor market in the region (see guideline 8) - Issue cannot be addressed by GMAC - Coordination of general DDR efforts conducted through the district officials and the military
4. Develop common approaches and strategic links	- Program takes no lead in development but coordinates all efforts with the local and regional authorities
5. Encourage participation of youth in decision-making process	- None observed
6. Create special measures to achieve release and RR of girls **See also Guideline 8**	- Release of girls not under jurisdiction of GMAC - Encouraging participation of girls in the RR program

Figure 36: Summary of guideline 2 observations

It should be noted that while GMAC followed the directive of the national and district authorities and coordinated with the other NGOs in the region, the coordination was not always successful as there was some rivalry present that caused friction and disrupted the work at times.[560] GMAC felt this friction in the beginnings to an extent and addressed it by involving different programs in order to split the work, so to speak. As such, GMAC involved other programs in their tracing and follow-up activities. At the time the interview with Robert was conducted, this coordination and inclusion was still in its beginning stages as it was challenging to develop the idea fully. He felt that the main difficulty was overcoming the struggle for resources and financial means to sustain programs, which led some NGOs to an

[559] Gloria L, interview, July 2, 2008.
[560] Kenneth Kamese, interview, October 15, 2007; GOAL Kalongo Project Manager, Chris Wadler, interview, June 30, 2008; Roger Bolton, Sponsor to the Gulu Orphanage and School, interview by author, Gulu, Uganda, July 12, 2010.

exclusionist approach.[561] Since there were not as many local NGOs present in Kalongo, the GMAC Kalongo program did not suffer as much as the GMAC Kyanjuki/Kasese program did.

Guideline 3: Family Tracing, Reunification and Support during RR Efforts

As mentioned above, it was not in the GMAC programs' mandate to implement most of the guideline 3 recommendations. Tracing and family reunification activities are coordinated with the transit centers but conducted by the national authorities and the International Committee of the Red Cross.[562] The GMAC rehabilitation program followed the general directive of the Amnesty Commission, the GMAC centers' partner, as was the case with other transit centers in the region. They collected all the information available about each child, which was then forwarded to the proper authorities to conduct further tracing and family sensitization efforts. As such, recommendation 3.1 (*Begin family tracing as soon as possible*), 3.3 (*If no immediate family - first search for extended family and relatives, then for foster home within the community, as a last options for foster home elsewhere*), and 3.8 (*Provide children with proper documentation*) were not addressed by GMAC. It should be noted that such coordination of effort, while a factor in the program not fulfilling all of the recommendations and guidelines, is viewed as contributing to the overall success of rehabilitation and reintegration. The division of tasks allows for better quality in implementation because it distributed the assignments according to skills and expertise and did not strain resources.[563]

However, while not directly involved in conducting tracing efforts, the GMAC reception center did offer workshops and counseling to the families once they were traced, inviting them to visit their children during their stay at the center.[564] The same invitation to visit and observe the children's progress was extended to the families and the communities in the VTC. This was a direct implementation of the recommendations 3.2 (*(Re) establish contact and an emotional bond with the family*) and 3.5 (*Conduct sensitization and training on how to deal with aggressive behavior within families*). If and when parents took the

[561] Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 4, 2008. In larger cities NGOs often covered similar areas of work, which led to competition for resources – the more children the program had the better financing and sponsorship it could hope to receive. The coordination through UNICEF helped only slightly, as UNICEF had no control over local organizations and entities, which were copy cats of each other – the locals soon realized that child RR programs received quick response through financial backing - many started a program as a means to earn a salary and support their family without proper training and familiarization with the demands of an RR program.
[562] Caroline Aloyu, UNICEF Child Protection Officer, interview by author, Gulu, Uganda, July 11, 2008; GUSCO Staff, interview by author, Gulu, Uganda, July 12, 2008.
[563] Caroline Aloyu, interview, July 11, 2008; GUSCO Staff, interview, July 12, 2008.
[564] APD, BUGE, JLDFP, questionnaires, September 28, 2007.

opportunity to participate in these relationship-building and trust activities, they provided an environment for the teachers to take the time to assess the family situation and to address any concerns which might be present.[565] Rehabilitation staff commented that these activities and visiting time were utilized effectively to discuss behavior, social and traditional etiquette, duties and responsibilities of parents and children, and to renew the bond between the child and the parent.[566] Such a centralized approach has its benefits as it allows the staff to focus on children and parents simultaneously without requiring additional resources or time allocation on the part of the staff. In addition, it can show parents' desire to help the rehabilitation process of the child. Even more, it allowed the child to approach parents in a neutral setting and sensitized the family to the healing and restorative justice concept prior to returning to the community. At the same time, however, it excluded community leaders from the process, which meant a possible loss of an important ally, a concept mentioned in chapter 2. Luckily, the local leadership has been involved in the RR efforts through other GMAC coordination activities. Finally, it could be questioned whether parents' motives were always pure. As indicated above, GMAC provided cash assistance to the families of the children they were working with at the center. Statements were made that families were frustrated and unsatisfied once the child was classified as rehabilitated and his or her case "terminated" because such termination meant that the program stopped providing the family with cash subsidies.[567] In discussions conducted independently with the transit centers in Gulu, similar confirmation was obtained. Further, it was confirmed that the activities at the center and the inclusion of the parents into the program was a directive and a programmatic design given to all the centers in northern Uganda by UNICEF Uganda and the Amnesty Commission.[568] As such, GMAC was following a general directive in implementing the international guidelines available at that time.

[565] Alex T, Bricklaying Teacher, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, July 5, 2008.
[566] Gloria L, interview, June 29, 2008; GMAC Regional Coordinator APD (full name withheld), interview by author, Kampala, Uganda, October 2, 2007.
[567] APD, questionnaire, September 28, 2007; Kenneth Kamese, interview, October 2, 2007.
[568] Caroline Aloyu, interview, July 11, 2008; GUSCO Staff, interview, July 12, 2008.

	Family Tracing, Reunification and Support during RR Efforts
1. Begin family tracing as soon as possible	- Tracing efforts coordinated through the national authorities, Amnesty Commission and Int'l Red Cross
2. (Re)establish contact and an emotional bond with the family	- Parents are able to come and visit children while at the reception center and participate in building a relationship of trust activities
3. If no immediate family- first search for extended family and relatives, then for foster home within the community, as a last options for foster home elsewhere	- N/A
4. Assist family with social support	- N/A
5. Conduct sensitization and training on how to deal with aggressive behavior within families	- During parents' visits to the reception center staff discusses important issues, such as health concerns, behavior changes, rights and duties - Basic awareness building and training how to work with specific cases prior to releasing a child to his/her family
6. Conduct regular follow-up	- Irregular follow up through the elders and the local leaders - Challenging to conduct individual follow-up as envisaged by the program
7. Consult families and children on their rights and duties	- See 2.5
8. Provide children with proper documentation	- N/A

Figure 37: Summary of guideline 3 observations

Finally, it should be noted that implementation of recommendation 3.6 (*Conduct regular follow up*) occurred sporadically due to the number of children and young adults who went through the programs and the general lack of personnel to accommodate everyone..[569] This, however, was not a deficiency of the GMAC reception center alone but was a programmatic structure which SWAY confirmed existed at the time in all reception centers as they all "offered very limited follow up care" to the returnees.[570] GMAC attempted communication with community leaders and was planning to involve other NGOs in jointly conducting more systematic, regular follow-up. But, at the time the observations were made, no such efforts were present and, considering that both programs closed within a year of when the observations were conducted, the only coordinated follow up was the information provided through community leaders.

Guideline 4: Community-Based Support and (re-)recruitment Prevention

GMAC programs, while not directly involved in the local initiatives of the individual communities, coordinated and supported their efforts the best they could. In addition, GMAC staff solicited the advice of and coordinated their programmatic efforts with community

[569] Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 4, 2008.
[570] Annan, Blattman and Mazurana, "The Survey of War Affected Youth."

leaders in order to most effectively utilize resources, target areas which had not been addressed by other NGOs, and achieve a long-lasting effect.[571] Through this coordination work, the program was also able to advertise its own objectives, coordinate the collection and rotation of learners, and to encourage community-based activities through their continued coordination work with community elders. As a result of this, it could be observed that the program in Kalongo implemented most of the recommendations in this guideline, in particular recommendations 4.1 (*Programs to be developed together with the community-coordination between NGOs and elders/leaders*) and 4.8 (*Support development of (re)recruitment prevention programs and community-based initiatives*). The importance of conducting coordination work with the communities has been instilled in the two GMAC RR programs through observations on the ground and in discussions with INGOs, such as UNICEF, during their initial set up.[572] Both programs mirrored the best practices of other programs and adopted the recommendations of the INGOs, sustaining the communities' authority. While the reception center received children as forwarded by the agencies dealing with demobilization of the children, the VTC discussed the list of candidates for vocational training with the community and the local authorities.[573]

It should be noted that the extent of the reception center's direct involvement with the communities was their joint presentation of workshops to help communities deal with conflicts that might arise upon a child's return (see recommendation 4.6). This meant that the program created a network with other programs in the area to conduct basic workshops. Such coordination efforts were helpful for two reasons. It saved resources and time, but even more importantly it showed that the program understood the challenges communities would be facing and wanted to provide them with some basic pointers how and where to get further help. As the joint effort included NGOs, which specialized in conflict management, GMAC's role was that of a mediator and an advocate on behalf of the child.[574]

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[571] Annan, Blattman and Mazurana, "The Survey of War Affected Youth."
[572] Annan, Blattman and Mazurana, "The Survey of War Affected Youth" ; Gloria L, interview.
[573] Gloria L, interview, June 29, 2008.
[574] APD, questionnaire, September 28, 2007; Kenneth Kamese, interview, October 2, 2007.

Community-Based Support and (re-)recruitment Prevention	
1. Programs to be developed together with the community-coordination between NGOs and elders/leaders	- All activities at the VTC agreed in prior with the community elders/authority - Coordinate with the local NGOs and the community leaders the list of learners for each group (incl. disabled, IDP, girl mothers)
2. Include youth in community programmatic development	- None observed
3. Assist community in setting up community-based child networks	- None observed
4. Conduct sensitization and training in the community	- Sensitization of local and nearby communities by allowing active involvement in the centers' daily events and activities
5. Support local initiatives	- Involve other vulnerable children and young adults in the program as per local communities initiative and request
6. Assist communities in conflict management	- Reception center involved with communities through basic workshops conducted in the community in coordination with other NGOs
7. Conduct long-term monitoring and follow-up through local leaders rather than individually focused monitoring	- Limited follow-up, not long-term in nature, but coordinated through the local leaders when it occurs
8. Support development of (re)recruitment prevention programs and community-based initiatives	- Inclusion of all vulnerable children in the training program - Active involvement in showing benefits of civilian life through training and livelihood incentives, positive feedback and care

Figure 38: Summary of guideline 4 observations

However, all of these efforts were only a small part of the activities envisaged by the guideline. For example, while conducting follow-up through community leaders and authorities rather than with individual children, as per guideline 7, it was already recognized that such follow-ups were not of a long-term or regular nature, and very seldom was there any monitoring on the progress of the child after they left the program. In a way, the word used by the reception center staff, "terminated," reflected the notion that the program moved on when a new group arrived to the center, and struggled to keep communication with the previous groups alive. Also, while supporting the initiative of the local communities to make an assessment of who should receive vocational training during each particular cycle was a fulfillment of the recommendations 4.1, 4.8 and 4.5 (*Support local initiatives*), it was only a partial fulfillment. GMAC had no influence on what went on in the communities and could not support local initiatives if there were none to support; however, the programs transferred all responsibility to the respective community leaders and concentrated only on influencing the small realm of psychosocial RR for the benefit of skilled vocational training.[575] While it could be observed that transferring such responsibility and coordinating follow-up with the leaders

[575] Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 4, 2008.

helped them grow, it was also observed that learners struggled and confirmed the importance of the programs "keeping in touch" with them at least "a while" after they were sent back to their communities.[576] One example in particular highlighted this issue. It was challenging for the VTC staff to provide any names of children and young adults that have gone through the training in order to conduct interviews. However, they contacted a 20-year boy who was in one of the first training cycles and since then has started working in a repair shop on the outskirts of Kalongo. Having attended the welding class, he seemed very happy to see the GMAC staff that accompanied me. In discussions he commented that he had a hard time adjusting, that he felt his training was so basic, and that he had many questions he wanted to ask the teachers now that he had some more practical experience, and he inquired shyly whether he could stop by the center to talk to them and sharpen some of his tools.[577] Though other interviews were not possible, it could be assumed that other children would have made similar statements. The regional coordinator commented after this experience that follow-up and monitoring was a great challenge because it strained the quality of the program. To avoid losing the focus of the program, GMAC chose to use community leaders and elders.[578]

Guideline 5: Special Case of a Girl Child

When the observations were conducted in summer 2008, it was not possible to obtain any information from the interviews conducted by returnee girls as the group present at the VTC was a boy group and the reception center had already closed at that time. As no observations and interviews with girls could be conducted, the thesis cannot fully confirm to what extent and how effectively the programs responded to the needs of a girl child unless it relies on the statements of the GMAC staff, both from the two RR programs and the Main Office. Considering the amount of resources utilized and number of programs designed by GMAC to advocate for women's rights, as well as the number of female employees in leadership

[576] Boy learners, James O, Okello F and Okello N, interviews, June 30, 2008; Boy HH (full name withheld), interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, July 7, 2008; Caroline Aloyu, interview, July 11, 2008; GUSCO Staff, interview, July 12, 2008; GOAL Project Staff, interviews, June 30, and July 2, 2008. Children and staff confirmed that the relationship with the teachers influenced how children coped with transitioning to civilian life. Sometimes people in their villages were apathetic and ignorant of children's needs. Staff also suggested that thecommunity leaders/local authorities could be at times overwhelmed with the responsibility they had towards all of the members of their community, making children disappear in this commission.
[577] Boy HH, interview, July 7, 2008.
[578] Gloria L, interview, July 7, 2008.

positions, it can be deduced that GMAC utilized the same effort to address RR needs of girls.[579]

Accommodating both girls and boys in the centers, programs attempted to create gender equality. In conversations with the teachers at the VTC, I was able to learn that in addition to the more traditional bakery and tailoring classes, the girls were as eager to learn welding, carpentry and brick-laying as the boys.[580] One of the teachers commented that the girls seemed to show greater willingness to learn and implement what they learned as many were single mothers and saw in the vocational training an opportunity to earn a better living for them and their children.[581] When asked what the girl mothers did with their children during the training, bakery class teacher Angela commented that they either left them with their families or the community members worked out an arrangement to accommodate them.[582] No matter what the circumstances, the elders utilized all resources available to allow the girls to take part in the training activities.[583] This short conversation showed that the program implemented recommendations 5.3 (*Include girl mothers in livelihood and vocational training programs*) and 5.6 (*Grant girls access to education and schooling and provide vocational training and income earning opportunities*) in coordination with the girl's community. A more detailed assessment of the general provision of income earning opportunities will be discussed in later guidelines.

In addition, GMAC led by example, employing female teachers, managers and program coordinators and giving them leadership responsibilities and encouraging them to act as role models in the community and especially as examples to the children at the center. Teachers such as Angela, who were strict but fair, showed girls and women in the community that their gender did not diminish their influence and role in the community. In fact, Angela served as a great role model to the women and the girls as she managed a big class of boys every two months, and each boy I spoke to in her class showed great respect and deep appreciation for her teaching skills, love and dedication toward the subject matter, and them as

[579] In 2007 the author followed the GMAC and CRN to the Women's Prison facility in Jinja, Uganda. In cooperation, GMAC and CRN provided a children's home at the facility to enable the women to see their children while in the prison. In addition, GMAC conducted a program to help facilitate lawyers to speed up the hearing process – due to the court system in Uganda, many hearings were backed up and many women had spent years in custody awaiting their hearing for possible crimes which were not punishable with prison stay.
[580] Alex T, interview, July 5-6, 2008; Sowedi N, interview, July 5-6, 2008.
[581] Sowedi N, interview, July 5-6, 2008.
[582] Angela X, interview, July 5, 2008.
[583] Gloria L, interview, June 29, 2008.

learners and individuals.[584] These statements confirmed that GMAC contributed to raising awareness of women's abilities and potential, thereby implementing recommendation 5.4 (*Conduct sensitization and empower women in the community*). The efforts to create gender equality and sensitization work have been the GMAC Main Office's prerogative since its inception, which also means even before some of the recommendations used to develop the comprehensive list were developed.[585] As such, the inclusion of girls in the programs, while partially conducted to fulfill the directives of international organizations such as UNICEF, Save the Children and World Vision, have also been conducted by GMAC as an individual effort to raise awareness of gender based violence and to create gender equality for both boys and girls.[586]

Special Case of a Girl Child	
1. Special attention to reunification needs of girl soldiers	- Coordinated with the agencies conducting family tracing - Needs addressed in coordination of vocational training learners with the community – assessment which girls would benefit from vocational training the most
2. Establish support programs to deal with emotional and physical consequences of rape	- Issue cannot be addressed by GMAC - Centers coordinate with other entities and local hospital to help treat rape injuries
3. Include girl mothers in livelihood and vocational training programs	- During the coordination with local authorities and the community, efforts made to identify all vulnerable girls and girl mothers in the training program, should they and their family agree - Arrangements met with the local leaders and the program staff what to do with the child of the girl learner during the training period
4. Conduct sensitization and empower women in the community	- Empowerment of girls could not be observed - Employ female staff and teachers to act as examples to the children and the community
5. Girls to benefit from the RR efforts	- GMAC programs cater to the girls the same way as to boys in all of their activities and programs
6. Grant girls access to education and schooling and provide vocational training and income earning opportunities	- Younger girls are encouraged to get formal education and schooling - VTC provides vocational training, however no tools or materials given at the graduation
7. Ensure confidentiality	- All conversations are kept confidential

Figure 39: Summary of guideline 5 observations

[584] Boy learners in the bakery class, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, July 2-6, 2008.
[585] Kenneth Kamese, interview, October 2, 2007.
[586] Kenneth Kamese, interview, June 29, 2008.

Guideline 6: Medical Assistance to Children with Disabilities and other Health/Physical RR Efforts

As mentioned earlier, while GMAC did not have its own medical staff or medical facilities to attend to serious injuries or health issues, the facilities of both programs were located close to health centers or hospitals and had standing arrangements with them for fee-free treatment.[587] In addition, the reception center in Kyunjuki had a psychologist and a medical nurse on site, and both were able to deal with minor cases of malnutrition, cuts and burns, and mental traumas.[588] Thus, through coordination they were able to implement recommendation 6.1 (*Provide child-focused basic health services in the communities and centers*).

Figure 40: Medical Complex situated in Kalongo. The VTC is situated within the complex (Photos taken July 2008).

During the observations it was noticed that many adults and children suffered severe physical injuries during the years of the conflict in the north. The LRA is known for its notorious brutality, and many limbless, earless or scalp-less Acholi people in Kalongo were living proof of that brutality.[589] In fact, there were a few boys among the learners in the VTC who displayed minor scars on their faces and arms, with one boy displaying a more severe scar from when part of his right forehead and scalp had been cut off.[590] As most learners come with such physical scars that have healed, no further medical attention is required. However, though the VTC program did not have any personnel with specialized medical training to

[587] Dr. Ambrosoli Hospital and Mission staff, interview. The hospital applied minimal fees for more severe cases, otherwise did not charge GMAC for its services.
[588] APD, questionnaire, September 28, 2007.
[589] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 42.
[590] The boy (name withheld) worked hard in the carpentry class and was well accepted by other boys. He was not mocked or ostracized by the other learners because of his scar. He seemed shy to speak about his past. Sowedi later explained that the boy was involved with the LRA, but that GMAC did not know much more.

address possible post traumas associated with the emotional and physical injuries of the returnees, the center itself was situated in the medical complex of the Dr. Ambrosoli Hospital, which provided support to GMAC with any health issues.[591] Often such support was to treat the consequences of rape or torture.

Rape in northern Uganda has a different context than it does in the neighboring DRC and should be briefly mentioned here. While rape is a widespread occurrence in the DRC as a consequence of the numerous different armed and rebel groups and the general lawlessness which reigns in parts of the eastern DRC, most cases of rape in northern Uganda result from the abduction of girls by the LRA to use them as "officers' wives."[592] Therefore, all girls who have been associated with the LRA, irrespective of the length of their association, have automatically received rape victim treatment in the transit or reception centers upon their release.[593] Such was the standard guideline given to all centers in Uganda by UNICEF and the government; it can therefore be concluded that any recommendation dealing with rape in this and the previous guidelines were fully implemented by the GMAC reception center, either through mediation and coordination with the health facilities available in Kasese or through treatments in the center by the medical nurse and the psychologist (such as recommendations 5.1, 5.2, 5.7 and 6.6 (*Provide clinical support to treat physical injuries of rape)).* Many of the cases were severe, since girls experienced continuous rape by one or multiple perpetrators and in many cases were infected with HIV/AIDS.[594] In addition to the physical injuries, the rape victims required special treatment because it was observed that they suffered from the Stockholm syndrome; having been given away as wives, the girls started identifying with their role and their perpetrator after certain time in bondage and hoped that their "husband" was coming to find them and build a better future with them somewhere else.[595] In addition to the consequences on the individual level, girls were often shunned as LRA "wives," and especially girl mothers and their children had to deal with prejudice and stigmatization by the collective.

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[591] Gloria L, interview, June 29, 2008; Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 6, 2008; Dr. Ambrosoli Hospital and Mission staff, interview, July 4-6, 2008.
[592] Caroline Aloyu, interview, July 11, 2008; GUSCO Staff, interview, July 12, 2008.
[593] Caroline Aloyu, interview, July 11, 2008.
[594] See footnote 593.
[595] See footnote 593; Rolf Köthke, "Das Stockhpolm-Syndrom: Eine besondere Betrachtung der Verhältnisse von Geiselnehmer und Geisel," *Praxis für Rechtspsychologie* (1999):78-85.

	Medical Assistance to Children with Disabilities and other Health/Physical RR Efforts
1. Provide child-focused basic health services in the communities and centers	- Both the center and the VTC coordinate with the health institutions in their area to provide children with basic health services - During their stay and training all medical issues covered by GMAC
2. Ensure adequate rehabilitative care, including prosthetic limbs, wheelchairs, reconstructive surgery (if possible) etc	- N/A
3. Prevent separation of children with disabilities and institutionalization of children (addiction, aggressive behavior)	- Children with disabilities are not separated, unless severe mental/physical disability
4. Support existing health services and improve response capacities to cases of HIV/AIDS, victims of rape, drug and alcohol abuse, etc	- See recommendation 6.1
5. Train staff to deal with more challenging cases	- 85% of staff employed by GMAC has received formal education (social workers and teachers) and has been trained to work with behavior challenging children, however transfer challenging cases to the hospital/health center
6. Provide clinical support to treat physical injuries of rape	- Issue cannot be addressed by GMAC, transfer cases of rape to the hospital/health center

Figure 41: Summary of guideline 6 observations

While cases of torture do not receive the same amount of stigmatization, these cases have often been quite severe and required special care and intervention. An example can illustrate this. Due to some fierce fighting in the region, the LRA believed that people were bicycling from village to village to inform the national army of their movement and responded by issuing a regulation that no one was to use any other means of transport but to walk. Anyone who was found on a bicycle was to be killed or maimed. In the vicinity of Kalongo, not many people had heard of the regulation, and when a man was met by a LRA patrol he was forced off the bicycle and another person passing by was forced to bite his leg off.[596] While GMAC was not equipped to deal with the long-term consequences of such acts, the program did not separate children with disabilities, thereby implementing the recommendation 6.3 (*Prevent separation of children with disabilities and institutionalization of children*

[596] Dr. Ambrosoli Hospital and Mission staff, interview, June 29-30, 2008; Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 6, 2008.

