Chapter 4

Reintegration and Rehabilitation of Child Soldiers in Mozambique

The official DDR process in Mozambique (early 1990s) was essentially adult-driven since it marginalised those former combatants who were below fifteen years of age. At that time according to the international community, soldiers below fifteen were considered children or 'child soldiers'. The focus of the DDR programme in the country was state security and human security concerns were sidelined. This chapter analyses the adult-driven DDR process as well as community-based rehabilitation programmes for child soldiers in post-conflict Mozambique (1992). It further aims to understand the impact of the exclusion of child soldiers from the DDR process. Before analysing the issue of human security and the DDR process in Mozambique, this chapter will give a glimpse of the armed conflict in the country.

The conflict between Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) and the Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) in the 1980s and early 1990s was one of the bloodiest in African history. As a result of the conflict almost one million died, among these 45 percent were children. Three million were displaced internally while one-and-a-half million ended up as refugees in neighbouring countries such as Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Swaziland and South Africa. The war ravaged the infrastructure, with medical facilities and schools systematically targeted by the rebels. Further, violence in Mozambique was rampant which included murder, rape, torture, amputation, and forced cannibalism (McKay and Mazurana 2004:32).

Background

It was in 1964, that Mozambicans embarked on their struggle against the Portuguese rule in Mozambique which was the only colonial power left in the African continent. The Portuguese government responded with killings and secret police infiltrations. In the aftermath of the 1974 coup d'état in Portugal, FRELIMO came to power in Mozambique. The departing colonists demolished buildings and infrastructure, slaughtered livestock,
and shoved equipment into the ocean, leaving the country impoverished (Wurst 1994:36). Soon the FRELIMO leadership was confronted with a guerilla war waged by the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) mostly known as RENAMO which received the support of South Africa and Rhodesia (Furley 1995:32).

In 1977, the armed conflict between FRELIMO (the government forces) and RENAMO (the rebels) broke out and continued for around fifteen years. However, during the post-independence phase, Mozambique did not experience the impact of RENAMO until after the creation of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980. From the mid-1980s South Africa’s destabilisation policies intensified in Mozambique (Dodge 1991: 57). However, due to internal reforms in South Africa to put an end to apartheid, former’s support for RENAMO declined. This resulted in the weakening of RENAMO. Therefore, the likelihood of a political solution acquired strength in Mozambique.

In 1992 the war ended with a peace settlement, which was facilitated by peace talks and international mediation (Honwana 2003:62). On October 4, 1992, the FRELIMO and the RENAMO signed the General Peace Agreement (GPA) (Ball and Barnes 2000:159). On 13 Dec 1992, the U.N. Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ) was established by the Security Council (Wurst 1994:37). In November 1994, elections were held in the country and finally FRELIMO took control of the government. Contrary to the Angolan case, where an electoral defeat led the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) to revive its insurgency, RENAMO in Mozambique accepted its position as the opposition party (Wurst 1997:17).

Child Recruitment

During the Mozambique conflict (1977–1992), for the first time the issue of recruitment of child soldiers or young people below eighteen years of age, was raised internationally. Here, in this case, FRELIMO publicly displayed boy soldiers from RENAMO forces. The international community responded with the development of programmes particularly for child soldiers, however, merely boys passed through these programmes.
During the conflict in Mozambique, child soldiers became an extremely “hot issue”, consequently neither RENAMO nor the FRELIMO government wanted to acknowledge using them. Accordingly alternative programmes were created to facilitate the release of child soldiers. Mozambique also offered an opportunity to assess and document the experiences of girls or young women who participated in the armed forces or militias. Mostly, the involvement of women in the armed forces or militias was reluctantly acknowledged by internationals, however the presence of girls was generally dismissed or denied as occasional. Post-conflict programmes, specifically for girls were not developed, and gender concerns in programmes for children were virtually absent. Girls received only few, if at all, benefits and years later they were struggling to make a living (McKay and Mazurana 2004:32).

During the armed conflict between the FRELIMO and RENAMO, both parties attempted to lure children and youth into their struggle by promising them scholarships which at times not just failed to materialise, but also caused the prospective scholar to become a direct combatant armed with an assault rifle instead of a pencil (McIntyre 2003). In Mozambique, children were recruited into the MNR through capture, coercion and brutal psychological and physical force (Dodge 1991:56). According to UNICEF, around 10,000 child soldiers were still being deployed by RENAMO’s forces in 1988. Moreover, an indefinite number of children were integrated by force into the local paramilitary forces or “milicias populares,” directed by FRELIMO. Moreover, scores of children were also recruited as soldiers in the state armed forces (Wamba and Mahony 2004:7). Children were employed as combatants, spies, intelligence agents, porters, slaves, and “wives” (McKay and Mazurana 2004:32).