(addiction, aggressive behavior)), except that these cases were recognized as a threat to others in the centers (such as cases of severe mental traumas).[597]

GMAC associations with the hospitals enabled both programs to provide medical treatment. It should be noted that the programs mediated but had no self-sustaining programs for medical assistance and treatment. While some might observe this as a deficit of the program, this measure in fact benefited the program greatly. First, it ensured that all health cases were considered and treated by experts. Second, it alleviated the need for trained medical staff to be always present at the center, thus freeing resources for something else.

Finally, it should be noted that in either case, the location was chosen in coordination with the district authorities, as well as NGOs operating in the area. In the case of the GMAC VTC program, the provision of facilities within the hospital and Mission complex was a product of discussions but was not planned with an objective to ensure implementation of the international guidelines.

Guideline 7: Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects

All of the GMAC program activities focused on psychosocial rehabilitation and reintegration. Even in their provision of activities at the center in Kyunjuki/Kasese, GMAC used education as a form of therapy and contributor toward psychosocial RR.[598] In addition, recognizing that education was an important factor for helping returnee children feel more comfortable in their communities, GMAC programs did not only teach vocational skills, but also showed how those skills could be used for the benefit of children. As a local NGO, the program strongly encouraged traditional family values and attempted to "teach the children to respect their peers and elders."[599] However, as Gloria, the GMAC Regional Coordinator, pointed out, the program also ensured that these traditional notions were not harmful and happened in the best interest of the child.[600] Thus, the program, while being sensitive to the cultural and traditional contexts, did not follow them blindly, thereby creating a balance in implementing recommendation 7.1 (*Include traditional, cultural and child development perceptions, as well as political and social realities of the region in the program development –always to reflect the best interest of the* child). This is the reason why for example, the program provided training for both girls and boys, but did not mix genders during the training

[597] Gloria L, interview, June 29, 2008; Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 4, 2008; Dr. Ambrosoli Hospital and Mission staff, interview, July, 4-6, 2008.
[598] APD, BUGE, JLDFP, questionnaires, September 28, 2007.
[599] Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 5, 2008.
[600] Gloria L, interview, July 6, 2008.

cycle. Being sensitive to gender notions that exist in Uganda, the program avoided any possible confrontations with the communities. In addition it spared children from any false accusations and established in this way a more relaxed, comfortable environment for each group to learn in.[601] On the other hand, the program was aware of gender-based discriminations and designed all programs to treat girls and boys equally. In the beginning, many did not understand why girls were given an opportunity to decide whether they wanted to learn to bake and sew or if they wanted to build houses and furniture.[602] In the traditional sense, these were jobs dominated by men and therefore to be performed by men.[603] Despite the early challenges associated with the decision to allow girls to learn a "manly" trade, the program continued to do so because it helped the girls gain self-esteem. Though most girls did not go on to become carpenters or welders, the increased self confidence was one of the most important elements for a successful psychosocial RR and helped them confront the other challenges they had to face.[604] This concept not only fulfilled recommendation 7.1, but also fulfills several other recommendations of guideline 5.

In order to respond to the needs of other vulnerable children in the region who had not gone through an official demobilization process, the VTC program also included internally displaced, orphaned, and street children, as well as those who were caretakers in their households.[605] It is also important to note that the VTC did not differentiate between the auto-demobilized and officially released children and coordinated the list of participants for each training cycle with the district and sub-county officials, as well as the community authorities, thereby implementing recommendation 7.6 (*Cater programs to deal with officially demobilized and auto-demobilized youth*). The VTC staff commented that the inclusion of auto-demobilized and other vulnerable children in the area was a directive that came from national entities and district officials and was widely adopted by various programs in the region.[606] Thus, the VTC program not only implemented recommendation 7.6 by including other children, but it also implemented recommendation 7.5 (*Avoid individual therapy and adopt all inclusive approach in the community-based programs*).

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[601] Kenneth Kamese, interview, October 16, 2007; Chris Wadler, interview, June 30, 2008. In Ugandan society, the interaction between a woman and a man is still accompanied with very traditional stigmas – husband and wife will never hold hands in public. It is strictly forbidden for a young man to go out and date a young girl. No matter whether they are both minor, if caught, he will be charged with seduction and promiscuity.
[602] Gloria L, interview, July 2, 2008; GMAC VTC teachers, interview, July 2-4, 2008; Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 5, 2008.
[603] See footnote 603.
[604] GMAC VTC teachers, interview, July 2-4, 2008.
[605] GMAC VTC teachers, interview, July 2-4, 2008.
[606] Gloria L, interview, July 2, 2008.

It could be observed that the staff was aware of the documents such as the *Machel Report*, *CRC*, and *Cape Town Principles*. They commented that these international norms, laws, and relevant documents were not brought to their attention through training, awareness raising, or lobbying but were concepts they heard mentioned at different meetings and at different centers.[607] Some of the teachers had read and familiarized themselves with these documents because of their personal interest in the subject matter. This could be noticed because the VTC staff freely discussed psychosocial and holistic concepts. At the same time, however, while one program responded to recommendation 7.5 in accordance with the international norms, the other practiced individual therapy, which the recommendation clearly states should be avoided. While such could indicate that the two GMAC programs did not act in a systematic way, it should be remembered that the reception center mirrored and adopted the implementation policy of all of the other transit centers in the region as directed by UNICEF and other INGOs. As it was set up before and in parallel to the presentation of the *Machel Report*, it could be assumed that, as the *Machel+10 Report* indicated, additional time passed before the recommendation to discontinue the use of individual therapy was appropriately addressed by the rehabilitation and reintegration programs.

While not completely implementing recommendation 7.5, the comments made about the rehabilitation program showed that recommendation 7.8 (*Children to stay in interim care and centers as short as possible*) and recommendation 7.9 (*Provide recreational activities, sports, theatre etc*) were fully implemented. In fact, the stay between 2 to 6 weeks, and up to 3 months (or longer) in extreme cases, showed that the reception center was meant only as a short stop before returning the child to his or her family and allowing for reintegration activities to take place. However, since the GMAC program did not conduct any in-depth community based-work, it is uncertain how well children were able to cope after having gone through a center. The "as short as possible" stay, while allowing for flexibility in approach and in reunification activities, also raises a question of its value as the length of stay was determined by the tracing success and the severity of the child's condition upon demobilization. Was it truly possible to rehabilitate a child within two weeks? Some accounts reported that it often took children longer to build a relationship of trust with the staff at the center, which was desperately needed in order to discern the severity of the emotional

[607] Gloria L, interview, July 2, 2008; GMAC VTC teachers, interview, 2-4, 2008; Robert Otema Amolo, e-mail, received April, 27, 2010.

trauma.[608] While recreation and play always contributed to children relaxing and opening up a bit, this recommendation and activity alone was not enough to reach to the core of the child in such a short time and to properly address some of the issues not visible to the naked eye.

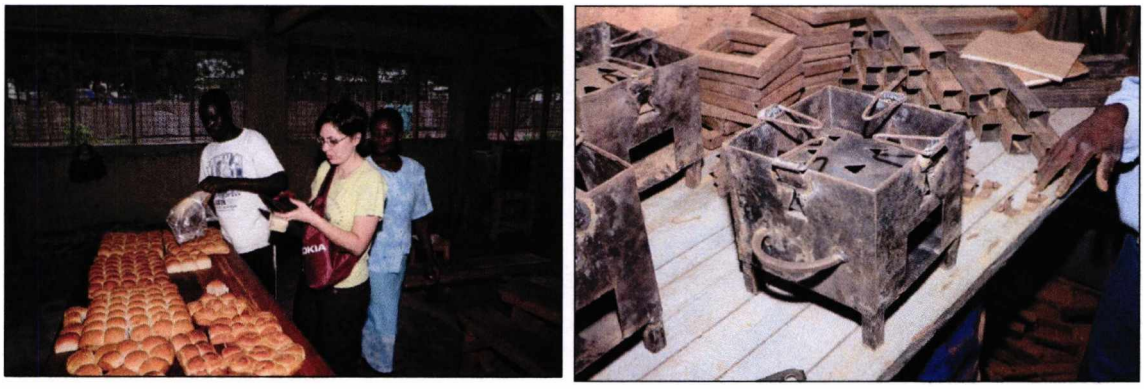

Figure 42: Besides teaching basic vocation skills, children and young adults also learn the main principles of small business entrepreneurship by accepting orders from the community against payment. For example, the bakery class baked each day a number of loaves and welding class made small portable ovens/stoves which were sold to the villagers (Photos courtesy of Robert Seidl, taken July 2008).

While the programs covered various aspects of psychosocial RR, the most important aspect they conveyed was to show the immediate practical applicability of the learned skills.[609] Thus, the bakery prepared loaves of bread and sweet pastries to feed the others in the program throughout the day, while the learners in welding, bricklaying or carpentry worked on projects to improve the center's infrastructure, i.e., laying asphalt floors in the classrooms, building furniture or welding ovens, pots and pans, and different tools to use in other classes. In addition, the classes took on jobs and orders from the locals and the community against payment. The learners, together with the teachers, took turns taking the orders, selling the items, and making change, thereby learning small business entrepreneurship and management skills. In other words, the training was also fulfilling recommendation 7.2 (*Develop socio-economic and livelihood incentives*).

[608] See Beah, *A Long Way Gone*, 138-141, 153 for experiences of children and staff in the transit centers in other countries.
[609] Bakery class learners, interview, July, 3-8, 2008.

	Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects
1. Include traditional, cultural and child development perceptions, as well as political and social realities of the region in the program development –always to reflect the best interest of the child	- VTC employs local staff, who are sensitive to and knowledgeable of the cultural precepts and traditions - Staff at the center from different tribes, allowing for a more thorough knowledge base of belief systems and customs that children will be returning to
2. Develop socio-economic and livelihood incentives	- Main focus of the program – diversified skill training, development of financing and small business management skills - Livelihood incentives encouraged by allowing community to interact with the center and place orders against payment
3. Train staff, local leaders and teachers and provide positive adult role models and strong peer support network	- All staff skilled and trained professionals or educated teachers - Teachers serve as role models and motivational examples
4. Centers should provide comprehensive support to the returning child	- Support after the training limited, coordinated and transferred to the community leaders
5. Avoid individual therapy and adopt all inclusive approach in the community-based programs	- Individual therapy at the reception center - VTC includes all children in their training program
6. Cater programs to deal with officially demobilized and auto-demobilized youth	- All children accommodated irrespective of their demobilization status at the VTC
7. DDR programs for children to be separated from adult programs	- Center caters to children and young adults up to the age 26 – slight gray area of the separation between grownups and children but according to the international standards (see guideline 1)
8. Children to stay in interim care and centers as short as possible	- Children stay 2 to 6 weeks, depending on the severity of their injuries and trauma and the success of tracing and sensitizing the family of the individual child
9. Provide recreational activities, sports, theatre etc	- Sports and recreation daily activity at the transit center, in the VTC possible during the evening hours (children's initiative, not part of the program)

Figure 43: Summary of guideline 7 observations

It was a small ecosystem, showing how each individual and everyone together contributed to a greater whole. Besides showing the learners how they contributed within the center to help each other, it also showed what they were able to do with the skill and the training received.[610] Finally, the learning by doing concept helped the children learn the concepts and the craft faster, which contributed to building their self-esteem and helped them gain a new sense of who they wanted to be.[611] This cycle was a good example of implementation of recommendation 7.3 (*Train staff, local leaders and teachers and provide positive adult role models and strong peer support network*). The boys commented that they respected the knowledge and the patience of the staff, and several mentioned that they wanted

[610] For further information on discussion of socio-economic worth of civil education vs. soldiering, see Blattman, "Consequences of Child Soldiering."
[611] Sowedi N, interview, July 6, 2008; Angela X, interview, July 5-8, 2008.

to become teachers themselves and help other children "like their teachers were helping them."[612] In addition, it could be observed that learners worked together and helped correct or tutor those who were struggling. Considering that these boys came from sub-counties relatively close to each other, it could be assumed that they were fostering a peer group network that would hopefully serve as a support system for them in the future.

Thus, while programs could not implement all of the aspects of guideline 7 and provide children with comprehensive support, especially after the children left the centers (see recommendation 7.4), they did create momentum toward self-esteem build up. If that self-esteem gained in the VTC was carried into the communities, this then could contribute to the long-term RR of both the child and the community. However, whether the communities were able to build on the momentum gained through the psychosocial incentives offered by GMAC remained unanswered. And if the community could not nourish that new self-esteem, children would struggle, as was the case with the boy interviewed in the Kalongo welding shop.

Guideline 8: Education, Vocational Training and Livelihood Initiatives

The words of a learner echoed throughout the entire time that observations were conducted: "Life is so easy, here. We are allowed to learn!"[613] Each vocational class worked with 15 to 25 learners 5 days a week, with classes from 8 am till noon and from 2pm till 6pm. The learners were informed from the beginning of their training about what was expected and what they would learn during the two-month cycle. This structured approach gave learners the assurance that the teachers thought their classes through and knew the subject matter. Even more, the details of each week's objectives showed that they considered their learners' background prior to beginning the training – the details of the studied material were written in simple sentences. This enabled those who came from areas where Lwo was more prominent that English to quickly learn the necessary basic terminology. In addition, during the week of theory, the teachers discussed the basics of understanding the skill, the tools, safety precautions, and learning how to adapt the skill to the community's needs. This theoretical part helped the learners decide whether they wanted to stay with a particular skill or change to something else – if there were no electricity or generators available in the village of a learner, a learner was able to make an informed decision whether to change from one skill to another, such as from welding to bricklaying or carpentry, in hopes that such a skill could help him find

[612] Bakery class learners, interview, July 3-8, 2008; Boy LP (full name withheld), interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, July 6, 2008.
[613] James O, interview, June 30, 2008.

a job or open his own shop in the community.[614] As such, theory week could be seen as an interpretation of recommendation 8.4 (*Do not provide training in jobs which are hazardous or not needed in the labor market*) because it provided opportunity for a brief and individual market survey of what skill might be beneficial to the child and the community. In addition, before any practical work was done, the teachers dedicated another week to explaining and educating the learners about the tools and the materials they were to use in order to familiarize them with hazards of each skill and to instill in them the attitude of respect and attention toward the machines and tools used. Teachers ingrained in the learners' minds the need to always be concentrated on what they were doing and focused on their surroundings as to avoid any potential harm to them and their co-learners.[615] While small injuries could not be avoided, as carpentry teacher Yugo showed me on his bandaged finger, commenting "of course they happen – but usually these are minor cuts, banged fingers or bruised hands," he also confirmed that "those are the only injuries we tolerate."[616]

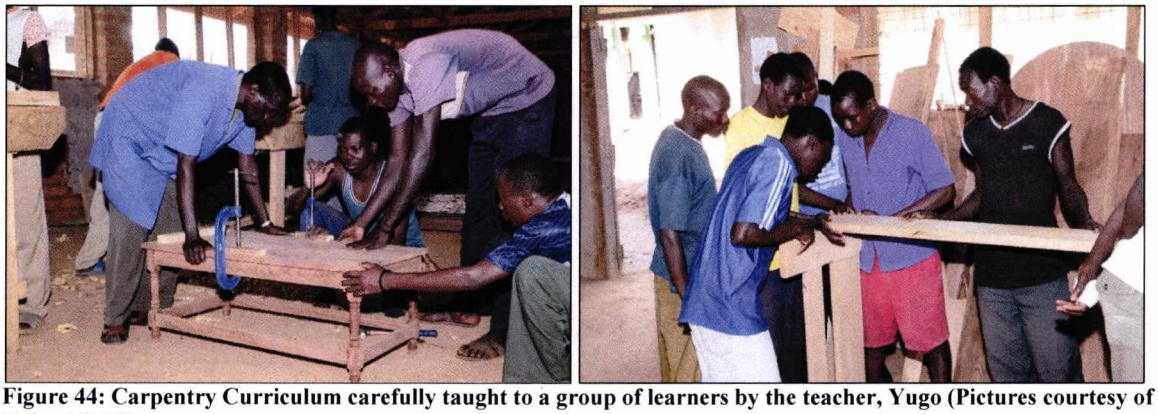

Figure 44: Carpentry Curriculum carefully taught to a group of learners by the teacher, Yugo (Pictures courtesy of Robert Seidl).

While training in welding is innovative and was offered through qualified educators, the difficulty of obtaining the tools or finding proper sources of electricity to power the machines was a challenge for the learners once they left the center and raises the question whether such a skill was marketable in rural settings of northern Uganda, which struggled to set up a basic infrastructure. A question was also raised whether the supply would outpace the demand in couple of years' time, thereby only creating competition among the children and young adults for jobs, to which Sowedi commented that many boys were able to obtain work

[614] Sowedi N, interview, July 6, 2008.
[615] Bakery class learners, interview, July, 3, 2008.
[616] Yugo S, Carpentry teacher, interview by author, Kalongo, Uganda, July 3, 2008.

in other shops and then to start a small business as a group, which seemed to go well.[617] He further mentioned that teachers oftentimes implemented novel and creative ideas to help children adjust their skills to the resources available to them in their community to counter these possible concerns.[618] An example highlighted this concept. While observing a bakery class, I noticed that they were using a nozzle from a plastic water bottle to make holes in the dough. Angela explained later to me that she decided to make these one day in a response to a learner's question about how they would get the tools to help them earn a living with the skill. She said she pondered for a minute and then adapted a bottle to demonstrate that the boys did not need fancy and expensive cooking utensils in order to be able to cook. All they needed was their creativity and "nature and the environment would provide the rest."[619] With this in mind, it was noticeable that such improvisations were applied in every class: the welding class used sunglasses to shield and protect eyes while welding; the bricklaying used cardboard to hold plaster mix and measure brick sizes; the carpentry class used wood from old furniture and reshaped it to the size and style they needed for a new piece of furniture. This not only indirectly contributed to recommendation 8.4, it also contributed to the implementation of recommendations 8.2 (*Develop programs which will have a link between education, vocational training and income-winning opportunities*) and 8.6 (*Provide apprenticeship and earning opportunities*), linking the training to real life situations and enabling the learners to apply that skill as innovatively as needed to earn living. Some aspects of this were also mentioned during the guideline 7 discussion.

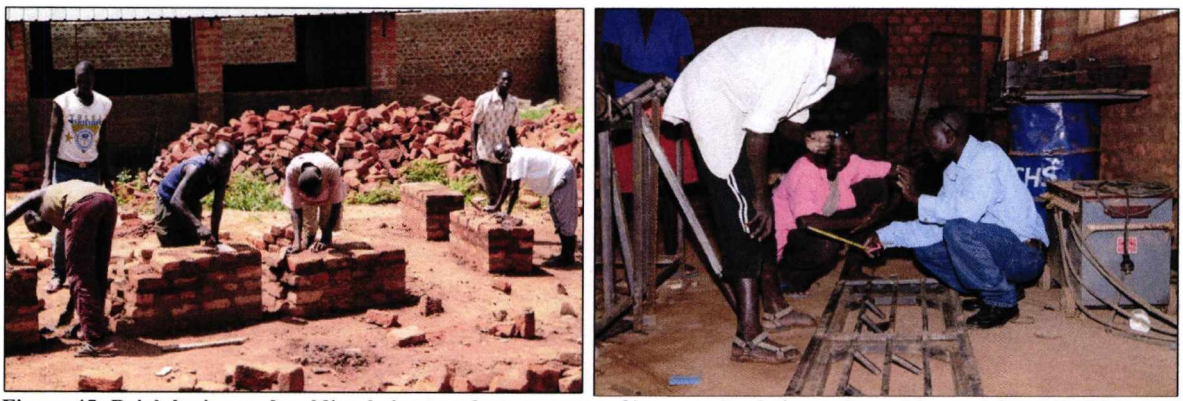

Figure 45: Brick laying and welding being taught to a group of learners by their teachers, Alex and Sowedi (Pictures courtesy of Robert Seidl).

[617] Sowedi N, interview, July 6, 2008.
[618] Sowedi N, interview, July 5, 2008.
[619] Angela X, interview, July 4-6, 2008.

Of course, it was challenging to estimate the labor market trend for the next 5 years; however, VTC diversified their teaching curriculum with each new cycle. While teaching basics to all, sometimes they focused more on teaching, for example, brick production vs. laying the foundation of a house, making metal doors vs. making pans and pots and small portable ovens.[620] Considering that the center covered a wider geographical region consisting of the Pader, Lira and Kitgum districts, the learners had not faced any real competition for jobs with each other.[621]

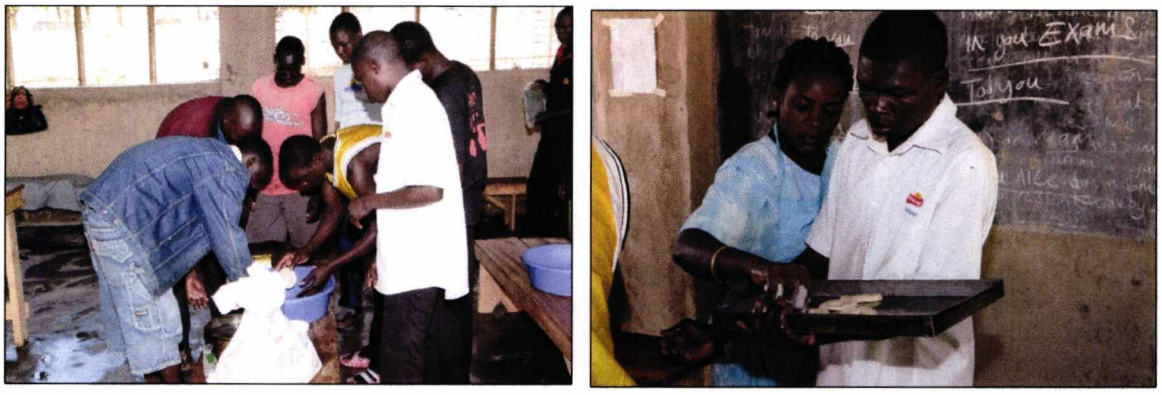

Figure 46: Bakery Curriculum carefully taught to a group of learners by the teacher, Angela (Pictures courtesy of Robert Seidl).

As shown through earlier examples during the discussion on guidelines 5 and 7, the VTC program not only involved disabled children and girl mothers in their training but also encouraged it, coordinating with the communities to achieve their participation. Thus, while concentrating on the implementation of recommendations to address the case girls and to afford psychosocial RR, GMAC also implemented recommendation 8.3 (*Involve children with disabilities and girl mothers in the programs-provide child care for the mothers*). Finally, it should be noted that while GMAC's training was indirectly helping children to further develop their teamwork and leadership skills, the program refrained from actively pointing out that these skills were 'positive skills' obtained during children's association with the LRA, in order to avoid sending a wrong message on child soldiering and forced recruitment as suggested by recommendation 8.8 (*Create educational opportunities for children to utilize positive skills gained while associated with armed groups*).[622]

[620] GMAC teachers, interview, July, 4-6, 2008.
[621] Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 6, 2008.
[622] Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 6, 2008.

It should be noted that while the VTC did not provide children with any cash or instant material assistance, as indicated by recommendation 8.5, the reception center provided families with cash subsidies while children had rehabilitative status with the program. The frustration that was experienced by the families once the child was classified as rehabilitated and cash subsidies discontinued was felt by the reception center staff, leading to communication challenges and dissatisfaction of the families. [623]

	Education, Vocational Training and Livelihood Initiatives
1. Develop age-appropriate and catch-up educational programs	- N/A
2. Develop programs which will have a link between education, vocational training and income-winning opportunities	- GMAC VTC main focus is to link vocational training with livelihood incentives to provide children and young adults with income winning opportunities
3. Involve children with disabilities and girl mothers in the programs-provide child care for the mothers	- All children involved in the training opportunities - Depending on the discussion with the communities and the situation, day care opportunities for girl mothers, provided by the her community
4. Do not provide training in jobs which are hazardous or not needed in the labor market	- Basic labor market assessment conducted at the set up of the program - Occasional discussion with the community leaders whether certain skills offered still find applicability in their community - All trades taught potentially hazardous
5. Do not provide cash or instant material assistance	- No cash or subsidies provided in the VTC - Reception center provided cash to families which was cause of frustration to the program in the long run
6. Provide apprenticeship and earning opportunities	- Immediate earning opportunities possible during the training program (dependable upon job orders from the locals)
7. Abolish school fees and use educational system to teach behavioral and political realities and to raise awareness on issues of concern	- Issue cannot be addressed by GMAC
8. Create educational opportunities for children to utilize positive skills gained while associated with armed groups	- No special highlighting of skills from the association with the LRA on group level

Figure 47: Summary of guideline 8 observations

While activities which were reflected in recommendations 8.2 through 8.6 have been designed and implemented in coordination with district authorities and the GMAC Main Office and mirrored the general guidance of UNICEF and other INGOs working in the area, the programs were still given enough free reign to design certain programmatic elements

[623] For key findings of such practices, see Annan, Blattman and Mazurana, "The Survey of War Affected Youth," Key Findings from Sway.

according to own liking. The actual curriculum, the length and the intensity of the program, the rotation cycle and the teaching methods are some of the examples of this.[624]

The program went to great lengths to provide the learners with quality training and vocational expertise that would enable them to provide for themselves and their families. With the knowledge that demands in the region were changing, the program began considering an expansion or transformation to a new concept of opening a library and providing opportunities for the most vulnerable in the area to receive formal education in the near future.[625] The flexibility to adapt to the demands of their surroundings showed that GMAC's was more interested in long-term RR of the children in the region than in keeping the specific program alive and funded. However, these transformation activities are currently in the design process, and at this stage it cannot be said when and whether they will be launched.[626]

Guideline 9: Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms

As was mentioned earlier, GMAC RR programs have not had much influence on the implementation of most of the recommendations in this guideline. As such, only recommendations 9.3 (*RR programs to adopt the restorative justice principle and be applied always in the best interest of the child*) and 9.6 (*Use local approaches and traditional healing mechanisms*) fall under the purview of GMAC programs and will be addressed here.

Uganda as a country has undergone a great struggle to identify the proper channels and means of dealing with demobilized LRA people and has adopted the restorative justice concept in response.[627] Focusing on rehabilitating and healing the communities and the individuals, the government does not view the returning children as perpetrators and does not prosecute them.[628] Such was reflected in the sensitization work conducted as the reception center in Kyunjuki/Kasese, where staff attempted to create a bond between parents and children.[629] However, these workshops were only available to parents who came to visit their children at the center, as the program had very little active interaction with the communities. Thus, while GMAC programs encouraged traditional and local approaches, such as healing

[624] Kenneth Kamese, interview, June 30, 2008; Gloria L, interview, July 4, 2008; Robert Otemo Amolo, e-mail, received April 27, 2010.
[625] Robert Otema Amolo, e-mails, received in October 2008, March and September 2009.
[626] Robert Otema Amolo, e-mail, received April 27, 2010.
[627] Chris McGreal, "Museveni refuses to hand over rebel leaders to war crimes court," Guardian (published March 13, 2008) http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/mar/13/uganda.internationalcrime (accessed October 7, 2010).
[628] See Gulu District NGO Forum, "The Cooling of Hearts: Community Truth-Telling in Acholi-land," *Liu Institute for Global Issues* (July 2007), 3; Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Release and Reintegration of Child Soldiers: One part of a Bigger Puzzle," Section 3.5; De Temmerman, *Aboke Girls*, 143-144.
[629] APD, BUGE, JLDFP, questionnaire, September 28, 2008.

and cleansing ceremonies, they never got involved in active support of such initiatives in the communities.[630] In the Acholi community, which greatly fosters traditional belief systems and believes in spirits, the value and importance of healing and cleansing ceremonies is great.[631] Research showed that 48% of returnees who went through a rehabilitation or interim center participated in some form of cleansing ceremonies upon their return.[632] Blattman, Annan and Mazurana commented in the SWAY report that centers often "offered small and only occasional assistance for welcoming and forgiveness ceremonies."[633] Considering the percentage of children that went through such ceremonies, active participation and assistance from centers and NGOs would have been essential to ensure that the traditional cleansing ceremonies were in the best interest of the child and ensured a child's rejuvenation rather than enhancing the trauma experienced. While there was a general knowledge of what these ceremonies looked like, the actual detailed acts of penance were individually designed by the community healers. Such acts could be burring guns, washing in rivers, or performing different chants.[634]

Three of the boys present at the VTC during the observations were in the process of a traditional healing and it was agreed with their healers, that their final act of cleansing would be the vocational training.[635] This cleansing process was given to them as an assignment from their healer who was a member of their village.[636] This example illustrated how much influence NGO programs could have on the healing process of a child if coordinated with communities and addressed in work with community leaders and parents. At the same time, this particular example showed that there was individual initiative on the part of the community and that the adults saw the value of education in helping children return to civilian life, which was the main focus of the cleansing process. Ultimately, the VTC program missed an opportunity to perpetuate this notion by not being more involved in the local initiatives of communities.

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[630] Kenneth Kamese, interview, June 26, 2008.

[631] The belief in spirits is still dominant in northern Uganda, especially among the Acholi people. Children who have spent time with the LRA were further indoctrinated with the concept of spirits and feel unclean and restless until they are able to perform cleansing rituals. Otherwise they belive to be haunted by the ghosts of the dead. For discussion on the importance of spirits and traditional healing, see Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, 110-134; Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 146-153.

[632] Emilio Ovuga, Thomas O. Oyok, E.B. Moro, "Post traumatic stress disorder among former child soldiers attending a rehabilitative service and primary school education in northern Uganda," *African Health Sciences* Vol.8, no. 3 (2008):136-141.

[633] Annan, Blattman and Mazurana, "The Survey of War Affected Youth," Key Findings from SWAY.

[634] Gulu District NGO Forum, "The Cooling of Hearts: Community Truth-Telling in Acholi-land," 11-18.

[635] Sowedi, interview; Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 6, 2008.

[636] Sowedi, interview; Robert Otema Amolo, interview, July 6, 2008.

Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms	
1. Establish age limit below which children cannot be charged	- Issue cannot be addressed by GMAC - No charges for children abducted by LRA
2. Do not treat children as deserters and do not apply death sentence	- Issue cannot be addressed by GMAC
3. RR programs to adopt the restorative justice principle and be applied always in the best interest of the child	- Activities for children and training conducted with families at the reception center cater towards teaching and instilling the restorative justice principle and abolishing the feelings of guilt
4. Seek alternatives to judicial proceedings and provide children with highest standards of safeguards and reconciliation mechanisms	- Issue cannot be addressed by GMAC - See recommendation 9.1 and 9.2
5. Avoid detaining children and youth	- Issue cannot be addressed by GMAC
6. Use local approaches and traditional healing mechanisms	- Respect for local customs, participate in encouraging them as long as in the best interest of the child - Training conducted with families at the transit center cater towards showing how activities contribute towards healing and cleansing the child
7. Include the age group 18-24 in the juvenile justice system –as per guideline 1	- Issue cannot be addressed by GMAC - See recommendation 9.1 and 9.2

Figure 48: Summary of guideline 9 observations

V. Conclusion

The chapter presented the case study conducted in the northern Uganda, analyzing the rehabilitation and reintegration programs run by GMAC. It could be observed that GMAC coordinated some of its activities with the international organizations, such as the Amnesty Commission and UNICEF. It was also observed that the Kalongo program closely coordinated the development of participants' lists for each new training cycle with the district authorities and local leaders. Due to this coordination, both programs were aware of the international recommendations. Such could especially be seen in the case of the reception center, which implemented the program as per instructions from the Amnesty Commission and mirrored other programs in the region. While some practices adopted by the International Organizations turned out to require changes, as was reflected in recommendation 8.5 (*Do not provide cash or instant material assistance*), it confirmed that GMAC was eager to implement international norms and standards in an attempt to achieve a systematic approach to the rehabilitation and reintegration of children. However, it could also be observed that while one program

implemented activities according to the suggestions of international organizations, the other program designed its own activities, mainly by observing the failures of previous programs and in discussions with local programs and leaders.

As in the previous case study, the observations and the analysis showed that successful implementation of the guidelines did not automatically require successful implementation of all the recommendations within that guideline. In fact, it could be observed that GMAC adopted a more exclusive approach, targeting only specific areas and activities to provide quality instead of quantity. As activities chosen were designed to address multiple layers of children's reintegration and rehabilitation, this approach contributed toward implementation of guidelines 7 (*Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects*), 8 (*Education, Vocational Training and Livelihood Initiatives*) and specific recommendations in guideline 2 (*Special Case of a Girl Child)* and 9 (*Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms*). In particular, the Kalongo program effectively contributed to the implementation of recommendations 7.2 (*Develop socio-economic and livelihood incentives*), 8.2 (*Develop programs which will have a link between education, vocational training and income-winning opportunities*), 8.3 (*Involve children with disabilities and girl mothers in the programs-provide child care for the mothers*), and 8.6 (*Provide apprenticeship and earning opportunities*). While the program did offer training in vocations that might be potentially hazardous, it was very attentive to potential hazards and addressed them adequately during training, thus taking note of recommendation 8.4 (*Do not provide training in jobs which are hazardous or not needed in the labor market*). Together with the assessments of what skills might in higher demand in the sub-counties and communities, it addressed this recommendation to the best of its ability.

The work GMAC conducted in Kyunjuki/Kasese and Kalongo showed that the provided list of recommendation was more comprehensive than what GMAC could accomplish in their programs. However, because GMAC had a focused program, it could not be observed that it provided the learners with comprehensive support as suggested in recommendation 7.4. This raises the question, what constitutes comprehensive support, and will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

The strength of GMAC programs could be observed in the nature of their RR programming and in the quality of the teachers. Once it was identified that the programs were not as beneficial to the area as required to continue their funding, and the RR work anymore, the staff was relocated to other projects and programs closed. Since GMAC, as most other

local NGOs, depends on donations and sponsorship, this showed accountability and responsibility in using the resources in the best interest of the child, rather than feeding into programs that would have a lesser effect. It was also seen that the quality of the program was greatly influenced by the quality of the teachers who acted as role models, tutors, educators, and counselors.

Also, it should be noted that the programs were quite effective in implementing guideline 6 (*Medical Assistance to Children with Disabilities and other Health/Physical RR Efforts*) and coordinating with the local hospitals to provide the children with necessary medical assistance without having to manage a hospital or a health center themselves.

However, the case study showed a great deficiency in some of the guidelines which have been recognized as more important elements of successful rehabilitation and reintegration of children, namely guidelines 3 and 4. While family tracing could be done by a specialized agency, as was the case with the Kyunjuki/Kasese program, counseling and assistance to children and their families has been identified as an essential contributor to achieving long term reintegration. Similar is the case with the community-based initiatives. It was recognized that rehabilitation and interim centers are safe zones and 'a time out' for the children. Because a lot of rehabilitation and reintegration work occurs in the community, direct involvement and more active presence would have been beneficial. Such was confirmed by SWAY in 2007 as well.[637] In particular, it could be observed that very little was done to contribute towards recommendations 3.3 (*Assist family with social support*), 4.5 (*Support local initiatives*), 4.6 (*Assist communities in conflict management*), and 4.8 (*Support development of (re-)recruitment prevention programs and community-based initiatives*). The coordination in one small area, which took place between the VTC program already in place generated a positive response and thereby confirmed that community leaders were willing to be involved and to involve others. Such a positive response could have possibly been utilized more to ensure greater value to the training program.

Finally, similar to the previous case study, GMAC programs vested little programmatic effort in conducting regular or, for that matter, any follow-up, as per recommendation 3.6 (*Conduct regular follow-up*). As mentioned earlier, follow-up was identified as a valuable contributor towards long term RR. However, SWAY identified that there was generally a lack of follow-up and monitoring present in any of the RR programs in the region at the time the

[637] Annan, Blattman and Mazurana, "The Survey of War Affected Youth," Key Findings from SWAY.

survey was conducted.[638] In addition to its intrinsic value, follow-up would have allowed for the collection of qualitative data aiding the improvement of existing and future programs in the region.

[638] Annan, Blattman and Mazurana, "The Survey of War Affected Youth," Key Findings from SWAY.

Chapter 5
Children no more...Soldiers no more: Comparative Analysis

"A final source of hope can, we think, be derived from the interviews and meetings with hundreds of children...who consistently expressed themselves to be tired of war. They have hopes and dreams for their own futures. They are not at all preoccupied by revenge or any other prospects that could prolong the war situation. These children are the leaders of tomorrow. They dare to hope."[639]

Cole Dodge and Magne Raundalen

I. Introduction

The previous chapters presented two individual cases in Northern Uganda and Eastern DRC, analyzing how local NGOs respond to the demands of reintegration and rehabilitation activities in their regions. While each individual case study provided a wealth of information and showed the strengths and the weaknesses of each observed program, learning of their challenges and successes even more importantly helps further the discussion on the applicability and feasibility of the internationally designed RR guidelines and recommendations. This will be achieved by conducting a comparative analysis of the cases and thereby evaluating the developed working list of the RR guidelines. In other words, the case studies provided a basis for comparing the guidelines applicability on the ground; in particularly the analysis aided in identifying whether a re-conceptualisation of rehabilitation and reintegration of children in the context of DDR processes is needed. The comparative analysis will further shed light on the practicality and feasibility of the guidelines and the recommendations, making it easier to answer questions posed in this thesis.

As developed in Chapter 2, the thesis provided a testing platform to confirm Jareg's theory what programmatic implementation was needed to achieve rehabilitation and reintegration. As such, Jareg claimed that (1) restoring the family relationships, (2) re-establishing relationships with the community, (3) promoting children's health, (4) organizing learning opportunities, (5) providing vocational training and livelihood incentives, and (6) providing opportunities for children to play and build down stress through recreation, should be considered as some of the key programmatic elements towards successful reintegration of returning child soldiers.[640] In addition, Jareg highlighted that gender concerns and mechanisms that allow psychosocial healing should be considered when designing and implementing RR initiatives. Embedded in the international legal framework, the theory considered that

[639] Dodge and Raundalen, *Reaching Children in War,* 121.
[640] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 1-9.

international children's rights would be incorporated into the design of the programmatic structure of the RR programs. Finally, her work stressed the importance of long term follow-up and involvement, confirming the importance of continuing the RR efforts upon child's return to the family and the community.

The following comparative analysis provides an opportunity to evaluate her theories and the assumptions made in parallel to assessing the actual applicability of the developed RR guidelines working list. To accomplish this, he chapter has been divided into two sections. First, a general comparative analysis of the cases will be conducted, evaluating their similarities and differences, such as the purpose and structure of each program, experiences and staffing, as well as geopolitical and locality based issues, in order to establish the reasons for similarities or divergences in observations and implementations of specific guidelines. This comparative analysis will in addition help in the development of a hypothesis whether the working list can have a general applicability elsewhere. The second section will turn to the comparative analysis of the guidelines and their recommendations, providing reflection on their contribution and necessity towards rehabilitation and reintegration in the programs conducted by the local NGOs.

II. General Comparative Analysis of the Cases

While the two programs have been chosen because they are similar cases, the analysis in the Chapters 3 and 4 showed that there are differences in their interpretation, general structure and purpose, which allow for divergences in the implementation success and feasibility. In addition, given that the geopolitical situation, as well as the history and nature of the conflicts in the two countries vary, the conditions under which children are recruited, and the treatment they receive during their active involvement provide for variation in the effectiveness of RR efforts as well as in the general attitudes and community acceptance during and in the aftermath of their disarmament. It is therefore meaningful to conduct a comparative analysis of the two cases in general terms before addressing their implementation activities according to the working list guidelines.

Geopolitical Concerns

Jareg's research showed that political and conflict backgrounds greatly influence the actual design of how RR will be implemented. This could be observed in the two cases. Though neighboring countries, Uganda and the DRC have been shaped differently through

their colonial history, the size of the territory they occupy and the number of different tribes who live under the same national umbrella. This difference has shaped their struggle for independence and continues to affect their present struggle for peace. Belgian colonialists, especially under the rule of King Leopold, exploited the land of the DRC severely without providing any stability and infrastructure in return. The lack of interest in the people or understanding of the tribal difference destabilized the country, leaving it fragile and open for grabs in the rise of the newly gained independence. The struggle for power and resources, dictatorship and conflict ensued soon after and has lasted ever since. The British colony of Uganda on the other side was a case of planned and carefully executed rule, affording tribes privileges and status in hopes to create a safe balance. While the British exploited the resources of the land, they showed enough interest in the country to set up a basic infrastructure. It should be acknowledged that though this infrastructure served selfish purposes, it provided the country with a level of material comfort that the DRC did not experience. This difference in infrastructure in the two states has helped to shape the conflicts to an extent, because it contributed toward breeding the styles of dictatorships that invested only as much care in their country as their colonial masters. While it cannot be claimed that the colonial powers are solely responsible for the present struggles, their attitude toward the countries did affect the struggles that followed. Such is reflected to this day, as it is easily observed that the conflict in the Eastern DRC has been instilled with a struggle for power and resources by various tribes, based on the exploitation of the local population and the land, with limited motivation toward economic and political stability and growth in the Eastern parts of the country. In addition to the internal struggle, the region has also had to deal with the spillover effects of its neighbors. Weakened by internal struggle, the government of the DRC has been unable to protect its borders alone. Allowing for Rwanda's genocide and Uganda's fight with the LRA to continue on its territory, it has strongly relied on the presence of the MONUC peace keeping mission and the UN in the east to provide some protection to the suffering population. As such, the DRC's case is multilayered and highly complex, with an ongoing conflict which has ravaged the eastern portion of the country on multiple levels and created animosities among multiple parties, making it difficult to find a solution that would please all and end the conflict.

The case of the north Uganda was in contrast, though not any easier, less complex. What began as retribution of one wronged tribe has become an open rebellion against the current political system and act of terrorism by one principle key party, the LRA. Because it is easy to

single out the cause of the disturbance to the peace in the north, the peace in northern Uganda has been a more tangible goal, and one that the government of Uganda has actively pursued. In fact, northern Uganda has been able to experience peace, pushing the LRA outside of the borders. This has had an effect on the RR programs, the influx of returning children, and on the ability of the country to recover from over two decades of destruction. However, it did come at the cost of losing an opportunity to completely disarm the group and demobilize the children still caught in its shackles. In addition, because no real peace treaty has been signed and agreed by all parties, the fear and threat of the LRA's return stall complete stability because their continued brutality and child abduction have only been relocated to neighboring countries rather than truly eradicated.

The geopolitical history of the regions is important to the RR initiatives for multiple reasons. First, the conditions and the type of armed conflict in the regions determine the attitude of the communities towards the returning children. In the struggle to find their place in society and to secure available resources in the DRC, many children and youth join voluntarily or are summoned by their families to participate in the fighting in hopes of a better future, safety and the provision of food. While they experience horror and participate in killing and pillaging, the male children and the youth do not face as many physical injuries and torture as their male peers under the LRA. Some Mai-Mai groups treat the young combatants in their ranks as equals, where the use of drugs, malnutrition, battle injuries and aggressive behavior are 'normal' consequences of participation in the conflict. This was highlighted through stories of some of the returning boys in Chapter 3, who could not be returned to their families due to the acts of atrocity committed against their own families without being coerced to doing so. Stories further showed that other armed groups employ fear and torture, in order to prevent their male children combatants from fleeing. Understanding which groups treat their children in such a way is a highly challenging task, and mainly possible upon a child's disarmament and confession. Given the explanation above, it can be concluded that many communities in the DRC will adopt a range of attitudes and may particularly fear their returning children. Some who have been harmed by child soldiers harbored feelings of revenge and treated children, with mistrust and disdain. The sensitization work therefore is of crucial importance in the Eastern DRC, and as was shown in Chapter 3, oftentimes a very challenging and laborious procedure. However, the efforts conducted by CEPAC/CRN showed that the program was well aware of these attitudes and was successful in addressing them to the most part through the reintegration agents' sensitization work and the presence of Children's Clubs

in some of the remote areas. However, the good rapport was limited to the communities where Children's Clubs existed. The example of a mother bribing an elder to avoid her boy being mocked by the community showed that the sensitization work was not sufficiently eliminating all the attitudes that existed or were perceived as existing in the communities. It indicated that there was a need for greater interaction with other communities that would allow for a more immediate intervention and eradication of potential prejudices.

In the case of the Uganda, however, the situation of male children was slightly easier. Because the LRA has been known for their notorious abduction of children, their brutality and rough treatment, communities were aware of the fact that most children will have always been forcefully recruited and made to commit atrocities. As De Temmerman showed, this knowledge was not present at the very beginning of disarmament activities; however, since the 1990's, a combination of a more focused sensitization work and personal encounters of local population with the LRA have made the communities aware of the true nature of children's involvement with the group.[641] It was therefore more observable in Chapter 4 that children did not face as much hostility as children did in some communities in the DRC. In addition, Uganda as a national entity has adopted the restorative justice system and as Allen showed in his research, has instilled the notion of no guilt towards child and youth combatants returning from LRA.[642] Provision of restorative justice system through the national legislative showed beneficial, because no children passing through GMAC's programs were persecuted or in need of any demobilization certificates. While some communities additionally conducted healing rituals, these were done to ease the minds of the people and not to seek revenge on the children. While the RR programs in both regions started as general DDR initiatives around the same time in the early 1990's, the general instability and displacement in the eastern regions of the DRC have led to disruption in the programming and made it difficult to conduct any disarmament and demobilization efforts.[643] As a result, CEPAC/CRN has had to deal with the challenging task of establishing infrastructure to conduct its work, sensitizing the communities and ensuring that children received adequate demobilization papers to avoid further stigmatization and acts of revenge, in parallel with rehabilitating children and monitoring the conflict's proportions. CEPAC/CRN took a lead to the great extent to conduct these efforts

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[641] De Temmerman, *Aboke Girls*, 141-144.
[642] Allen, *Trial Justice*, 74-76.
[643] Stephanie Hanson, "Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration in Africa," *Council Foreign Relations Website* (published 16 February 2007) http://www.cfr.org/publication/12650/disarmament_demobilization_and_reintegration_ddr_in_africa.html (accessed December 6, 2010).

alone. Therefore while the DDR programs existed in the region for a while, CEPAC/CRN was learning many child RR lessons on the go, and thath affected the quality and depth of programmatic implementations they provided. The GMAC program in Uganda on the other hand was embedded in a more systematic effort coordinated by the government and international NGOs, which were actively involved in the child RR work in the past 10 years. By outsourcing the community sensitization work, GMAC programs for rehabilitation and vocational training were able to achieve greater focus on these specific aspects and thereby utilized their resources more effectively. While this is an ideal situation, it has to be recognized that in the case of DRC this might not have been an option and in order for it to take place, the RR programs in the Eastern DRC would have had to undergo structural changes and solicit greater participation of the national entities.

The dissimilarities of treatment and attitudes towards the male child combatants in the two cases shift towards similar attitudes when considering the girl child combatants. While statistics show that Uganda ranks among top nations in Africa in providing gender equality with 24% of women in the parliament, the situation in rural areas is much different.[644] The cultural and traditional role of women has been subordinate to men, a custom which is still observable in most of the villages, allowing violence under justification of "traditional values."[645] The situation is even less favorable in the eastern regions of the DRC. While women in urban areas have been able to experience some economic revival, laws still govern in the DRC which stipulate that women are legally subservient to men, an occurrence which is vividly exhibited in villages and rural areas of the DRC rainforests.[646] This means that in both areas of research, issues of domestic or gender based violence and rape receive very limited attention, and when they do, the attention is always associated with negative consequences for the women.

If the general gender based inequality stigmatizes the women and girls, their situation is equally dire in the case of forced abduction and involvement with the armed groups. In both

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[644] Chantal Rowena Jacobs, "Attitudes towards Gender Equality and the Representation of Women in Parliament: A Comparative Study of South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe," (MA Thesis, Stellenbosch University, Cape Town, South Africa, March 2009) Stellenbosch University Electronic Library, http://scholar.sun.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10019.1/4053/Jacobs,%20C.R.pdf?sequence=1 (accessed December 7, 2010).

[645] Rita M. Byrnes, ed., "Women in Society," *Uganda: A Country Study* (Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1990), http://countrystudies.us/uganda/ (accessed December 7, 2010); Amnesty International, "I can't afford justice – Violence against women in Uganda continues unchecked and unpunished," *Amnesty International Publication 2010*, http://www.amnesty.ch/de/shop/laender/afrika/i-cant-afford-justice-violence-against-women-in-uganda-continues-unchecked-and-unpunished (accessed December 6, 2010).

[646] The Library of Congress, "Status of Women," *A Country Study: Zaire (Former)* (Washington: Federal Research Division for Library of Congress), http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/zrtoc.html (accessed December 7, 2010).

cases investigated, girls faced abuse at the hands of the armed groups, regardless of the type of recruitment. It was evident in both chapters that girls had to deal with physical and emotional consequences of continued rape, possible motherhood, and stigmatization from the communities to which they were returning. While there are strong efforts in both regions to sensitize communities towards the gender based equality and in particular to the situation of the girl child combatants, both cases showed that the attitude of the communities were still tainted by traditional views and beliefs, making it challenging for the girls and in particular girl mothers to reintegrate in more remote communities. This seemed to be so prevalent in the DRC case, that several of the girls who were interviewed opted to relocate in order to avoid further stigmatization. Since girls were not interviewed during the field observations in Uganda, it cannot be concluded fully to what extent the stigmatization persists in the communities in which GMAC operated. However, the interviews conducted with GMAC staff hinted that though there were positive efforts (such as providing day care for their children), certain cultural stigmatization still existed. This stigmatization was manifested through lack of marriage opportunities and shunning of the returnees with children. Thus, while the attitude of the communities towards boy combatants seemed to be solely affected by the conflict history and its complexity, the attitudes towards girl combatants were additionally affected by the traditional gender values and beliefs in both cases.

Second, the historical and geopolitical conflict background provides understanding of the complexity and challenges which RR programs should anticipate when designing activities and initiatives. It is important to know whether children voluntarily participated in what they themselves might consider a freedom fight, or whether they were coerced into fighting for a cause that they did not support. Disarming and rehabilitating children and youth who were enthralled in the cause will present a different set of challenges than working with children who were forcefully recruited and were seeking any opportunity to escape. The case of the DRC showed that there were both of these attitudes and that rehabilitation and reintegration strongly relied on children's respect of the staff. Some children in the CTO more readily retold about their time spent in the bush, glorifying it and testing their surroundings through provocation, while Uganda's case exhibited the latter attitude, showing children's aspiration to move on by learning and studying hard and very rarely speaking of what happened prior to their disarmament. This is an important difference, because it showed that the staff in the two case studies needed to be aware of different issues and to have training specific to the circumstances in order to properly address, control and deal with the consequences of

children's involvement. Because children were forced to commit atrocities and punished for any acts of disobedience, it was obvious that children returning from the LRA would have more severe physical injuries, while children returning from various Mai-Mai groups would exemplify behavioral challenges which were reflected in the CTO's workshops on re-learning social behavior and dealing with aggressive or impulsive behavior. In addition, sensitivity to the setting and the knowledge of the geopolitical realities enabled the programs to anticipate the traumas children have experienced. Children in Uganda, as was shown in Chapter 4, have experienced severe traumas due to their active involvement with the LRA. The proper response to their traumas therefore catered towards addressing any physical and emotional scars of that involvement, including malnutrition, loss of limbs or premature motherhood. However, the case of the DRC was more complex, because in addition to the traumas experienced during their active involvement with armed groups, there were children who experienced trauma during the disarmament and demobilization process, feeling abandoned by their group, or who experienced loss of power and authority and were lowered once again to a concept of a 'helpless child' and did not know how to handle it. These traumas required different responses and if wrongly handled caused further rebellion and harm. Given these differences, the two programs, though in theory structured similarly, showed significant implementation and practical differences. While the DRC program worked on multiple levels to restore traditional values, it also aimed to empower children in their community by allowing the longest portion of the reintegration programming to occur in the Children's Clubs, where children could show their abilities and at the same time be given an opportunity to interact with the community as a means to deal with the trauma of having power withdrawn from them so abruptly. The program in Uganda, on the other hand, strongly focused on educational prospects, providing a central vocational training location, removed from any particular community and better equipped for teaching, in order to help children move on and create a new life outside of the LRA.

Third, it was observed more so in the DRC than in Uganda that the knowledge of the geopolitical situation was important for the programs to determine the safety levels of the areas and communities where they would be returning children to in order to appropriately adjust their course of action. While this might appear as a side consequence, it was confirmed through different stories at the CTO that such daily reality had a crucial bearing on the success of the CEPAC/CRN's RR initiatives. The constant shift of unrest and displacement contributed to continuous adjustments in tracing efforts, at times making it impossible for

children to return to their families or to locate any family member, placing more burdens on the CEPAC/CRN to accommodate the children. In addition, in the areas lacking stability, no further work through Children's Clubs could be conducted nor could it be determined whether children were safe from any new recruitment. Such challenges added a stress to the CEPAC/CRN's program that was absent for GMAC.

Finally, the differences which exist in the belief systems of the cultures present in the regions can also be viewed as geopolitical and historical background information contributing towards designing proper RR initiatives. As was mentioned earlier, traditional beliefs, spirituality and religious customs play an important role in the well being of the children in this study, and even more importantly in the way communities view the returning children. Because of the strong belief in the spirituality of everything in the rural communities of both Uganda and the DRC, the way programs address healing, forgiveness and regaining of spiritual peace are important contributors to the successes or failures of the RR initiatives in these regions. Both the DRC and Uganda are similar in this context, as parts of the regions still exhibit animalistic and spiritual beliefs, while other, more urbanized areas have moved toward Christian values. The observations in the areas of Beni and Kalongo showed that there was a strong mixture of both present at the same time in both regions. However, it could not be observed in depth how communities responded to the returning children in the communities visited, and what specific rituals and cleansing ceremonies were or were not performed, but it was noticeable that the DRC program tended more towards including elements of Christian beliefs in the implementation of its activities, while the program in Uganda avoided embedding religion in their activities. This seems logical considering the fact that the DRC program was funded and maintained by a Pentecostal church system, while the program in Uganda was maintained by a purely non-profit organization. This is why the program in Uganda strongly relied on the community's traditional healing mechanisms which performed cleansing rituals upon child's return to the community without taking active part in, or coordinating, such efforts. However, although they were not involved in the cleansing ceremonies, both programs did conduct sensitization work, and in the case of the DRC, the reintegration agents spent considerable effort in addressing the issue with the community elders, utilizing their status and position in the community to advocate the children's innocence and ritual cleansing through the rehabilitation program at the CTO. In a complex belief system, such as is present in the cases of the DRC and Uganda, a mixture of both programs would have been ideal, one that does not impose different value systems on the

children as was exemplified by GMAC, but provides tools for them to receive 'official' healing as was the case of CEPAC/CRN through provision of release documents. The ideal course of action would have been for programs to work with the communities to ensure that any further ceremonial cleansing is in the best interest of the child, which could not observed in either cases.

Purpose and Structure of the Program

Just as was the case with the geopolitical concerns, Jareg's research highlighted the need of the programs to be flexible and adapt their programmatic implementations according to the actual needs in the region and the children. For this reason, having looked at the broader influences that determined the success of the RR initiatives, it is also valuable to compare the programs' structure, purpose and basic activities, to evaluate how and whether they have adapted to adequately address the needs of the their participating children's RR.

Both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC saw the need for helping children transition from war to peace, which led them to design their programs with the purpose of addressing the most vital aspects of rehabilitation and reintegration. As local initiatives, both organizations identified those vital aspects in accordance with their individual mandates and while both organizations shared the same purpose, their actual interpretation of that purpose, (as was shown in the Figure 18 in Chapter 3 and Figure 34 in Chapter 4), was different. First, CEPAC/CRN, because of its unique role and function in the region, attempted to provide an overall RR initiative, designed under one local chapter, which executed both rehabilitation activities in their transit center and educational and psychosocial reintegration through its children's clubs. GMAC however, branched out and adapted in such a way to give each local Chapter 1 main focus, as could be seen by provision of a rehabilitation center in Kasese and a vocational center in Kalongo. As a result, the structure of CEPAC/CRN enabled them to provide a spectrum of activities, while GMAC's set up focused specifically on implementation of educational reintegration and rehabilitation activities. Second, as local initiatives they utilized international norms on RR within their operational framework differently. The individual case study analysis showed that both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC programs coordinated with and received general guidelines from national and international entities on the basic scope of their programs, and that both attempted to provide a level of systematic structure to their working approach that was comparable to the RR programs run by UNICEF or Save the Children. While the guidelines received mainly outlined the coordination of the disarmament and

reception into the transit or rehabilitation center, they also provided some stipulations as to which programmatic approach should be taken and which activities conducted. It could however be noticed that CEPAC/CRN had more freedom for interpretation of the programs' particularities than GMAC. Such was evident in set up of the CEPAC/CRN's CTO, which was unique in comparison to the other CTO's in the Eastern DRC. Contrasting this notion, GMAC conducted rehabilitation center activities exactly as designed and encouraged by the INGOs in the field, and thereby mirrored the activities of the other 8 main reception centers in the region. As these concepts are important aspects of the comparative analysis of the programs, further discussion follows.

The first noticeable difference between the two programs was their interpretation of the length of time requisite for rehabilitation of the children at the transit/reception center. While GMAC based that length upon the psychological assessments and family tracing successes, ranging from 2 to 6 weeks for most children, CEPAC/CRN had a fixed time of 3 months that all children spent at the center. As mentioned earlier, GMAC's implementation was the standard set up for all rehabilitation programs in Uganda, and was a product of multiyear observations by the INGOs. Allowing children to stay at the center as little or as long as required had two major benefits. First, it allowed children to take their time to adjust and recover from any immediate injuries, malnutrition or anxieties of returning home. At the same time, it focused their recovery on returning home, because parents or family members were (in most cases) visiting the children at the center and spending time with them. This meant, that while staff at the center played a crucial role and were vital to the successful reunification, the children were not growing too attached to them, which in the case of CEPAC/CRN often led to challenges upon departure from the CTO and while adjusting to the family and community. Second, it provided relief to the center and to the child. Once children were healthy, happy and strong, which was case with those who might have spent only days or weeks with the LRA, they were ready to move on. Releasing children to their families within the timeframe of 2 to 6 weeks also allowed the center to reduce the number of children who needed to remain, saving cost and logistical effort, and enabling the staff to focus on the children who needed additional help. In other words, it allowed quality time towards rehabilitating some of the harder cases without neglecting other children. Of course, it must be indicated that this was possible because GMAC's center was one of many in the western and northern Uganda, closely coordinating with other much stronger and internationally based organizations which carried out tracing and reunification efforts. As one link within the chain, the logistics of receiving

and sending out children were easier to maintain because that burden was heavily shared and covered a much smaller geographical area than that of CEPAC/CRN. Being one of only couple transit centers in the region, which covered most of the Eastern DRC, CEPAC/CRN was conducting tracing while rehabilitating the children and attempting to rehabilitate the parents and the community. Though they received basic assistance in their tracing and reunification activities from Save the Children, a lot of the work was still sole responsibility of CEPAC/CRN's reintegration agents. Thus, the stay of 3 months was often necessary in order to make sure that the child's family was successfully traced and rehabilitated. In addition, reunification required logistical capabilities, and as such it was cumbersome to do individual reunifications. The observations during the trip to Vayana showed this clearly – the two days travel, given the terrain, the security issues and the remoteness of the villages, needed to be planned well in advance to ensure the safe arrival of the children and the staff.

In addition to the logistical concerns, CEPAC/CRN regarded the 3-month stay as a requisite length to allow the staff to address the rehabilitation appropriately. CEPAC/CRN's rehabilitation approach was based on rebuilding trust towards relationships, allowing for consistency and forging friendships among peers and the staff. While this was done in a very positive way, greatly contributing to children's rehabilitation, it also created a level of dependency that children reported afterwards made it difficult for them, especially in cases where the home and community environment was not as welcoming as the CEPAC/CRN's. Just as the length of stay differed, the level of empowerment of the returning children depended greatly on the group with which the children were involved. While both programs conducted the rehabilitation work in their transit/reception centers in close coordination with the military and child minded international agencies, the CEPAC/CRN's CTO's work actively pursued to involve children in their rehabilitation, while GMAC executed the activities as outlined by international organizations and with little inclusion of children's opinions in the process.

The reactions of returnees participating in the GMAC rehabilitation center could not be obtained directly, the children's perceptions of themselves can therefore only be speculated through the interviews conducted with the staff. The interviews indicated that some children returning from the LRA exemplified a desire to return to the notion of "innocent children" to avoid repercussions of their involvement. Through these interviews it was observed that the children were less likely to disrupt the center's working approach. In addition, since GMAC implemented international norms exactly as they were given to all rehabilitation centers in

Uganda, it never faced criticism from the international organizations; however, at the same time the exact implementation left no room for personal ingenuity, nor did it actively solicit children's contributions. Adjustments were made as lessons were being learned nationally and internationally from the mistakes of other programs and the INGOs/NGOs collective effort.

CEPAC/CRN on the other hand adopted a more lenient and relaxed facility and approach, to the point that it faced criticism in the beginning from other international organizations with experience in the management of transit and reception centers. Despite that criticism, CEPAC/CRN did not adjust to fit the views of the international organizations involved, because it had observed that the approach taken, although out of the ordinary, was well received by the disarmed children. This acceptance was a direct result of CEPAC/CRN's willingness to utilize children's ideas, opinions and suggestions in order to create the most comfortable environment for them. It could be considered that by doing this, CEPAC/CRN unknowingly utilized Fine's concept of empowering the children. While such an act was CEPAC/CRN's natural reaction rather than an informative implementation of parts of the recommendation 2.5 (*Encourage participation of youth in decision-making process*), it did contribute positively toward the notion of the importance of involving and allowing children to take part in decisions that concern them and the making of their future. Further observations showed that this was one of the few examples in both case studies where children were included in the decision making process and is therefore an even more meaningful example of why programs should involve children. As mentioned previously, returning children have a different perception of themselves and the world around them upon their return. Even though they are considered children in the international law as per guideline 1, the returning girls and boys in the DRC did not fit the traditional definition of a child within their own culture any more. Reasons could be many, but most prevalent, as remarked by Honwana, are that the children held high positions and ranks, made decisions based on life and death and learned to survive in the toughest conditions.[647] All of these events enforced a level of maturity and accountability, as well as contributed to an element of empowerment. While it is important to understand and standardize returnees' rights and privileges, the DRC case showed that it is imperative not to limit the children to the stereotypical definition of a humble, obedient and submissive child, because this did not help their rehabilitative and reintegration process. In fact, examples mentioned in the individual analysis showed that the returnees retaliated if they felt demeaned, hindering the efforts made by the staff in the transit center. The statements

[647] Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa*, 50-51.

from Colonel Kimbutu indicated that during demobilization and the *brassage* some older boys had an issue of being demobilized with and as children, because they felt as adults themselves. While such a reaction was partly due to fear of the unknown, it also indicated that the returnees wanted to be taken seriously and viewed themselves as mature and responsible, which, in addition to confirming the above mentioned UN recommendation, also confirms Jareg's concern that children should be "encouraged to take active roles in planning of their own rehabilitation and reintegration processes."[648] For this reason, the thesis views the relaxed and lenient manner in which CEPAC/CRN dealt with their returnees as more successful example of achieving RR goals of the program, despite the criticism it experienced. This leads to the conclusion that the most important aspect of CEPAC/CRN's adaptations in the implementation of the directives was the attempt to demonstrate that the programs were not about what adults believed returning children would feel most comfortable with, but about what children indicated they felt most comfortable with. The case of CEPAC/CRN confirmed that a careful adaptation of the standards should be allowed based on the local culture, or on perceived failure of the standards in the area, when staff see fit or where necessary. However, GMAC's case also indicated that such adaptation may not always be required for the program to implement its activities successfully.

Similarly, CEPAC/CRN's interpretation of vocational training programs led to a development of unique decentralized, community-based training centers which conducted their training in the community for duration of 8 months. These centers, in addition to providing basic vocational training, also served as portals to communities and were therefore examples of community-based rehabilitation and reintegration. They allowed for psychosocial reintegration through rejuvenation of trust between the children, their families and the community. In addition, they helped alleviate any prejudices between the children in the community and the returning children by allowing them to interact and learn together. However, while they had a pre-prepared curriculum for each new group and were teaching basic sewing and carpentry skills, the real educational value of the Children's Clubs varied depending on their location and could be therefore easily debated. While some Children's Clubs had tools, skilled teachers and additional resources to address any influx of children, others oftentimes trained too many children at the same time. In all of the clubs observed, there were only 2 to 4 working stations possible, allowing a limited number of children to practically implement the concepts taught while others watched. With such a basic

[648] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 5.

infrastructure—an absence of boards, classrooms, pencils notebooks and a lack of materials and tools to practice—the learning experience was strongly based on visual abilities, team work and sharing of tools, materials and knowledge. Some comments during one interview with a boy who had graduated from the Children's Club showed that he desired more in-depth training to build on the basic skills learned, while most girls interviewed felt inadequately equipped to conduct a sewing business.

Equally important to the training of the offered skills is the question of the actual skills themselves. The training only emphasized two vocational skills, which were the skills identified and set by directive as those that should be taught. While it can be viewed as a positive contribution that CEPAC/CRN utilized all resources to provide training in both sewing and carpentry, it has to be noted that such training was harming the children in the long run as it oversupplied the market with skills which might not have been utilizable in the communities in which the children lived. As a result, the children could do little with their vocations and were in competition with each other for work in bigger communities. It was observed during the interviews conducted in the shops that there were no customers, nor were the children able to confirm that they had steady flow of orders or sufficiently to cover their purchases of materials and tools. The only successful small business owner interviewed reported that his success came from offering teaching in the skill in addition to taking orders. However, he also commented that his skills were not sufficiently developed. Thus, while providing the time for learning to take place, the 8-month period spent in attending the training had more of a therapeutic than educational effect.

Despite the deficiencies in the educational area, the provision, structure and the effect of the Children's Clubs was still seen as positive, because they provided a safe zone for the children after leaving the CTO, helped the reintegration agents in their attempts to follow up with the children and the community, and because they did provide some level of training – a very rare opportunity for the region considering its political situation and the internal displacement and insecurity. Finally, these clubs were the only means through which CEPAC/CRN kept in touch with the communities and reinforced the notion of community reintegration. While not truly designed to address community-based initiatives, the clubs were in many areas the only efforts to assist children's reintegration, not because the communities did not care, but because they did not have the means or the infrastructure to accomplish it themselves. Thus, while not a perfect answer to community-based initiatives and despite their

insufficiencies in quality of skills training, the Children's Clubs played an important role in assisting children to find their place in the community slowly and in a less threatening way.

In contrast, GMAC worked with community leaders to identify potential learners that would participate in their vocational training. This assumed that children were back in the community long enough that their scholastic needs were known to the community leaders. Because the 2-month intensive training ran independent of the rehabilitation efforts, its sole focus was to assist the education based reintegration through development of a sustainable livelihood and the rejuvenation of the self-esteem of each child by developing potential and enhancing their vocational skills. This meant that the program was not fully involved in psychosocial rehabilitation, and that its only contacts with the community-based initiatives were the coordination efforts in listing the next group of children who were to participate in the training. While this model was executed very effectively, it could only be effective if there was effort at the community level to address the psychosocial reintegration needs of the children between their stay in the reception center and their participation in the vocational training. Through interviews conducted it could not be confirmed whether the communities in northern Uganda assisted in the psychosocial reintegration of the returning children. But, the training center staff commented that sometimes they received learners with unresolved psychosocial issues, which they attempted to resolve while the children were in training. Not being sufficiently or adequately equipped to do so, such intervention, though well intended, can represent a challenge to the overall success of the program. GMAC's attempt to address any interventions can be credited to the quality and training of the staff, a topic that will be discussed later in this section.

From its educational perspective, the program stands out as an example of a positive effort in the community. First, offering a greater range of vocations, having assessed their need on the labor market and customized them for each new group, the skills learning was done in such a way to be of use to the children for the most of the vocations. The real strength of the program to address such market-based questions came from their built-in assessment at the beginning of the training with each individual learner, to ensure that they could utilize the skill to earn a livelihood in their own community. Thus it anticipated questions of availability of tools and electricity.

Second, GMAC's curriculum and class-based teaching allowed the teachers to manage a class of around 25 learners per 5 different classes, providing sufficient time to focus on the individual learners. This enhanced the learning experience, brought consistency and routine

and taught the learners a certain discipline for life. In addition, because the classes were of a manageable size, it enabled all of the learners to participate in the practical application of the learned theory. Children commented that the hands-on experience was what they valued most. However, the same question that was raised with the CEPAC/CRN's vocational training could be raised here as well regarding how the adequacy of just 2 months of intensive training. While the length of the program was decided to be 2 months in order to allow as many children to participate as possible, it ran the risk that the benefits of the training could get lost due to the shortness of the training period. Some skills taught at the center would have required months of training, such as welding and carpentry. Considering that children were being trained in potentially dangerous and hazardous vocations, working with fire, knives, welding machines and other dangerous tools, additional familiarization time with the tools and their hazards would have been beneficial, but seemed not to be dire needed according to the comments made by the learners.

Finally, by bringing the learners to a centrally established facility from different districts, the program often mixed cultures, languages and tribes, which made the learning experience challenging, but had a positive effect on the learners. Because children came from various districts they were unfamiliar with each other, which could have had the potential to create anxieties. However, it did exactly the opposite. Interviews and observations showed that the children felt more open to identify themselves in a new light as learners and peers, built new friendships without stigmatization and prejudices, quickly creating support systems and friendships which helped them through the learning routine. This ability to forge new identity and make new friends could be seen as an element of psychosocial reintegration, as it has great therapeutic qualities, validating once again Fine's concept of empowerment as a reintegration tool.

As addressed in Chapter 2, efforts within the communities were vital to the long-term reintegration of the children. This is why identifying positive influence and the effect the vocational training centers in the communities were crucial to the overall success of the programs. Interviews with the community leaders and parents in the DRC case confirmed that despite insufficiencies of the program, the Children's Clubs allowed for a greater connection with the community and were seen as a positive influence on the reintegration of the children long-term. Similar feedback from the community leaders and other NGOs in Kalongo confirmed that GMAC's role as skills provider had a positive effect on the reintegration of the children who have gone through the center. Thus, though there were recognizable

insufficiencies in both programs, their unique features contributed towards reintegration of children, in the case of CEPAC/CRN because they were only initiatives in the communities and in the case of GMAC because of the versatility of the training. In addition, the cases reinforced the point that the programs should not be expected to implement all activities envisaged by RR initiatives: as CEPAC/CRN's case showed, they risk losing educational quality, but as the case of GMAC showed, it is important that they be sufficiently prepared to address psychosocial reintegration needs as part of their programmatic implementation. In other words, programs need to find the balance between focusing on their specific area of work, while at the same time ensuring that their programs sufficiently address rehabilitation and reintegration needs of children. This could also entail greater effort in educating the communities and helping them develop community-based initiatives to aid in the long-term reintegration process, and conducting follow up visits, in order to coordinate with the communities and community leaders, or offer any assistance if needed. The latter was identified as one of the areas where both programs were struggling, and agrees with the findings of SWAY 2007 on Uganda, which reported that there was "limited follow-up care."[649] Due to the number of children and communities to follow up with, as well as the remoteness of the areas and the lack of resources and people to conduct them, both programs decided that follow up activities would not be given as much attention. However, children's comments in both cases showed that follow up and regular visits would have been beneficial to help their long-term RR.

Staff and Program's Management

While the overall structure and execution of the activities was an important factor for the success of the programs, the case studies also indicated that the individual staff and management members were vital to the effectiveness of the programs' implementation. In her research, Jareg did not specifically address the importance the staffing and management can play in RR programs, but she did highlight the need for programs to be provided with sufficient training to allow for proper implementation of programs. That such training of all staff was highly important to the overall success of the program's work was specifically noticeable in the case of CEPAC/CRN, whose great success in many of the auxiliary activities, as well as in the CTO was strongly enhanced by the presence of one specific individual, the

[649] Annan, Blattman and Mazurana, "The Survey of War Affected Youth," Past and present programming for youth associated with the LRA.

director of the program, Edmond Pinos. As the director of the program, it was logical that he put significant effort into the program; however, it was not the effort alone, but his unique background, knowledge and perseverance that allowed the program to flourish. Many accounts and interviews throughout Chapter 3 confirmed the uniqueness of CEPAC/CRN's program was as a result of Pinos's leadership. While this is a great tribute to Pinos and proves the power of one person to contribute to program's success, it is problematic because program's successes and failures depend on that person's attitude rather than on the collective team effort. If for any reason Pinos was removed from the structure of the program, the program would struggle to survive. In addition, it by default put everyone else's efforts in the shadow, possibly inviting hostility, envy and disunion – all detrimental to the success of the program. However, given the situation and the conflict history of the region, a presence of one strong individual was vital for the survival of the program. Pinos's presence was not only vital to implementation success of the program, but was also crucial contributor toward establishing safety of staff and the community at large. Interviews showed that he exercised his leadership in a thoughtful and organized manner, empowering the staff before the children and the communities. Since many of the staff members were women, it further taught valuable lessons on gender equality and instilled respect towards women, which was crucial for the safety of the female staff working with demobilized male child soldiers and for the implementation of the work in the communities who had adopted different gender values.

While a similar attitude towards the role of women in the program could be observed in the case of GMAC, the program's implementation success was based on team effort. The teachers gained respect by the mere fact that they had the knowledge and were willing to transmit it to the learners under the conditions of respect and an attitude of learning. Creating a balance through the team effort approach meant that the progress of the program was easier maintained and program's survival was not reliant on any individual.

Finally, the interviews with the GMAC and CEPAC/CRN staff revealed that they did not have same level of training. This contributed to different level of self-confidence. Conversations with the CEPAC/CRN staff confirmed that they often lacked confidence because they learned through trial and error, and that children easily spotted teachers and staff who were not confident using it for their advantage. Thus, while hands-on experience was vital, cases showed that training was essential for the presence and self-confidence required to ensure the success of the programs. It should be noted, that while in situations such as the case of CEPAC/CRN, where staff will have only a basic level of training, because of the presence

of international entities and consistent coordination with the UNICEF, MONUC and Save the Children, more could have been done to train them. The training would have been even more beneficial because the staff showed great desire for further learning, not only concerning the implementation of specific activities, but also the international guidelines, conventions and standards.

The general comparative analysis of the two cases showed that both programs had their specific strengths and weaknesses. As such, while CEPAC/CRN successfully implemented its CTO activities, because of the bonds created between the staff and the children, it also created a level of dependency which made it harder on some children to reintegrate once they returned to their communities. GMAC staff created a good rapport with their children, but was primarily concerned with ensuring that children were involved in reestablishing bonds with their family members. In comparison of the two cases, GMAC's model was more effective and ideal towards achieving RR. It should be mentioned, that while GMAC model is more efficient, given the family tracing challenges and sole responsibility CEPAC/CRN had in conducting reunification activities, in CEPAC/CRN's case the GMAC's model would have only been possible if another international organization took over family tracing and community sensitization work and if there was more CTOs closer to the localities to which the children were returning which would enable families to participate in their rehabilitation efforts.

While both programs provided vocational training centers whose ultimate objectives differed to some extent, it was obvious that the CEPAC/CRN's Children's Clubs were more than vocational training centers, as they were the only attempt of the program to conduct community-based initiatives. As a result of that, their presence was vital to the psychosocial RR of the children. GMAC's centers on the other hand assumed their original role of providing training to the children and addressing their educational needs. As such, CEPAC/CRN employed social workers as well as professionals in their Children's Clubs, while GMAC employed highly trained and educated teachers. Because they were able to reach out into the communities to a greater extent, the CEPAC/CRN's Children's Clubs seemed to provide a more effective model of community-based initiatives. However, their educational value was lesser to that of the GMAC training center. This comparison clearly showed that given the resources and tools, it was not possible to address all elements of RR within one single program. This is why both programs showed insufficiently developed follow up activities and struggled to keep up with the demands of visiting on regular basis the growing

number of children. However, in the case of CEPAC/CRN, the presence of Children's Clubs helped compensate for the lack of follow up in at least some communities, while GMAC attempted to compensate by inquiring from community leaders during coordination meetings. Neither were perfect models, but again, given the circumstances, they compensated to the best of their abilities through these activities.

The following section will conduct an analysis of the working list guidelines, in order to assess their effectiveness in helping the RR programs design their activities. As this analysis pointed out some challenges and weaknesses of the two programs, it will be a task of the following section to analyze whether such challenges and weaknesses could be avoided through the application of the recommendations within the working list guidelines. Finally, through the analysis it will be possible to reflect on the extent to which these recommendations and guidelines have been appropriately placed within their context in the working list, or whether a rearrangement of the guidelines and their recommendations would provide a better tool to the programs developing RR initiatives.

III. Reflection and Analysis of the RR Guidelines Working List

The general comparative analysis shed light on the similarities and differences in the programs' structures and implementation successes and challenges and further facilitated reflection on the value of the reintegration approaches of the two programs. Additional analysis is required to assess the effectiveness of the working list recommendations. As was established in Chapter 2, the individual guidelines and their recommendations in the working list have been assembled together for this thesis from the major international documents on the reintegration and rehabilitation of children associated with armed groups. As a collective, the list incorporates most aspects of what the international community considers as necessary for successful RR. As a result, the thesis' main hypothesis questioned whether the implementation of the working list by programs would lead to successful reintegration and rehabilitation of children on a long-term basis. This hypothesis will be tested by close examination of the guidelines in the context of the case study observations and analyses. It should be noted that while reflection will be provided at the end, the analysis itself will exclude those guidelines which do not fall under the jurisdiction of the local NGO initiatives. In particular, such was the case of the *Guideline 9: Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms*, which clearly showed that out of 7 recommendations presented only recommendations 9.3

(*RR programs to adopt the restorative justice principle and be applied always in the best interest of the child*) and 9.6 (*Use local approaches and traditional healing mechanisms*) could be implemented by local NGOs, while other 5 recommendations were under the authority of the national legislature and peacekeeping operations. Since both of these recommendations address psychosocial RR notions, as they are identified in the *Guideline 7: Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects*, they will be addressed and analyzed as part of that guideline.

Similarly, it was assumed in Chapter 2 that the local initiatives could not assume a leadership role for the execution of the *Guideline 2: Encourage Local, National and International Coordination of DDR Programs*, and would as such have only limited influence on the implementation success of the recommendations within this guideline. The individual cases showed that both programs participated in coordination efforts as per recommendation 2.1 (*Coordination of DDR programs among the UN, specialized agencies and civil society*), and the case of CEPAC/CRN even indicated that the program effectively implemented recommendations 2.2 and 2.6, both dealing with sensitization of the armed groups to achieve release of children, and in particular girls. However, since recommendations 2.2 (*Sensitization of non-state actors to be conducted as a joint effort*) and 2.6 (*Create special measures to achieve release and RR of girls*) are activities within the broader context of DDR, it cannot be generalized that all local initiatives will be able to conduct such efforts. As a result, only the second portion of the recommendation 2.6, achieving RR of girls, will be addressed during the discussions reflecting the *Guideline 5: Special Case of a Girl Child.* It should be noted that recommendation 2.1 is valuable to the discussion on the generalizebility of the guidelines' applicability to other cases, and as such will be addressed during the discussion on issues which cover all aspects of the programs' RR initiatives.

After analyzing the cases according to the working list guidelines, the analysis will reevaluate the working list itself. This analysis of the effectiveness of the working list in the contest of CEPAC/CRN's and GMAC's work contributes towards recognizing the feasibility and the applicability of the guidelines and their recommendations elsewhere. Identifying whether the guidelines and recommendations presented in the working list can be utilized to design programs and activities to address RR of children is of vital importance for several reasons. First, the analysis of the list and its validation in the two cases presented would enable more general questions to be posed whether the working list could be implemented in all cases, allowing for a more systematic and structured RR efforts. Second, if the general

analysis of the case studies and the analysis of their work through the working list point toward similar weaknesses of the programs, the working list can validate the conceptual thinking of the international community and present a tool for distinguishing between guidelines and recommendations that have a direct effect on the success of child RR. The existence of an effective working list of RR guidelines would help those designing programs to focus their resources more effectively. Third, as was shown, there are RR issues, which fall under larger DDR initiatives and cannot be implemented by local NGOs, but need to be addressed by national entities. The cases clearly indicate this, and contribute to pointing out to all parties involved their area of accountability and responsibility, allowing for more accurate monitoring and reporting. As a result of the existence of a working list, NGOs would not be held responsible for initiatives that they cannot perform. Finally, the analysis of the guidelines and their recommendations can show weaknesses and gaps in the presented list, which should be addressed in order to focus the guidelines towards becoming the tool for achieving successful RR of children.

During the analysis of the individual cases, it was observed that there were guidelines which addressed issues that cross over all aspects of the RR, in addition to those guidelines which focused on single events, and finally those that covered the same topical interests and could therefore be grouped together. In particular, *Guideline 1: Set the age of a Child at 18, prohibiting all forms of recruitment for those Younger*, *Guideline 5: Special Case of a Girl Child*, *Guideline 6: Medical Assistance to Children with Disabilities and other Health/Physical RR Efforts* and *Guideline 7: Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects* addressed issues which reflected all of the aspects of the child RR and as such can be considered cross-cutting guidelines. They will therefore be addressed and analyzed as broad spectra guidelines and not as single event guidelines. It should be noted that because the recommendations found in guidelines 6 and 7 have similar topical interests, the psychosocial and health issues will be grouped together to provide for a more thorough analysis. Finally, guidelines 1 and 5 will also be grouped together, because they address specific characteristics of children's status, namely gender and age. As RR efforts have been facing strong challenges in dealing with the age delineation and disproportionate gender-based violence, the two guidelines fall under a similar topical interest and allow for better analysis of the implementation successes of the guidelines in the two case studies.

Guidelines classified in the single event guidelines do not address a one-time activity, but rather focus on a more specific, narrower area of implementation. This concept is reflected in

the *Guideline 3: Family Tracing, Reunification and Support during RR Efforts*, *Guideline 4: Community-Based Support and (re-)recruitment Prevention* and finally in the *Guideline 8: Education, Vocational Training and Livelihood Initiatives*. All three guidelines cover important aspects of what contributes towards successful RR, as was identified in the Chapter 2, and all three focus their recommendations on one special area of the RR, all of which happen after the child has been through a reception/transit center and constitute efforts towards achieving long-term RR. However guidelines 3 and 4 cover similar topical interests, because family and community RR efforts need to be coordinated and executed in parallel to achieve the best possible effect. To avoid repetition of concepts these two will therefore be grouped together during the analysis.

Cross-Cutting Issues Guidelines

Guideline 1, guideline 5, guideline 6 and guideline 7 all had the same characteristic – while not being specific activities, their implementation was present in implementation of other recommendations, and build the framework on which programs should design their activities and initiatives. This means that these recommendations within these guidelines should be woven in all of the child RR programs, be they broad as CEPAC/CRN's program, or focusing on specific initiatives, as was the case with GMAC's program, to ensure the best interest of the child, as it is defined in the international law standards.

Guidelines 1 and 5: Age and Gender RR

The appropriateness of a RR response for the age and gender of the retuning children has been an issue of concern since the beginning of the DDR efforts. As was seen from the discussions in Chapters 1 and 2, while international documents strongly urged that attention be given to both age and gender issues in association with armed groups involvement, past research consistently showed that girls in general and both gender groups ages 15 through 18 were stigmatized, benefiting little from RR programs.[650] The failures of the past programs and the efforts of the international organizations has contributed to a greater knowledge and implementation of internationally developed standards and guidelines among the local NGOs in Uganda and the DRC. In this sensitization effort, local NGOs, such as CEPAC/CRN and GMAC have received their general guidelines on how to conduct their programs to adequately

[650] See Denov, "Girl Soldiers and Human Rights," 813-836; Kostelny, "What About the Girls?," 505-512; Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration during an Ongoing Conflict," 497-504; Farr, "The Importance of a gender perspective to successful DDR," 26; Denov, "Is the Culture Always Right?"

address the age and gender issues of the returning children. It could be observed that Denov's concept of in particular "girls' invisibility and marginalization" was not present at all.[651] In fact, the opposite was the case. Both NGOs took the general guidelines seriously and gave special attention to the creation of gender balanced programs, which would effectively address the challenges girls might face during their rehabilitation and reintegration process. Just as important as including girls in all stages of the RR effectively, both programs coordinated with national and local entities to include the age group 15 through 18 in the implementation of their programs. This inclusion was given both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC as a directive from UNICEF and the respective national governments, thereby reflecting the recommendation 2.1 (*Coordination of DDR programs among the UN, specialized agencies and civil society*). As a collective effort to disarm and demobilize all children ages 18 and below, and through the coordination efforts which are a direct result of international intervention, CEPAC/CRN and GMAC implemented both recommendation 1.1 and also 1.2, including all children of both genders up to age 24 in case of CEPAC/CRN, and up to age 26 in the case GMAC, in all of their programs and activities. As part of this concerted effort, both NGOs also adopted the directive to create activities and initiatives to address the recommendation 2.6 and create special measures to achieve RR of girls. As a result of this, it can be concluded that both GMAC and CEPAC/CRN actively and knowingly pursued the implementation of the guideline 1 recommendations, as a response to the national and international efforts to implement the recommendations of the guideline 2.

Further, the observations showed that the inclusion of children, ages 18 and younger as well as the age group 18 though 24 as per recommendation 1.2, was beneficial even though challenging to the programs. First, it addressed immediate concerns in regards to the juvenile justice and allowed the execution of the restorative justice system. The inclusion of children up to ages 24 helped avoid creation of the next generation of violators, validating Wessells' statement that "justice for child soldiers is less about imposing penalties on them than about defining reparations and group processes that heal the social wounds."[652] Second, the inclusion of the age group helped the community reintegration initiatives. If the task was placed on the communities alone, communities themselves would not be able to achieve reintegration of the child soldiers due to lack of knowledge and resources. By setting in place a more structured approach and opportunities for learning, programs contributed toward reintegration of a

[651] Denov, "Girl Soldiers and Human Rights," 813, 824, 826; Denov, "Is the Culture Always Right?"
[652] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 224.

greater percentage of demobilized persons in a community, alleviating the burdens that would otherwise be the responsibility of individual villages and families. Considering the circumstances prevailing in the region, communities in eastern DRC and to extent in northern Uganda would not be sufficiently equipped to tackle the issues on their own. As a result, the communities would either exhaust all of their resources or feel animosity towards the children and the young adults, creating another cycle of violence. Third, many of the returning young adults were children at the time of their abduction or active association with the armed groups. Because of that, their mental and emotional, as well as physical needs were that of children and needed to be addressed in an environment more conducive to children rather than to adults. Kostelny observed that similar conditions existed in Sierra Leone, in particular with the cases of girl mothers and rape victims.[653]

However, while past research observed general insufficiencies of services and activities to address the RR of girl mothers and rape victims, the opposite was true in the case of CEPAC/CRN, and to an extent in the case of GMAC. Both programs took great care in designing and executing their programs in such a manner that gender issues were addressed adequately and to the best of programs' abilities. This was observed in the presence of the recommendations 5.1 (*Special attention to reunification needs of girl soldiers*) and 5.5 (*Girls to benefit from the RR efforts*) in all of the activities that both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC implemented. In addition, both programs closely coordinated with health care providers, to ensure that any physical and emotional needs of girl mothers and rape victims could be addressed adequately and with no costs for the girl. Through the provision of reconstructive surgeries (CEPAC/CRN) and through standing arrangements with the hospitals in Kalongo (GMAC) and in Beni (CEPAC/CRN), the programs can be seen as examples of successful implementation of the guideline 5's recommendations, in particular of the recommendation 5.2 (*Establish support programs to deal with emotional and physical consequences of rape*), but also in fulfilling the recommendations of the guideline 6's recommendations, in particular portions of recommendations 6.2 (*Ensure adequate rehabilitative care, including prosthetic limbs, wheelchairs, reconstructive surgery (if possible) etc*), 6.4 (*Support existing health services and improve response capacities to cases of HIV/AIDS, victims of rape, drug and alcohol abuse, etc*) and 6.6 (*Provide clinical support to treat physical injuries of rape*), all calling for health services and the provision of adequate care to the victims of rape. While girls are not the sole victims of rape and sexual abuse during their involvement with the armed

[653] Kostelny, "What About the Girls?," 507.

groups, as Jareg suggested, their experiences and the implications of such actions will be different due to their gender.[654] However, Jareg also pointed out that rape of boys should be given context and needed to be properly addressed in RR initiatives.[655] No information on number of boys in GMAC's and CEPAC/CRN's programs who were sexually abused could be obtained because staff was not aware of any such cases and did not actively address it in the program. There are no statistical reports on the number of boy rape victims in Uganda and the DRC, but reports have alluded to rape of boys taking place, especially in the case of the DRC.[656] This shows even more vividly how important it is that the recommendations in the guidelines 5 and 6 that consider rape and consequences of rape be gender unbiased. Because they were attending to the needs of their female returnees vigorously both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC programs were aware of the consequences that sexual abuse had on the girl child, which was a positive development. However, the programs did little to address the boy rape victims and as such might have failed to address serious injuries and possible traumas boys were silently suffering.

Limited data could be collected regarding the perception and challenges girl mothers and their children faced in their families and communities. However, sensitization on the issue was conducted, and the programs were aware of day to day concerns faced by the returnee girl mothers as well as their children, specifically in connection with participation in vocational training opportunities. This went along the lines of the research conducted by Apio in Uganda 2008, showing that while girl mothers had positive experiences with reception/transit centers and NGO based programs and were generally welcomed home by their families and communities, they struggled to participate in vocational training opportunities and to break from the cycle of poverty because of the burden of social prejudices associated with raising a child alone.[657] While they did not have any activities associated with the provision of educational opportunities for either gender (as per recommendation 5.6 - *Grant girls access to education and schooling and provide vocational training and income earning opportunities*), both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC attempted to break that cycle of poverty by including girl mothers in their vocational training opportunities. It was identified that while their structure

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[654] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 6.
[655] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 6.
[656] International Centre for Migration Health and Development, "Rape in the DRC is not a new problem but it is a serious one," International Centre for Migration Health and Development Blog, http://icmhd.wordpress.com/2010/09/17/rape-in-the-drc-is-not-a-new-problem-but-it-is-a-serious-one/ (accessed December 6, 2010).
[657] Eunice Apio, "Forgotten Children," 5, 8.

and objectives, as well as their end products differed, the vocation training opportunities were open to both boys and girls, not excluding anyone up to ages 24 (CEPAC/CRN) and 26 (GMAC), or girl mothers, as per recommendation 5.3 (*Include girl mothers in livelihood and vocational training programs*) from participation. GMAC's efforts in encouraging girl mothers went to the extent to coordinate possible day care or ways for the community to take care of the learners' children while they were at the center in Kalongo, which contributed toward implementation of the second half of the recommendation 8.3 (*Involve children with disabilities and girl mothers in the programs-provide child care for the mothers*). Discussion in Chapter 3 showed that this was not feasible in CEPAC/CRN's case, but that the Children's Clubs allowed the mothers to bring their children along, when no other solutions could be found. All of these efforts show that the different forms of invisibility and marginalization, as observed by Denov in past research of the programmatic implementations of local NGOs were at least attended to and addressed by the two programs. In addition, the cases show discrepancy from the academic research conducted by Coulter in the case of Sierra Leone's attempts to address the issues of female fighters, showing clearly that the standards and directives have been revised to accommodate the insufficiencies of the past experiences to better address them in current programs.[658] It also showed that the local initiatives received training on the special case of a girl child in such a manner that they knew how to relate the importance of it in their work with girls, their families and the communities.

It should be noted that this inclusion in the programmatic implementation was sometimes based on the best practices of the region and adopted the current trends of other programs, such as providing training in sewing (CEPAC/CRN and GMAC) and in bakery (GMAC) as the stereotypical vocations for girls. However, when asked about rigidness of gender division in attending training of a specific vocation, both programs stated that they did allow girls to attend carpentry, brick laying and welding classes, according to the girls' interests. However, they also commented that girls rarely decided to be trained in the non-typical vocations for girls. It could be therefore concluded that the programs did not enforce the stereotypes on the girls, but that these were already present in the cultural context and girls' upbringing.

Finally, in her article on the importance of addressing gender issues in DDR processes, Vanessa Farr stated that the "women's absence from the planning through to the implementation stages of the process, had a critical impact on the extent to which women's

[658] Coulter, "Reconciliation or Revenge."

(and girls') particular needs could be anticipated and catered for."[659] If this reasoning is to be followed, then it can be deduced that both GMAC and CEPAC/CRN were so successful in their implementation of guideline 5's recommendations because of the presence of women in leadership, coordination and management roles both in the local chapters of the NGOs, as well as in their national offices. In addition to addressing the special issues of girl returnees, by employing and assigning responsible roles to women, both programs were also implementing recommendation 5.4 (*Conduct sensitization and empower women in the community*), providing role models to the returnees and to the communities, thereby assisting them to venture out "to become experts in areas that are not traditionally associated with women's peace-building."[660]

As was indicated earlier, guidelines 1 and 5 are cross-cutting issues, meaning that their recommendations should apply to all programs. The cases showed that implementation of recommendations 1.1 and 1.2 can be achieved successfully, with flexibility to incorporate the ages as per directives from INGOs and national entities. In addition, interviews and discussions pointed out that such inclusion of young adults between ages 18 and 24 (26) in child programming was beneficial to achieving their RR without obstructing the RR of those younger than 18. The cases confirmed the applicability of the recommendations in the guideline 1, validating it in its entirety. Because they should be action oriented recommendations, *should and could* terminology are omitted; and since they address age sensitive issues, discussing inclusion of what constitutes children and young adults within the international law system, the name of the guideline has been shortened to more correctly encompass its recommendations to *Age Sensitive Issues*. Finally, the recommendations in this guideline not only can, they should be implemented in all activities conducted by local initiatives and NGOs. The RR guideline working list will then be as follows:

Guideline 1: Age Sensitive Issues		
Local NGOs/ Cross-Cutting Issue	1.	Include all children and youth below age of 18
	2.	Cater to those between 18 and 24, where needed

Recommendations relevant to the guideline 5 could also be found in other guidelines, such as guidelines 2 and 8, showing that there is a need for the concern revolving around girl child and her inclusion in the DDR and RR process to be adequately addressed in all of

[659] Farr, "The Importance of a gender perspective to successful DDR," 30.
[660] Farr, "The Importance of a gender perspective to successful DDR," 29.

activities, initiatives and programmatic planning. The comparative analysis of the two cases showed that both NGOs received very clear directives on the inclusion of the girls in their programs and their implementation efforts were regarded as successful and effective. Furthermore, the comparative analysis showed that the guidelines constituted a helpful checklist in ensuring that the issues of a girl child were attended to in all aspects of the RR programming. However, there are two points that need to be made concerning the guideline 5 recommendations.

First, recommendation 5.5 (*Girls to benefit from RR efforts*) is a repetitive recommendation and appears to address more of a general statement rather than a specific recommendation that should be implemented. The goal of the entire guideline is to fulfill recommendation 5.5, in other words to allow girls to benefit from the RR efforts. As such, the aim of the recommendation 5.5 is already integrated in all of the other recommendations within this guideline. As a result of this assessment, recommendation 5.5 is omitted from the list and added to recommendation 5.1, addressing the implementation of it on a programmatic rather than an individual activity level. The new proposed recommendation is *Integrate RR needs specific to a girl child in programs and activities*. This not only calls for action, it also indicated that programs must elaborate what are the RR needs specific to the girl child within their cultural context and develop programs that would adequately address them.

Second, while it was identified that girls have been marginalized and invisible in the past RR programs, it should be also noted that the same mistake should not be made in the case of boys, when considering certain events, which are most often linked to womanhood, such as rape. Jareg and Narrainen discussed such, clearly showing that programs not only need to be sensitive to the needs of a girl child, but rather to gender sensitive issues.[661] As such, recommendation 5.2 (*Establish support programs to deal with emotional and physical consequences of rape*) should indicate that programs should consider both genders when designing programs and activities. To emphasize this, the name of the guideline has been changed to *Gender Sensitive Issues*, to signal that while there is a need to ensure girl child is adopted in RR programming, there are gender sensitive issues, which should not exclude or marginalize boys because they are inheritably connected to female gender. Such would then also signal that recommendation 5.6 (*Ensure confidentiality*) also applies to both genders. Finally, this should also indicate that there might be a need for further recommendations to be

[661] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 6; Sheila Narrainen, "The gender perspective and the right of boys during conflict."

included to encompass gender issues particular to boys, which might not have been addressed thus far. The RR guideline working list will then be as follows:

Guideline 5: Gender Sensitive Issues		
Local NGOs/ Cross-Cutting Issue	1.	Integrate RR needs specific to a girl child in programs and activities
	2.	Establish support programs to deal with emotional and physical consequences of rape (both genders)
	3.	Include girl mothers in livelihood and vocational training programs
	4.	Conduct sensitization to empower women in the community
	5.	Grant girls access to education and schooling and provide vocational training and income earning opportunities
	6.	Ensure confidentiality

Guidelines 6 and 7: Psychosocial and Health RR

While the local chapters of CEPAC/CRN and GMAC were not able to directly respond to many of the recommendations in the *Guideline 6: Medical Assistance to Children with Disabilities and other Health/Physical RR Efforts* because they lacked the necessary knowledge, resources or the facilities, both programs still managed to receive assistance in the implementation of this guideline by outsourcing and coordinating with other programs (CEPAC/CRN Goma) and institutions (local hospitals in Beni and in Kalongo). This was one of the few guidelines where successful coordination effort was created in particular by CEPAC/CRN in order to realize recommendations 5.2 (*Establish support programs to deal with emotional and physical consequences of rape*), 6.2 (*Ensure adequate rehabilitative care, including prosthetic limbs, wheelchairs, reconstructive surgery (if possible) etc*), 6.4 (*Support existing health services and improve response capacities to cases of HIV/AIDS, victims of rape, drug and alcohol abuse, etc*) and 6.6 (*Provide clinical support to treat physical injuries of rape*). Looking at the overall medical and health coverage, neither of the programs had their own medical facilities, but orchestrated the implementation of the recommendation 6.1 (*Provide child-focused basic health services in the communities and centers*) very effectively, because the standing arrangements allowed them greater flexibility in providing medical help to the children without overburdening own resources or requiring additional funding and expertise. However, it should be noted that this provision in the DRC's case could only occur in the communities where CEPAC/CRN had their CTO and Children's Clubs, as well as where hospital facilities were available in near proximity, and in Uganda's case in the areas where the reception center and vocational training center operated. This meant that it was not possible for either of the programs to provide health services to all of the communities to

which the children were returning, as they themselves depended on the existence of a health care infrastructure.

The lack of own on-site facilities meant that neither of the two programs was sufficiently equipped to address rehabilitative care, such as provision of prosthetic limbs or wheelchairs, as recommendation 6.2 suggested. This raises a question whether local initiatives should be required to implement all of the recommendations within guideline 6. Since some of these guidelines are focusing on more specialized medical care, their implementation must be addressed by properly trained staff and agencies specializing in such care. Forwarding serious cases to specialized agencies by both programs contributes towards viewing the implementation of this guideline as successful, despite the fact that both programs did very little on their own. The analysis in the previous section clearly pointed out that staff in CEPAC/CRN's or GMAC facilities did not possess the knowledge or the ability to deal with serious medical cases or physical injuries. As part of the psychosocial RR, outsourcing such services contributed to ensuring that all of medical needs were properly met, traumas properly dealt with by adequately trained staff.

Individual cases showed that CEPAC/CRN and GMAC did directly perform some activities. However, these activities reflected more towards the efforts for psychosocial RR, or, as the programs termed it, holistic healing, and are represented by the recommendation 6.3 (*Prevent separation of children with disabilities and institutionalization of children (addiction, aggressive behavior)*), and partially by recommendations 6.5 (*Train staff to deal with more challenging cases*) and 7.5 (*Avoid individual therapy and adopt all inclusive approach in the community-based programs*) focusing on the treatment of behavior challenging cases. Due to the type of recruitment, CEPAC/CRN did not have as many cases of severe mental or physical disabilities as was the case with GMAC children. However, the children who arrived at CEPAC/CRN's CTO seemed to be more rebellious and needy for social behavior relearning than the children in GMAC's reception center. Those returning from the LRA seemed to be more broken and less rebellious than the children returning from participating in different Mai-Mai groups.[662] The research of Wessells on effects of the PTSD in former child soldiers confirmed both manifestations of the trauma exhibited by the returnees, confirming that while a small percentage might exhibit serious effects of PTSD, they are "long-lasting and can take a very significant toll in terms of suffering, social relations, problems in living, and

[662] Colonel Emmanuel Viktor Kimputu, interview; UNICEF Child Protection Officer, interview; Caroline Aloyu, interview.

productivity."[663] It was not possible to verify this from the GMAC reception center staff, but the UNICEF Kampala and Gulu officers did confirm that reception centers in Uganda all employed qualified personnel and operated under the same directive to avoid separation of children and placement into institutions, unless the cases were too severe to be dealt with at the reception center.[664] In the case of CEPAC/CRN, it was evident that the staff was not adequately trained to deal with challenging behavior cases. Most of their knowledge was collected through hands-on experience, in an attempt to act on the directives given from the CEPAC/CRN office in Goma and the UNICEF office in Kinshasa. This comparison would lead one to assume that CEPAC/CRN was insufficiently prepared to deal with the demands, however the element that worked in their favor was in agreement with Jareg's research, stating that it was "vital to any rehabilitation program to have developed a detailed understanding of the central ideologies of the armed forces, the way children have been treated, the motivations behind this, how the armed group's ideology has been explained to them, how atrocities have been justified, as well as the specific training children have gone through."[665] CEPAC/CRN's staff had great insight into the different armed groups operating in the region, conducted regular sensitization with them, and as mentioned in Chapter 3, some of the staff had participated with the groups and therefore had a detailed knowledge of all of the aspects Jareg stipulated as important towards achieving rehabilitation of the returnees. While GMAC staff did not have contact with the LRA fractions to conduct sensitization, the group's ideologies and treatment of children in their ranks were widely known. The basic knowledge collected coupled with qualification of the staff made GMAC's reception center more efficient to ensure proper treatment of the PTSD, while CEPAC/CRN's approach contributed more towards rebuilding of social etiquette.

The implementation of the two recommendations also contributed towards children's holistic healing, or in another words in pursuing the psychosocial RR, as per *Guideline 7: Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects*. Since achieving the holistic healing was a prerogative of both programs, it was easily observed that all activities conducted aimed at providing a platform for it to take place. The concept of this holistic healing was not only present in their medical and health assistance, but also in the implementation of their reception/transit center activities, as well as in the implementation of certain juvenile justice principles in their vocational training and reunification activities, supporting Russell's et al

[663] Wessells, "Trauma, Culture and Community."
[664] UNICEF Child Protection Officer, interview.
[665] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 3-4.

concept of psychosocial programming.[666] In particular, CEPAC/CRN applied recommendations 9.3 (*RR programs to adopt the restorative justice principle and be applied always in the best interest of the child*) and 9.6 (*Use local approaches and traditional healing mechanisms*) during its sensitization activities with the armed groups, as well during rehabilitation and sensitization activities with the families and communities, in order to ensure that the transition and return into the communities would be based on the restorative justice principles and that local traditions and cleansing ceremonies would be applied in the best interest and with the consent of the child. But, as was indicated in Chapter 3, the CEPAC/CRN reintegration agents had no real knowledge whether cleansing ceremonies were performed upon children's return. GMAC was even more subtle about the actual implementation of the recommendations since they were embedded in the receptions center structure and partially executed by other agencies dealing with family tracing and reunification issues. Neither program conducted thorough follow-up visits to ensure that the communities truly implemented the restorative justice principle and conducted their traditional healing mechanisms to benefit the child, thereby failing to successfully implement activities envisaged by these recommendations, in addition to the family and community related recommendations that address healing mechanisms specific psychosocial RR, such as 3.6 (*Conduct regular follow-up),* 4.5 (*Support local initiatives*) and 4.6 (*Assist communities in conflict management*). As a result of that, during the conversations and interviews with the staff, it was not possible to receive answers on the actual RR of children once they left the programs and returned to their communities, especially in the case of those children who did not participate in vocational training opportunities of either of the programs. Further, it was noticed that the CEPAC/CRN translators during interviews with the returnees were themselves surprised by answers and feedback that was being shared, showing that they were not aware of the challenges or successes children faced with the traditional healing mechanisms or the lack thereof upon their return. Thus, while all the good intentions were there, the programs partially failed to provide the "support systems" services "for strengthening and reinforcing a child's coping efforts," within communities, which were identified by Russell et al as pillar functions of NGOs towards proper community-based psychosocial RR.[667] The reason for this could be that both programs were attempting to implement activities which Russell et al identified as auxiliary pillars of psychosocial reintegration, in particular activities contributing towards

[666] Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 61.
[667] Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 63.

complete implementation of recommendations 7.2 (*Develop socio-economic and livelihood incentives*), 7.3 (*Train staff, local leaders and teachers and provide positive adult role models and strong peer support network*), 7.6 (*Cater programs to deal with officially demobilized and auto-demobilized youth*), 7.7 (*DDR programs for children to be separated from adult programs*), 7.9 (*Provide recreational activities, sports, theatre etc*) by both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC, and finally recommendation 7.8 (*Children to stay in interim care and centers as short as possible*) in the case of GMAC. It can be concluded that the general trend of both programs was to provide "educational intervention" through vocational training, supporting the findings of Castelli et al from 2005, as a response to community-based psychosocial RR.[668] It was observed that both programs included both auto-demobilized and officially demobilized children, encouraged the participation of other vulnerable children in the communities, and besides adopting the directive to include the age group 18 through 24, these vocational training opportunities were held separately from any adult programming or DDR initiatives. However, as recognized by Castelli et al and discussed in previous section, the efforts conducted by both programs were not truly representative of all psychosocial intervention programs could provide. They lacked the adequate interaction with the community-based initiatives, which are the long-term contributors towards successful psychosocial RR of children.[669]

In summary, it could be noticed that CEPAC/CRN and GMAC very effectively outsourced the health services, in order to provide children with best possible medical attention required to address various consequences of their involvement, such as HIV/AIDS, PTSD, rape, and others. The case studies showed that while guideline is considered a cross-cutting issue, it is one of the guidelines requiring greater networking in order to be implemented within a RR program. Through the effective coordination exemplified in both cases, it became evident that while it must not be expected of a single program to provide such services directly, it can be encouraged that programs ensure that they are available in all of their programmatic implementations by provision of standing arrangements with other hospitals, health clinics and other NGOs specializing in this area. In that same respect, such a list can be a great asset to the hospitals, clinics and NGOs specializing in health RR, when considering what provisions and services might be required of them. It should be noted that the not all recommendations will be applicable to all cases, but rather provide a good

[668] See Castelli, Locatelli and Canavera, "Psycho-social support for war affected Children in Northern Uganda."
[669] Castelli, Locatelli and Canavera, "Psycho-social support for war affected Children in Northern Uganda"; Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 62, 64.

comprehensive list of areas to consider. As a result of that, there are no recommendations that need to be omitted. However, two points should be mentioned. First, the cases showed that the recommendation 6.5 (*Train staff to deal with more challenging cases*) addressed training that the program should provide their staff in order to deal with challenging behavior cases, in addition to the clinically challenging cases. Such should be conducted in the response to recommendation 6.3 (*Prevent separation of children with disabilities and institutionalization of children (addiction, aggressive behavior)*). Careful consideration should be taken when identifying whether staff are able to deal with the individual cases. Therefore, further considerations and guidance on how to respond to these two recommendations should be given by specialized agencies. Second, CEPAC/CRN did not have cases where it needed to provide wheelchairs and prosthetic limbs as per recommendation 6.2, but GMAC did witness cases where provision of wheelchairs and walking help tools was necessary. This clearly showed that the extent of medical and health services required will greatly depend on the case to case basis, and must consider situation in the region, the conflict and armed groups' history of violence to allow programs to coordinate sensibly and equip accordingly. As a result, while no recommendations need omitting, international agencies might want to consider additional recommendations and suggest ways that local initiatives can address them adequately. The RR guideline working list will then be as follows:

Guideline 6: Medical Assistance to Children with Disabilities and other Health/Physical RR Efforts	
Local NGOs/ Cross-Cutting Issue	1. Provide child-focused basic health services in the communities and centers
	2. Ensure adequate rehabilitative care, including prosthetic limbs, wheelchairs, reconstructive surgery (if possible) etc
	3. Prevent separation of children with disabilities and institutionalization of children (addiction, aggressive behavior)
	4. Support existing health services and improve response capacities to cases of HIV/AIDS, victims of rape, drug and alcohol abuse, etc
	5. Train staff to deal with more behavior/clinically challenging cases
	6. Provide clinical support to treat physical injuries of rape

At the same time, programs cannot afford to only partially address psychosocial RR, as was the case with both programs. That they were could be due to the notion of the programs, as pointed out by the study of Castelli et al, that NGOs' responses to psychosocial RR was the provision of educational, or even more precise, vocational training and livelihood incentives. While both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC's programs were active contributors, recommendations rightly show that there are areas for improvement required, especially in the implementation of family and community RR initiatives, as they build, according to Russell et al, pillars of

successful psychosocial RR. The contradiction between being active contributor in the community and only partially addressing the psychosocial RR can be the result of the fact that guideline 7 deals with a variety of issues, being the only guideline that also addresses the reception/transit centers programming, in addition to addressing political sensitive issues, which should be considered in the design of NGOs programs and activities. Some of these find their repetition across other guidelines. Such was evident in the recommendation 7.2 (*Develop socio-economic and livelihood incentives*), which encompasses the entire guideline 8, as well as recommendations 7.5 (*Avoid individual therapy and adopt all inclusive approach in the community-based programs*) and 7.6 (*Cater programs to deal with officially demobilized and auto-demobilized youth*), which are reflected in recommendations 6.3, 5.3, and 8.3. However, the cases showed that this repetition was not aimless, because it ensured that vital psychosocial aspects of RR receive adequate attention. As a result, it pointed out that recommendations which deal with medical, educational or purely administrative issues have an overall psychosocial value and as such deserve added attention. Another example of such psychosocial value is reflected in the recommendation 7.7 (*DDR programs for children to be separated from adult programs*) and 7.8 (*Children to stay in interim care and centers as short as possible*). Both recommendations focus on administrative aspects of conducting proper RR, however as cases confirmed, both recommendations hold great psychosocial value – separation of child RR programs from adult programs allowed children to feel greater comfort in a more secure and non-threatening environment, which affected their ability to cope with traumas. Similarly, the logistical aspect of the length and type of stay in the transit/reception centers could be seen as a contributor toward psychosocial RR. While the recommendation is lenient enough to allow each program to discern the definition of "as short as possible," such decision was not only made according to administrative issues, but incorporated tracing concerns, reunification needs and challenges, children's ability to cope and recover both mentally and physically. As these aspects will vary from program to program, the definition, as in the case of CEPAC/CRN and GMAC will also be different. And while the two cases showed that the approach taken by GMAC was more effective for the child itself given the context in which they operated, CEPAC/CRN's circumstances showed that the definition of "as short as possible" was not any less correct or effective than that of GMAC.

Finally, it should be pointed out that recommendation 7.4 could be further detailed and that NGOs and international, as well as national, entities might need to coordinate and develop general policies to define the scope of the "comprehensive support." While it is a local NGO's

right to determine how much they are able to provide, on the broader RR programmatic level, national entities should develop a concept outlining comprehensive help to allow local initiatives and NGOs to adequately address and coordinate efforts, avoiding duplication of services and provision of truly comprehensive aid to the returning children. Currently, in theory neither of the program's interpretations is less comprehensive; the comparative analysis however showed that neither of the two programs was truly able to address all the needs families, communities and children had to achieve long-term RR. A definition of comprehensive support could contribute to establishment of better networks. This thesis views that properly addressing all recommendations within the working list presented would afford such comprehensive support. This means that the recommendation should be omitted from the guideline 7's list as it encompasses much greater spectrum of RR work then currently outlined in the guideline 7. The RR guideline working list will then be as follows:

Guideline 7: Consider Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Reintegration Aspects	
Local NGOs/ Cross-Cutting Issue	1. Include traditional, cultural and child development perceptions, as well as political and social realities of the region in the program development – always to reflect the best interest of the child
	2. Develop socio-economic and livelihood incentives
	3. Train staff, local leaders and teachers and provide positive adult role models and strong peer support network
	4. Centers should provide comprehensive support to the returning child
	5. Avoid individual therapy and adopt all inclusive approach in the community-based programs
	6. Cater programs to deal with officially demobilized and auto-demobilized youth
	7. DDR programs for children to be separated from adult programs
	8. Children to stay in interim care and centers as short as possible
	9. Provide recreational activities, sports, theatre etc

Single Event Guidelines

The analysis showed that the single event guidelines at the same time happen to be the guidelines whose implementation is vital towards achieving successful RR of children, because they all address long-term efforts and initiatives, such as rebuilding relationships with family and community, and the provision of livelihood means and prospects for the future through skills development. This means that the proper implementation of the recommendations within the *guideline 3, guideline 4* and *guideline 8* will affect the outcomes of the RR initiatives. Both cases confirmed this, showing that weak implementation areas of both NGOs in general analysis were the areas where if they had had the list of

recommendations they would have had guidance on how to more effectively design their programs and activities. Because the list of recommendations matched the areas where both programs had faced challenges, it can be concluded that these recommendations would be effective contributors towards successful long-term RR.

Guidelines 3 and 4: Family and Community RR

Echoing Russell et al's claims on researching reintegration of children in Northern Uganda, Angucia et al commented that family bonds and community acceptance were crucial RR elements, but that little was really known about what happened to the children's reintegration once they were reunited with their families.[670] It could be almost extracted from this statement that NGOs' work only extended through the reception and release period, without addressing any work with the families or the communities to which the children returned. The case studies showed that this statement was not completely factual, but that it did bear some reality on the general design of their RR programs. Both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC placed high value on communicating with the families and coordinating RR efforts with them or through community leaders to the extent possible or known to be available to them. This was reflected in the implementation of the recommendations from *Guideline 3: Family Tracing, Reunification and Support during RR Efforts* and *Guideline 4: Community-Based Support and (re-)recruitment Prevention.* Coordination of effort with the families and communities validated the findings of the USAID's report, confirming that families were "a key to the reintegration process," and that "appropriate power structures of community leaders" needed to be "in place to sanction their acceptance" because "community participation also played a critical role in implementing and sustaining local activities."[671] However, while recognizing the importance of such family and community participation, the actual level of that involvement and the quality of the activities conducted indicated that there was a lot of room for improvement in order for the recommendations to be effectively implemented. While CEPAC/CRN's activities involved the community more, GMAC's centers mirrored the statements made by Russsell et al and Angucia et al. Their only direct effort to involve communities in the reintegration efforts was the coordination with the

[670] Margaret Angucia, Jacques Zeelen and Gideon de Jong, "Researching the Reintegration of Formerly Abducted Children in Northern Uganda through Action Research: Experiences and Reflections," *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 20 (2010):220.
[671] USAID: "Role of Education and the Demobilization of Child Soldiers – Aspects of an Appropriate Education Program for Child Soldiers." *USAID Issue Paper no. 2* (March 2007), 2-3.

community leaders to develop lists for the next group of learners attending the vocational training. Nevertheless, when it came to soliciting family participation, GMAC facilitated creation of a bond with the family during children's stay at the rehabilitation center. In comparison with CEPAC/CRN's approach, this allowed the GMAC staff to have a greater control over the communication and conduct of behavior that went on between the parties. But, in order for any sensitization and bonding to take place, family members needed to come to the center. If parents felt forced or were afraid of the child, possibly the only reason why they decided to come would have been the incentive to collect the financial assistance which GMAC distributed in coordination with the Amnesty Commission. This created false premises for any true emotional bond to be developed and was doing the exact opposite what the recommendations 3.4 (*Assist family with social support*) and 8.5 (*Do not provide cash or instant material assistance*) indicate RR programs should implement. In fact, during the analysis of surveys distributed to the reception center staff, out of 3 surveys received, all 3 stated that this was one of the areas in need of improvement – dissatisfaction of family members regarding the provisions of financial assistance and miscommunication which developed as a result of it. It should be noted that the financial assistance was provided prior to the 2007, which means that the international guidelines have not been fully developed and distributed yet, and as a result of that the distribution of financial assistance could not be used as a failure of the program to adequately address international norms.

Irrespective of the parents' initial motivation, meeting on a neutral ground at the center before returning children to villages took away some of the anxiety from both parties and was a necessary step to rebuilding positive relationships, one of crucial RR elements, as suggested by Jareg.[672] For this reason, while the CEPA/CRN's 3-month period was a good way for the entire family and the community to be sensitized in a more comfortable environment, sensitization was conducted without the presence of the child, making it impossible for the families and community to see the progress of the child or to resolve any concerns in the presence of a mediator. For this reason, the thesis views that GMAC's approach was a more effective contributor toward the reestablishment of initial family bonds, as per recommendation 3.2, thereby easing children's reunification process.

While both NGOs felt it important to provide children with vocational training opportunities in the vicinity of their communities, there was only limited implementation of some of the more important recommendations, such as 3.4 (*Assist family with social support*),

[672] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 5.

3.6 (*Conduct regular follow-up)*, and 3.7 (*Consult families and children on their rights and duties*). The reasons were either the lack of resources and knowledge base, or no ownership to conduct the activity, because it was not within the mandate of the particular program. As a result of that, CEPAC/CRN transferred the implementation responsibility of the above mentioned recommendations to the community leaders, while GMAC did not implement 3.4 at all, transferred responsibility to the community leaders for 3.6 and conducted basic workshops at the rehabilitation center for 3.7. While transferring responsibility to the community leaders could be seen as a positive way to reinforce community-based initiatives, it would have been important for the CEPAC/CRN and GMAC programs to assist the community leaders in such endeavors. The implementation of these recommendations would have made the essence of the guideline 3, because they address the long term support, which Jareg and other resseach strongly encouraged as part of follow up measures.[673] From this it can be concluded that while both programs were putting in great energies to 'jump-start' the rehabilitation and reintegration process of children within their families and communities, they lacked long-term solutions and mechanisms to follow through on issues and challenges that children and their families would be facing in the home environment.

At this point, a question could be raised why did both NGOs transfer so much of the responsibility to the communities? Research by Wessells and Denov has suggested that some local practices and community efforts can be harmful.[674] Given the lack of, or limited, infrastructure available in most of the communities in the regions disturbed by conflict and displacement, and the knowledge that community initiatives could cause harm if not conducted properly, it would be illogical to expect the communities to be able to provide comprehensive support for the returning children. However, as NGOs are not able to be present in all of the villages and areas where children have been abducted and will be returning to, empowering the communities to oversee the long-term reintegration and rehabilitation efforts is the most efficient way, and according to MacMulin and Loughry, is

[673] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 5, 6-7; USAID, "Role of Education and the Demobilization of Child Soldiers," 2, 3, 4-6; Wessells, "Child Soldiers, Peace Education and Postconflict Reconstruction for Peace," 366; Wessells, "Trauma, Culture and Community," 4; Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Democratic Republic of the Congo – Priorities for Children associated with Armed Forces and Groups"; Stott, "Out of sight, out of mind?," 58; Castelli, Locatelli and Canavera, "Psycho-social support for war affected Children in Northern Uganda," 5; Russell and Gozdziak, "Coming Home Whole," 62, 64. See also Susan Shepler, "The Rites of the Child," 197-211.

[674] Wessells, "Trauma, Culture and Community," 4; Denov, "Is the Culture Always Right?," 1, 3.

strongly recommended.[675] Therefore, the act of transferring the responsibility and ownership over the returning children to their respective communities could not be viewed as a mistake on the part of CEPAC/CRN and GMAC. In fact, that they did transfer and coordinate with the communities was a fulfillment of the general guidance they received from the national and international organizations, and as such went hand in hand with the implementation of the recommendation 4.1 (*Programs to be developed together with the community-coordination between NGOs and elders/leaders*). The coordination with the communities and the leaders, as was observed in both cases, was a crucial element to the success of the training facilities these NGOs provided. But, such coordination was not enough to satisfactorily empower the communities to fend on their own with various RR issues. What would have contributed to the concept of empowerment would have been for the NGOs to be involved in supporting other local initiatives (recommendation 4.5), assisting set up of community networks (recommendation 4.3), or assisting local initiatives for the re-recruitment prevention (recommendation 4.8) and conflict management (recommendation 4.6). In other words, a gradual transferring of the responsibility by "drawing local people into the process" and tutoring them to "act as agents," as recommended by Guyot, would have been the right approach.[676] While they were advised by the national and international entities, CEPAC/CRN and GMAC were not given the rationale for why transferring of responsibility was to be conducted and as a result did not have the knowledge of additional activities and efforts which they could have performed as per the guidelines 3 and 4 recommendations to address the how of the transfer.

It was observed that parents, leaders and children all indicated that there was a general desire for even greater involvement of CEPAC/CRN in the community-based reintegration and rehabilitation of the returning children. In addition, some of the comments from children indicated that despite sensitization efforts conducted by social workers at the center or by reintegration agents in the communities, the children felt abandoned and alone upon their return to the communities and had to face some challenges, such as stigmatization, with limited help available. With few programs in the region that addressed all aspects of child RR, CEPAC/CRN's presence was highly valued and dire needed to help communities survive. As their importance in these communities was great, the insufficiencies affected the programs'

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[675] Colin MacMullin, and Maryanne Loughry, "Investigating Psychosocial Adjustments of former Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone and Uganda." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 17 (2004):460-472.
[676] Guyot, "Suffer the Children," 10.

ability to successfully achieve long-term RR of children. Only a few such comments were made in the case of GMAC, indicating that the communities did not view GMAC as a primary care taker of their communal reintegration and rehabilitation. As a result, that they did not engage more in community-based initiatives was not as significant. This clearly showed that coordinated effort of different agencies should be encouraged on national and international level, to alleviate burdens of one single NGO.

In addition, the lack of correct transfer and adequate community support resulted in an inability to address family issues fully. However, as programs can only get involved in family matters to a limited extent, the depth to which recommendations in the guideline 3 can be implemented is questionable. Perhaps the extent of their control was to jump-start the family reunification activities? Otherwise, if the recommendations envisaged offering direction to NGOs in providing a long-term support to families, the list of the recommendations would need to be revisited together with the list of recommendations in the guideline 4. Provision of additional advice would include not only follow-up activities, but specify the actual type of activities, counseling, and involvement level that NGOs should provide. But, if NGOs are to only initiate the family reunification, then proper transfer of knowledge and responsibility to communities and families, as both programs attempted to do, would go in line with the recommendations. Considering confirmations from the past research, that "program that is too short and does not thoroughly deal with the issues on the agenda creates expectations which it is unable to fulfill. This leaves participants with a sense of betrayal and deception," it can be concluded that there are principle gaps in the programmatic execution of NGOs work and that the list of advice regarding the guideline 3 and 4 would need to revisited and more precise long-term recommendations added to them.[677] The RR guideline 3 working list currently only addresses the initial community-based RR, while RR guideline 4 working list provides general recommendations, which would require further elaboration and guidance. They are as follows:

[677] Muntingh, "After Prison," Chapter 2, Common shortcomings of the reintegration programs. See also Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 5-6, 9.

Guideline 3: Family Tracing, Reunification and Support during RR Efforts	
Local NGOs	1. Begin family tracing as soon as possible
	2. (Re)establish contact and an emotional bond with the family
	3. If no immediate family- first search for extended family and relatives, then for foster home within the community, as a last options for foster home elsewhere
	4. Assist family with social support
	5. Conduct sensitization and training on how to deal with aggressive behavior within families
	6. Conduct regular follow-up
	7. Consult families and children on their rights and duties
National Gov't/ International NGOs	8. Provide children with proper documentation

Guideline 4: Community-Based Support and (re-)recruitment Prevention	
Local NGOs	1. Programs to be developed together with the community-coordination between NGOs and elders/leaders
	2. Include youth in community programmatic development
	3. Assist community in setting up community-based child networks
	4. Conduct sensitization and training in the community
	5. Support local initiatives
	6. Assist communities in conflict management
	7. Conduct long-term monitoring and follow-up through local leaders rather than individually focused monitoring
National Gov't/ International NGOs	8. Support development of (re)recruitment prevention programs and community-based initiatives

It should be noted that in the current lists, the recommendation 3.8 (*Provide children with proper documentation*) is an issue which could be added as a recommendation to the guidelines not under local NGOs jurisdiction, because the provision of proper documentation cannot be addressed by local NGOs, but is in the hands of national government. If the national government is unable to provide such documentation during an armed conflict, it should be addressed by relevant international organizations, such as the International Red Cross, MONUC, Amnesty Commission or other similar NGOs. However, the distribution of proper documentation or release papers can be a coordinated effort, executed by local NGOs, and as such the recommendation can find its proper place in this guideline as an auxiliary coordinated effort with the national and international entities.

Similarly, the implementation of the recommendations 4.8 (*Support development of (re)recruitment prevention programs and community-based initiatives*), 8.1 (*Develop age-appropriate and catch-up educational programs*) and 8.7 (*Abolish school fees and use educational system to teach behavioral and political realities and to raise awareness on issues of concern*) are issues that must be addressed on national level. While programs can

participate in the development and execute re-recruitment and general education initiatives in their communities, the tasks must be addressed at the national level before being passed on as a directive to local initiatives. The cases showed that if such effort is passed on to local NGOs, they must be educated to the importance of utilizing and educating the communities, in order for the directive to be effective and ensure re-recruitment prevention.

Guideline 8: Education, Vocational Training and Livelihood Initiatives

Provision of educational and vocational training activities, as per guideline 8, have been identified as the key elements towards achieving successful RR by Jareg, because they help them change their behavior by replacing hopelessness with a new sense of self and finally because they provide meaning and prospects for the future by offering solutions for financial security of the returnees.[678] CEPAC/CRN and GMAC incorporated the provision of training and livelihood opportunities because they recognized a lack of availability of such services in the regions where they operated. However, while both provided vocational training, their practical approach differed, as was observed in the previous section of this chapter. CEPAC/CRN's Children's Clubs were not only vocational centers, but also portals for the community and therefore served the psychosocial RR of both children and the community in addition to their educational function, while GMAC training center was a purely vocational training and educational facility. Despite this practical difference, the implementation of the program according to the guideline's recommendations was comparably similar.

Before analyzing these training initiatives, it should be mentioned that neither of the programs provided basic or catch-up education opportunities, as these are initiatives embedded in the national education system. As a result, recommendations 8.1 (*Develop age-appropriate and catch-up educational programs*), and 8.7 (*Abolish school fees and use educational system to teach behavioral and political realities and to raise awareness on issues of concern*) have not been addressed by either of the two programs. Further observations revealed that no local NGOs in the DRC or Uganda conducted any activities that would reflect the above mentioned recommendations. They were issues that were addressed through national and international organizations, and while they have their rightful place under this guideline, they do not belong in the list of recommendations to be fulfilled by local NGOs. Local initiatives could in theory participate in the execution of the recommendation 8.1 if there is no functioning school system

[678] Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 7-8; See also Castelli, Locatelli and Canavera, "Psycho-social support for war affected Children in Northern Uganda," 5; Stott, "Out of sight, out of mind?," 59, 62; Wessells, "Child Soldiers, Peace Education and Postconflict Reconstruction for Peace," 365.

available due to destruction of the infrastructure or displacement of teachers, but such was not observed in the two regions. But, the actual development of catch-up education and the educational curriculum is primarily the responsibility of the national agencies to ensure uniformity of the learned material and its fulfillment through local initiatives would be quite challenging. As a result of this, local NGOs have no jurisdiction to develop policies relevant to education, such as abolishment of school fees, development of specific curricula to adopt political and behavioral realities or to raise awareness, as per recommendation 8.7.

However, in the execution of their vocational training initiatives, both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC were very successful in creating a balance in participation of the officially demobilized and auto-demobilized returning children and other vulnerable children, in addition to involving disabled children, girl mothers and the age groups 18 through 24 (CEPAC/CRN) and 26 (GMAC). Past research indicated that such inclusion was vital for the success of the vocational programs, not only because it allowed children who escaped and did not go through a reception/transit center to participate in official training initiatives, but also because it prevented stigmatization and enmity in the community and between the children who did not fight and the returnees.[679] In theory then the academic research consulted is in agreement with the approach taken by both programs and the provision of recommendations addressing this concept. In practice, it was observed that such inclusion had a positive effect on the acceptance from and importance of the programs in the communities and received highly positive feedback from the participating children, because there was a general feeling of camaraderie, creating a support system for children both on an educational, but also on a social level. The CEPAC/CRN's and GMAC's successful implementation of the recommendations 8.2 (*Involve children with disabilities and girl mothers in the programs-provide child care for the mothers*), 7.6 (*Cater programs to deal with officially demobilized and auto-demobilized youth*) and the implementation of the second half of the recommendation 7.5 (*Avoid individual therapy and adopt all inclusive approach in the community-based programs*) validated the past research and confirmed the importance of the recommendations within the guideline.

In addition to including all war affected and vulnerable children in their programs, it was observed that a necessary contributor toward success of the program was the conduct of

[679] Annan, Blattman and Mazurana. "The Survey of War Affected Youth,." 8, 9; Jareg, "Crossing Bridges," 6; USAID, "Role of Education and the Demobilization of Child Soldiers," 3; Coulter, "Reconciliation or Revenge," 8; Guyot, "Suffer the Children," 9; Franklyn Bai Kargbo, "International Peacekeeping and Child Soldiers: Problems of Security and Rebuilding." *Cornell International Law Journal* Vol. 37 (2004): 494; Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Release and Reintegration of child soldiers," 8-9; Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 204-205.

adequately developed activities that fall under the implementation of the recommendation 8.2 (*Develop programs which will have a link between education, vocational training and income-winning opportunities*). CEPAC/CRN did such by establishing means for the learners to earn "soap-money" or take small orders while still in the training, or by providing possibilities for apprenticeship and internships during the training, as per recommendation 8.6 (*Provide apprenticeship and earning opportunities*). Given the political situation and the instability in the eastern DRC region, the implementation of the recommendations 8.2 and 8.6 is challenging, because there is a general lack of proper labor market and infrastructure that would allow for adequate development of programs and execution of activities envisaged under these recommendations. If there are no shops, there are no job options, a problem which Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers identified in their 2009 report.[680] The CEPAC/CRN's and GMAC's ingenuity of dealing with these challenges was through the creation of income-winning opportunities and immediate application of the learned skill, by doing apprenticeship during their training. In other words, centers were partially serving as shops. As an indirect result of such programmatic implementation, the centers themselves were opening the market and creating basic infrastructure of supply and demand. The only downfall of such a principle in the case of CEPAC/CRN was the fact that the their clubs provided only two vocational skills, carpentry and sewing, thus overpopulating those two job families, causing an imbalance and rigorous competition in the future. This was according to Wessells "a classic mistake," which was one of the major causes for further frustration, "propelling youths back to the bush."[681] While CEPAC/CRN felt it did not have resources to provide training for more than two vocational skills, a possible solution could have been found in provision of training in different skill sets in different Children's Clubs. Such would have followed the recommendations of Castelli et al and Knudsen, which urged that "programs must be willing to self-evaluate critically and to revise their programs accordingly" as a re-recruitment prevention measure, as well as a means to address long-term RR of children.[682] Another possible option, as developed and funded by local NGOs in the case of Sierra Leone, would have been to use the carpentry skills to rebuild surrounding communities, thus showing and strengthening the skills sets, contributing toward community-based initiatives and creating

[680] Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, "Release and Reintegration of child soldiers," 6-7.
[681] Wessells, *Child Soldiers*, 204-205.
[682] Castelli, Locatelli and Canavera, "Psycho-social support for war affected Children in Northern Uganda," 5. See also Knudsen, "Demobilization and Reintegration During an Ongoing Conflict," 503.

possible future market for the children.[683] That CEPAC/CRN was not aware of possibilities for adjustment and utilization of the learned on a long-term basis obstructed the success of its training facilities, which otherwise could have been a very effective solution in the areas of CEPAC/CRN's reach.

GMAC, to the contrary, was able to conduct basic market research and adjusted the program to fit the labor needs in the communities and the area in which it operated with the skills available for training, thereby efficiently implementing recommendation 8.6, in addition to fulfilling the second half of the recommendation 8.4 (*Do not provide training in jobs which are hazardous or not needed in the labor market*). The advantage that GMAC's program had in comparison to CEPAC/CRN's was its clear and simple mandate, the returning stability in the region allowing for revival of the market, as well as a greater presence of NGOs dealing with other aspects of child RR, thus allowing GMAC to implement its main objective – the provision of intensive training. While such was identified as lacking in implementation of guidelines 3 and 4, it contributed towards successful implementation of this guideline and a provision of greater variety of vocational skills by qualified professionals and teachers. Even though GMAC utilized its resources to provide quality-intensive training, its effectiveness to achieve long-term RR success could not be fully assessed, because there were no means to contact children who have gone through the training, but one. The generalization from one case could skew the actual reality. However, the high demand from community leaders for the program to take and train their children could also serve as an indicator of an effective programming to contribute towards achieving successful RR long-term. Thus, while the implementation of the recommendations 8.2, 8.4 and 8.6 can be challenging, they do provide guidance that contributes towards long-term RR and should remain in the working list.

Finally, it was observed that neither of the two programs actively pursued implementation of the recommendation 8.8 (*Create educational opportunities for children to utilize positive skills gained while associated with armed groups*). While both programs embedded values such as leadership, accountability, discipline, and team work in their curriculum, CEPAC/CRN teachers never actively addressed these as 'positive skills gained while in the bush' in order to avoid any false glorification of the involvement, while GMAC avoided speaking about children's past to avoid causing traumas and stigmatization. Associating skills such as cooking, cleaning or expertise with knives and other sharp objects (similar to the tools used in carpentry etc) with the soldiering could bring aversion towards the

[683] Wessells, "Child Soldiers, Peace Education and Postconflict Reconstruction for Peace," 367.

skill, incapacitating the child to utilize it in the future for his or her personal benefit. At the same time, the *IDDRS* suggested such inclusion in order to show children that the years spent fighting were not completely wasted, but that some benefit could be drawn from it. No literature consulted besides the *IDDRS* addressed this issue, showing that such was not a practice among the NGOs working the field of child RR. Future research could focus on investigating whether reinforcing skills learned as child soldiers is beneficial and whether recommendation 8.8 should truly be viewed as a recommendation or omitted from the list. The RR guideline working list is then as follows:

Guideline 8: Education, Vocational Training and Livelihood Initiatives	
National Gov't/ International NGOs	1. Develop age-appropriate and catch-up educational programs
	2. (7) Abolish school fees and use educational system to teach behavioral and political realities and to raise awareness on issues of concern
Local NGOs	3. (2) Develop programs which will have a link between education, vocational training and income-winning opportunities
	4. (3) Involve children with disabilities and girl mothers in the programs- provide child care for the mothers
	5. (4) Do not provide training in jobs which are hazardous or not needed in the labor market
	6. (5) Do not provide cash or instant material assistance
	7. (6) Provide apprenticeship and earning opportunities
	8. Create educational opportunities for children to utilize positive skills gained while associated with armed groups

Recommendations that can/should be addressed on both local and national level have been grouped together for ease of reading. Their original number within the guideline is provided in parenthesis.

In summary, both CEPAC/CRN and GMAC implemented guideline 8's recommendations within their jurisdiction with great care, which resulted in positive feedback from the community and the children. However, at the same time, while effectively implementing the recommendations, the long-term educational effect of their programming could be questioned - partly, because of the instability in the regions and the labor market, and partly because of the actual educational value drawn from the vocational training. The observations of the CEPAC/CRN case showed that there needs to be a greater network of incentives to revitalize the market and the economy, which would allow the children to improve their skills further and apply them effectively for income-winning. The case of GMAC validated this point, showing that some stability in the region and networking with other NGOs helped the program's implementation of its mandate, providing high educational value and enabling children with utilizable skills.

Guidelines not under Local NGO Jurisdiction

The recommendations in the *Guideline 2: Encourage Local, National and International Coordination of DDR Programs* and *Guideline 9: Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms* indicate recommendations which do not fall under jurisdiction of local NGOs. As the case of CEPAC/CRN showed, local initiatives might take a very active part in the implementation of these recommendations, however the analysis of the list of recommendations showed that local NGOs will not have the proper authority to successfully take the lead and therefore rely on coordination efforts by national and international entities. It should be pointed out that because these recommendations address activities which need to be implemented by national governments and international organizations or peace keeping missions, their inclusion in the working list is of great importance. While local NGOs and their initiatives play a vital role in providing opportunities for long-term RR efforts, they cannot be fully successful without the coordination of broader peace-building and DDR efforts. In addition, they do not have the jurisdiction to develop policies and change laws, which in the case of child soldiering make or break any other RR effort. As a result of that, it is only correct that the working list should have a guideline and make recommendations that enable the local initiatives to receive feedback, guidance and support from national and international agencies. In addition, *Guideline 2: Encourage Local, National and International Coordination of DDR Programs*, as the cases showed is an vital aspect of developing systematic approach to DDR and in particular RR efforts. Successful examples of such systematic approach were the coordination efforts conducted by MONUC and Save the Children to prepare disarmament and demobilization of girl children in the case of CEPAC/CRN, and the family tracing and reunification efforts conducted by Amnesty Commission and International Red Cross, allowing GMAC to focus on rehabilitation of children and work with the families in the reception center. Inclusion of these guidelines and their recommendations signals that coordination has to take place, as well as points out that the success of RR does not only depend on the local NGOs efforts. This thesis showed clearly that there are limits to which one single program is able to be effective and how far it is able to go if there are coordinative efforts and guidance by policy designing organs.

It should also be noted that if guideline 2 were implemented in its entirety, then the recommendation 4 (*Develop common approaches and strategic links*) would lead to a creation of a general operationalization of RR efforts. In other words, guideline 2 is the vehicle for the creation of approaches that could be replicated in other programs and proper implementation

of other guidelines, allowing for systematic and more coordinated RR efforts in any conflict areas. In combination with other guidelines, this guideline would provide for enough flexibility to adjust the programs to fit the needs of the individual conflicts, however provide programmatic guidance on vital RR issues and thereby help newly developed programs or already well established programs target the constants of child RR which affect its success or failure. As such, guideline 2 could play a vital role in helping national and international agents educate and empower local NGOs to act knowingly and in a more concerted manner in any given case.

Finally, it should be noted that there are two recommendations within guideline 2 which can be implemented on both local and national levels. These are recommendation 2.5 (*Encourage participation of youth in decision-making process*) and the second half of the recommendation 2.6 (*Create special measures to achieve release and RR of girls*). The cases showed that there is more than can be done to implement recommendation 2.5 and that its implementation would have a positive effect on the children and on the quality of the programs, as CEPAC/CRN's example demonstrated. In addition, this recommendation indicated that the national entities and international organizations and agencies dealing with RR could benefit from involving children in the design and implementation of RR efforts, an area which deserves further investigation and analysis. Similarly, the analysis showed that recommendation 2.6 indicates that the errors of past programs and the marginalization and exclusion of girls from RR and DDR efforts cannot be caused by local initiatives' ignorance to the plight and role of women and girls in armed conflict only, but that it has its proper place in being addressed and directed by national and international entities, whose primary role should be to ensure gender equality in all peace-building and DDR efforts on a grander scale, and in particular in the implementation of RR programs. As examples showed, because recommendation 2.6 was implemented by national governments of both Uganda and the DRC, and given as a directive to the local programs, GMAC and CEPAC/CRN internalized the directive in adoption of various activities and initiatives to include the girl child in their programs, and did such effectively, countering the past research. The RR guideline working list will then be as follows:

Guideline 2: Encourage Local, National and International Coordination of DDR Programs		
National Gov't/ International NGOs	1.	Coordination of DDR programs among the UN, specialized agencies and civil society
	2.	Sensitization of non-state actors to be conducted as a joint effort
	3.	Link between peace-building DDR programs and RR efforts, without dependency on the progress of the first
	4.	Develop common approaches and strategic links
Local NGOs	5.	Encourage participation of youth in decision-making process
	6.	Create special measures to achieve release and RR of girls See also Guideline 5

The efforts conducted by MONUC, UNICEF and the national government in the eastern DRC and by the national government and UNICEF in Uganda, while not part of the analysis, showed in both cases how effective coordination can provide children with protection they require as addressed by the *Guideline 9: Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms*. And while local NGOs cannot do much to implement most of the recommendations in this guideline, they have influence on how their programs and communities with which they work adopt and implement restorative justice and traditional adjust healing mechanisms to ensure successful RR. As cases showed, the implementation of these two recommendations has a critical effect on any further long-term RR efforts. The RR guideline working list is then as follows:

Guideline 9: Juvenile Justice and Treatment of Youth in Justice Mechanisms		
National Gov't/ International NGOs	1.	Establish age limit below which children cannot be charged
	2.	Do not treat children as deserters and do not apply death sentence
	3.	(4) Seek alternatives to judicial proceedings and provide children with highest standards of safeguards and reconciliation mechanisms
	4.	(5) Avoid detaining children and youth
	5.	(7) Include the age group 18-24 in the juvenile justice system –as per guideline 1
Local NGOs	6.	(3) RR programs to adopt the restorative justice principle and be applied always in the best interest of the child
	7.	(6) Use local approaches and traditional healing mechanisms

Recommendations that can/should be addressed on both local and national level have been grouped together for ease of reading. Their original number within the guideline was provided in parenthesis.

IV. Conclusion

The individual case studies helped establish some parameters for the comparison of the two programs, as well as for the evaluation of the feasibility of the recommendations and guidelines developed in the Chapter 2. The chapter conducted a comparative analysis of the

two cases, evaluating their basic structure, activities and outcomes, and looked at the differences inherited with the history of the areas and the conflicts. In addition, the analysis attempted to identify what impact management and staffing had on the level of implementation success of the various programs conducted by CEPAC/CRN and GMAC. The general comparative analysis showed that there were some basic differences caused by the colonial and conflict history, which in the case of CEPAC/CRN added complexity to any DDR and RR efforts, destroying basic infrastructure and leaving the program to fend GMAC's colonial and conflict history revealed, while not any easier, less complex situation, allowing for better utilization of resources and knowledge to aid the RR efforts. In addition, the general comparative analysis pointed out that while CEPAC/CRN had more flexibility in implementing some of its programmatic activities that it often stretched its resources thin to encompass all aspects of RR. However, the comparison also indicated that while not perfect in its implementation, especially in the community-based initiatives, such as vocational training at the Children's Clubs, CEPAC's influence and psychosocial value was positive enough to be of crucial importance to the communities. GMAC on the other hand stood as a great example of a more structured and focused implementation of certain RR initiatives, providing quality especially in its vocational training programs, but it was not able to achieve the same psychosocial effect, nor gain as strong a presence in the communities as did CEPAC/CRN. Nonetheless, its educational importance in the communities was great and as such, the program experienced success in implementing its mandate. It was also noticed that this success was possible because there was general stability in the region and a strong presence of NGOs and INGOs that specialized in other aspects of RR, leaving GMAC the freedom to implement only one aspect of RR at the time.

Following the general comparative analysis of the two cases, the chapter aimed to evaluate the applicability of the guidelines and recommendations against the cases. Through comparative analysis it was possible to identify if matching the weak and strong points of each program could be done through general comparative analysis as was identified in the guidelines working list. This analysis showed that guidelines and its recommendations for the most part went into a more in-depth detection of the actual weaknesses of the programs, highlighting more precisely what activities and initiatives caused programs' failures to long-term success.

In addition, the analysis showed that there were three groups of guidelines within the working list, namely those that addressed cross-cutting issues, and were therefore present in

almost all programmatic considerations, such as RR issues related to gender, health and psychosocial recovery. These guidelines shadowed the theory established by Jareg, ensuring that the environment was created to allow the proper rehabilitation and reintegration through her suggested programmatic key elements.

Guidelines that discussed one specific area of implementation, referred to as single event guidelines, were also examined with regard to family, community and educational programming. These three single event guidelines also corresponded to the guidelines addressing the most important issues contributing towards achieving successful RR, as they all addressed long-term activities, which according to Jareg helped the child re-build relationships, self-esteem and skills set which allowed him or her to have greater prospects in the future. As a result, the analysis confirmed Jareg's theory, showing that these single event guidelines make the essence of the RR efforts and that more care needs to be given toward their proper implementation. Analysis of the two cases against these guidelines showed that while they were executing activities and did enjoy certain level of success in the implementation of their so called community-based initiatives, they still lacked a number of implementation points and lost out on opportunities to truly be involved with community-based initiatives, affecting possible real RR in the long-term.

Finally, it was identified that there were guidelines, which were not under jurisdiction or authority of the local NGOs such as CEPAC/CRN and GMAC to be implemented, and that it was not reasonable to expect the local initiatives to conduct them, or be held accountable for their failures or weaknesses. Those that fell under this category were guidelines dealing with coordination of efforts on a national programmatic level and as part of greater DDR initiatives, as well as guidelines addressing juvenile justice system. While not directly addressed by Jareg, through the comparative analysis of the case studies, it was possible to provide rationale for their purpose and place within the working list and within the framework of Jareg's theory.

As a result of the grouping and the analysis of the working list guidelines against the cases, it could be determined that while some guideline addressed clearly what helped the RR effort, other guidelines and recommendations needed further rethinking, renaming and restructuring to more comprehensively and adequately address the rehabilitation and reintegration issues. One such restructure was undertaken with the name of guideline 5, addressing the special case of a girl child. The analysis identified that for the sake of including the girl child in RR efforts, there were issues where male gendered issues need to be addressed. As a result, the guideline was renamed to address gender-based issues and

recommendations dealing with rape were left open to address both genders. In addition, it was identified which recommendations require national or international entities for their fulfillment, highlighting how coordination should be fostered through the provision of the guideline 2 in the working list and enabling for a more structured and systematic RR approach. If this coordination was effectively done amongst international, national and local entities, it would lead to ability to apply and implement the effective elements of one case to any other cases. As a result, the working list could contribute towards the more general operationalization and would be a good help tool to aiding RR efforts in any conflict stricken area as long as the working list remained broad enough to allow room for adjustments according to culture, traditions and customs, always in the best interest of the child and in coordination of the agencies and the international and national entities of that particular conflict area.

The cases of CEPAC/CRN and GMAC showed that the application of the working list can aid many RR long-term needs. It also showed that when the guidelines are implemented in a more knowledgeable and coordinated manner, they produce results that are easier replicated in other areas and programs, despite their differences. A successful example of such was the implementation of the directive to include the girl child in all programmatic implementation. While the conflict and the historical perspectives were different, as well as the resources with which CEPAC/CRN and GMAC could work, both programs implemented the directive to the best of their knowledge and ability. The efforts to properly address girl child sensitive issues in the activities were a result of consistent coordination and sensitization of the NGOs themselves by international and national entities. This effort showed that when local NGOs are involved in knowledgeable execution of national and international policies related to RR of children, they confirm that the desired effects can be achieved through a platform which can be successful elsewhere.

Conclusions

Helping children find their way back to 'a normal life' after having been involved with the armed groups is a challenging task, because it involves attempts to redefine children's presence to assist them in gaining the perspective of a better future in the midst of conflict, lack of infrastructure and general instability. Considering the challenges posed in the context of these efforts, the response by the international community has been a development of a concerted effort for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of all combatants, and in particular combatants under the age of 18. Yet, the decades of work showed that there were important links and methodologies missing, resulting in dissatisfaction among the local population, aggressive behavior and re-recruitment. Evaluation of these gaps led to the development of the hypothesis that rehabilitation and reintegration is best achieved when programs are designed to implement long-term solutions and are designed to cater for children's needs of both genders, as outlined by Jareg. This claim assumed that coordination among the local, national and international initiatives would allow programs and communities to utilize their resources more effectively and aid any RR efforts.

The objective of this thesis was to critically assess the above mentioned hypothesis by conducting a comparative case study analysis of two programs in the Great Lakes region, *Give Me a Chance* (GMAC) in northern Uganda and the *Communaute des Eglises de Pentecote en Afrique Centrale* (CEPAC) in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This was conducted in the pursuit of an answer how the long-term rehabilitation and reintegration are best achieved, and what normative, policy and academic frameworks exist to aid this effort.

Postulating that if the guidelines and recommendations recently developed by the international community could aid achieving long-term RR efforts in these two programs, it would also mean that the academic framework as developed by Jareg contributed to the successful reintegration of child soldiers. In other words, policy development would contribute in the assessment of the academic framework and vice versa. In addition, the validation of guidelines' applicability in the cases observed would assist reflection on their general applicability in other conflict areas that undergo child RR. To find answers to posed thesis question, comparative analysis operational framework was created by developing a RR guidelines working list through extraction of recommendations from the relevant documents on the previously identified RR topics of interest. Applying the RR guidelines working list in

the analysis of the individual cases contributed further to the identification of patterns in the comparative analysis.

While there were basic differences caused by the colonial and conflict history in the regions of northern Uganda and eastern DRC, which contributed to a lack of proper RR infrastructure in DRC and which provided Uganda with more means to distribute elements of the overall RR efforts to various parties, they did not affect the detection of similar outcomes in the implementation of certain guidelines and their specific recommendations.

First, the comparative analysis showed that both programs were coordinated with the national and international entities and had received specifications on how to conduct their programmatic implementations of specific guidelines. These were guidelines discussing gender and age issues, as well as aspects of psychosocial healing, such as transit and rehabilitation center initiatives. As a result of the coordinated effort, both NGOs showed greater inclusion and attention in the implementation of programs to help the girl child, the girl mothers and auto-demobilized children, as well as the age groups 18 and below and 18 through 24 in their activities and initiatives. In addition, both programs showed a weakness in implementing guidelines dealing with family and community based initiatives, despite the fact that they did receive directives on conducting these initiatives by international and national entities. That they showed gaps and insufficiencies could have been effected by the vague directives provided to them, in addition to the lack of resources to address all of the aspects of that implementation. It was observed that in both cases, the lack of resources and clear directives led to omitting programmatic activities, such as the conduct of follow-up visits. However, such gaps, as was discussed through the reflection on the guidelines could have also meant that there are general weaknesses in the design of RR programs' policies at national and international levels. This, in other words would mean that directives given to NGOs themselves already bear deficiencies which limit the NGOs' ability to perform successfully and in the best interest of the child. An example was shown by CEPAC/CRN's refusal to follow through with a directive on the general design of their CTO, which was one of the unique features of the program. While it led to criticism from other child-minded programs in the region, including INGOs, it also contributed to greater success of the CTO. As this concept is observable, further investigation would be necessary to identify whether there are requirements for readjustment of policies developed in Kinshasa and Kampala.

Second, the weakness in the implementation of the above mentioned guidelines confirmed that there is a need for a set up additional tools to help the long-term nature of the

programmatic key elements as they were discussed by Jareg. In particular, while both programs effectively implemented guidelines to jump start community based initiatives; neither was able to provide long-term support and involvement in local initiatives. It was observed that although this did not have such a detrimental effect in Uganda, it left a gap in the case of the DRC. Since CEPAC/CRN was one of few NGOs in the region, the implementation of these key elements was either pursued by them or not pursued at all. The studies showed that where key activities were not implemented according to Jareg's theory, the NGOs experienced challenges in the reintegration of the children. That this was not observed to such an extent in the case of GMAC only stresses the applicability of Jareg's theory, because it showed that success is more likely if the effort is multilayered. Since RR efforts in northern Uganda were coordinated among various parties, including community leaders, GMAC only focused on one aspect of the RR, thereby becoming one layer of the entire process, rather than the process itself. This observation suggests that RR efforts, in order to be comprehensive and provide long-term solutions as stipulated by guidelines and the reintegration theory, should not be performed by NGOs only. In fact, when they include multi-actors, and are multi-layered, they lessen the risk of providing quantity at the expense of the quality.

This observation contributed toward recognizing the need for the inclusion of additional guidelines within the RR guidelines working list. Even though issues such as juvenile justice and coordination of local, national and international efforts are not under the jurisdiction of the local NGO initiatives, the thesis showed that it was important that they are included in the list of topics to consider during the design of RR initiatives, because they ensure implementation of important aspects of DDR initiatives on a higher level and as a result enable RR efforts to take place more effectively on the local level. Such could be observed in the implementation of the restorative justice in both cases and provision of demobilization certificates in the case of DRC. Both were issues that national authorities addressed within the broader concept of DDR efforts, and at the same time contributed toward RR efforts in the communities.

Fourth, the thesis validated the usefulness of a working list as a measure against which to evaluate programs. However, it was also observed that in some areas, the list of recommendations needed to be further adjusted to be of practical use to those designing and evaluating RR initiatives. Further, the analysis showed that due to the nature of the adjusted recommendations and guidelines, they could be classified into three main categories, namely the guidelines which addressed a single event or one main area of programming, guidelines

which found their application across any RR efforts and should therefore be built into the implementation of any single event guidelines, and finally guidelines which were required for RR to take place more efficiently but could not be implemented by local NGOs. This classification provided a clearer picture of how RR initiatives could be conducted, because it showed that single event guidelines most often addressed Jareg's key elements for successful reintegration and could therefore be the main focus of a single program, implemented by provision of services which ensured that the cross-cutting guidelines' recommendations were built into that program. GMAC's vocational training center was a good example of this concept. It should be noted, that such RR efforts would be interdependent of other RR initiatives in the region, and might need further testing in other conflict areas, to assess their overall generalizebility.

In summary, this thesis offered support for Jareg's theory, and in addition built further on its original 6 key elements. As such, the thesis viewed that grouping gender, as suggested by Jareg, as a cross-cutting issue was beneficial to reiterate its importance across all RR programmatic initiatives. However, the thesis views that some of the guidelines, which are placed within the programmatic elements in Jareg's theory, also need to be addressed as cross-cutting guidelines. These were, as shown in Chapter 5, guideline 1 on age, guideline 6 on health and medical considerations, and finally guideline 7 on psychosocial RR initiatives. The thesis views these as the backbone of any RR program. Further, the outcomes of the thesis also indicate that once the cross-cutting guidelines have been embedded in the RR structure, NGOs could choose to coordinate their efforts and focus on the implementation structure of one single event guideline. These single event guidelines are all addressed by Jareg's theory, and in congruence with the thesis constitute the meat of the RR programs. If such implementation occurs in a more coordinated manner among various RR actors (i.e. NGOs, communities, local government), this could lead to successful results, and in particular, affect the approach used for some of the more problematic RR issues. In addition, the thesis showed that an attempt to do everything through one RR actor was not possible, nor beneficial, and that greater results and more positive outcomes were achieved when programs focused on one greater RR initiative and coordinated it with national and international actors, as well as with other local entities working in the field. Such coordination emphasized the need for involvement of different actors, and should be reflected in the guidelines not under local NGO jurisdiction. Therefore, while building on Jareg's framework, the thesis views that the following structure,

as depicted in Figure 49, would be most beneficial to allow proper implementation of RR activities to achieve long term results:

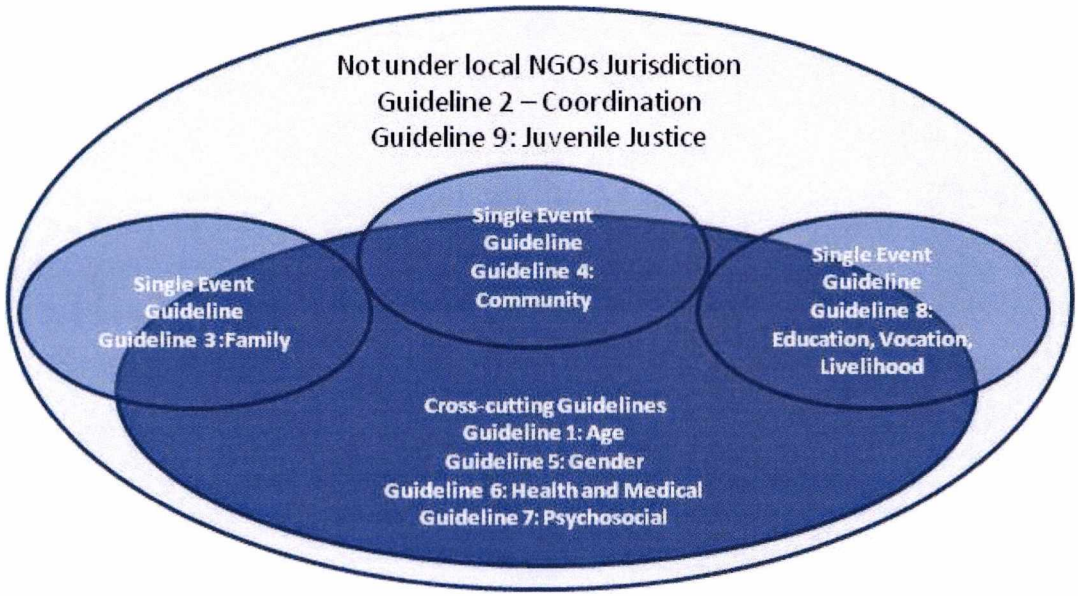

Figure 49: New Revised set of guidelines as viewed by the Thesis

The suggested diagram shows two levels of the RR programmatic implementation – the level at which guidelines do not fall under the jurisdiction of local NGOs, but are essential to the overall RR effort, and the level at which guidelines could be pursued by local initiatives as single event and cross-cutting guidelines. The diagram also shows that there are multiple intersections between the two levels, and that proper implementation of the single event guidelines will incorporate guidelines that require attention of the national and international actors. Finally, the diagram indicates that while local initiatives might choose to focus on only one of the single event guidelines in their programmatic implementation, the analysis showed that they would be more successful if they treat certain guidelines as cross-cutting in the design of their programs and ensure their implementation in any particular single event program.

It should be recognized that the findings are conducive to the two cases observed and that their general application in other programs in the respective regions can be postulated. However, further investigation needs to be conducted to validate such an assumption for several reasons. First, the cases did not explore the perceptions that the communities and the

children had towards the two programs to the extent that would allow for an assessment of successful implementation or 'jump-starting' of long-term solutions. This was not possible due to the conflict and resource limitations and because the thesis was time bound. Therefore, follow-up research in the future could answer these questions, and reevaluate the programs' impact on achieving RR. Second, currently there is no detailed information on the actual level of commitment placed by international organizations in operationalization and awareness-raising on the existence of the guidelines. This also includes the way that RR programs learn or are encouraged to utilize international guidelines and documents, such as the *Machel Reports*, *IDDRS*, *Paris Principles* and others. The fact that most of the staff members were not aware of any of these documents, or their importance, shows that more needs to be done to foster awareness of international guidelines. International organizations could place initiative in implementing the guidelines themselves by communicating them to individual programs. Third, as the working list is not presently used as a guiding tool, further evaluation would be useful to identify its actual applicability as a kind of a checklist given to the local RR programs.

It should also be noted that the RR initiatives are embedded in the DDR concepts, which have not been addressed in this thesis. Because of this, it has not been evaluated what impact issues, such as human trafficking or small arms trade, would have on the implementation success of the RR initiatives, if an effect could be observed at all. This would also imply that achieving successful RR depends on the broader peace building concepts, and that the implementation of the guidelines cannot always guarantee success. DRC can be the prime example of this. For this reason alone, further discussion and analysis could be conducted to learn how these RR initiatives can create stability in the region. Examining how and whether the creation of the labor market by the two RR initiatives provided a self-sustainable labor market and what effect it had on the region might be another area to investigate.

Finally, it should be said that no solution is a permanent solution as long as children are coerced and lured into fighting. And maybe there are no definite answers on how to prevent recruitment of children in the future conflicts, but there is great consolation in the attitude and in the resilience of the children themselves. If they are able to put behind all bad that has transpired and to look with an eye of hope into the future, then it is the task of local, national and international actors to reinforce that attitude and resilience by creating RR initiatives which will provide long-term success.

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