**RENAMO**

With support from the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), RENAMO came into existence in 1977. The Rhodesian government was responsible for creating and sponsoring the RENAMO in reprisal for the FRELIMO’s complete implementation of the sanctions authorised by the UN, above all its support for Zimbabwe National Liberation Army’s (ZANLA) armed struggle for Zimbabwe’s independence. Immediately
subsequent to Mozambique's independence in 1975, many Portuguese settlers in addition to previous members of the colonial armed forces in the country who opposed FRELIMO's policies left for Rhodesia. For the Rhodesian security services this offered 'a recruiting pool for founding members of RENAMO'. In the beginning the RENAMO was entirely reliant on Rhodesia and was meant to serve a dual purpose: firstly, assisting the Rhodesian forces to carry out operations inside Mozambique against ZANLA, mostly through intelligence gathering; secondly, to put into practice the agenda of the aggrieved Portuguese settlers who desired to dethrone the "communist" (FRELIMO) government of Mozambique. Consequently, at first RENAMO had few local roots and initially its mentors chose to keep the military wing distinct from its political wing, which was just about entirely under the control of white Portuguese-speaking Mozambicans (Honwana 2003:65-66).

As Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980 subsequent to the Lancaster House agreements, the Rhodesian support was no longer available to RENAMO. However, it came under the tutelage of South African Security Forces as well as some groups in the West. While the outside support helped RENAMO make considerable military progress, its ideological and political project remained extremely weak. To cope with this concern, RENAMO made attempts at harnessing popular support within Mozambique by employing a traditionalist approach, which worked towards filling the void caused by FRELIMO's rejection of traditional chiefs in addition to cultural and traditional religious values and practices. This in turn helped RENAMO build local support among sections of the peasant population (Honwana 2003:65-66). By the mid-1980s RENAMO was active throughout the country and had become notorious for its recruitment of child soldiers.

Large segment of the rural population helped in spreading the rebel (RENAMO) movement due to their alienation from the FRELIMO government 'by its forced collectivisation of the countryside', religious persecution, and the elimination of traditional chiefs. All ethnic groups and regions in central and northern Mozambique supported RENAMO as they felt sidelined or marginalised by the dominance of people from south within the FRELIMO government. It was in the 1960s during the freedom
struggle that the regional divisions inside FRELIMO had emerged, however, historically their roots can be said to go back much earlier. RENAMO's electoral successes during the elections in 1994 and 1999, when the opposing party got a majority of votes in most northern and central provinces have eventually confirmed that the rebel movement has always had substantial regional support (Seibert 2003:276).

Child Recruitment by RENAMO

RENAMO was notorious for the recruitment of child soldiers who were frequently abducted and forced to train as combatants. Reportedly, RENAMO recruited ten or twelve year olds from refugee camps in the neighbouring Malawi which was accused by the FRELIMO government of aiding RENAMO. It purposely targeted children to train them with the most dreadful and brutal techniques, which led to it earning the title of the 'Khmer Rouge of Africa' (Furley 1995:32). In one instance the RENAMO took 100 children into its custody from a school in Cambine, southern Mozambique (Furley 1995:32).

Human Rights Watch notes, ex-child soldiers who were interviewed during the period 1990-1992, recounted their experiences of abduction and training by RENAMO. The rebel movement engaged in recruiting young people in all areas; however especially wherever there was a dearth of adult men. It was in the south that reports of recruitment of children below fifteen by RENAMO forces were most common, where the traditional labour migration to the neighbouring South Africa had meant a scarcity of adult males. According to the reports children were instructed and trained in rebel campsites such as Matsequenha. Children reportedly did not complain much and followed orders. One person interviewed by Human Rights Watch (HRW) explained, young boys could be turned into particularly good fighters (HRW 1996:14).

The process of turning the young person into a soldier and making him or her a part of the RENAMO forces took place through a direct encounter between RENAMO and the young people and their families or was interceded by local chiefs. As far as southern Mozambique was concerned the latter was perhaps less frequent, though there
exist reports of local chiefs who backed the government or the rebels. Yet, the extent of their direct involvement in recruiting child combatants is unclear. While, in other areas (central and northern region) of Mozambique, reportedly, there existed stronger link between the rebels and traditional authorities (Honwana 2002).

To close probable avenues of resistance from the child’s communities, armed groups may purposely wipe out the bonds of trust between the child and the community. For instance, during the conflict in Mozambique, RENAMO compelled boy enlistees to slay someone from their own village (Wessells 1997:35). A characteristic RENAMO recruitment practice entailed coercing new child enlistees into killing someone known to these children.

In fact, in several cases RENAMO compelled children into killing either their mother or father or a relative so as to sever their ties with the community, binding them to the movement through guilt and shame. Further, reportedly child soldiers were made to smoke a concoction of soruma or marijuana and gunpowder in order to enhance their physical strength and courage. Child units were mainly engaged in attacks on non-combatants and in looting raids ‘on local communities to provide bases with supplies’. They were seldom involved in direct combat with FRELIMO. Most young people were kidnapped in the south of the country where the rebels were less entrenched among the local people. Further, an attempt to flee would prove dangerous since RENAMO retaliated with instantaneous execution and abducted children and men were generally taken to far-off training camps to avoid escape. Besides, the fear of punishment by the government following their return daunted the captives from absconding from RENAMO camps (Seibert 2003: 255-256).

However, Schafer observes, while previous writing on the conflict focused on psychological brutalisation tactics and physical coercion by RENAMO to produce desocialised killing machines, however, oral accounts by ex-fighters revealed a process of re-socialisation wherein they attempted to retain links with their previous lives and adhere to their moral values as far as possible. Particularly the young soldiers’ attachment
to family in addition to the belief in patriarchal structures was upheld through their own actions as well as the manipulation of the leadership. The depiction of the guerilla leaders as father figures responded to a psychological requirement for the recruits, in addition to becoming an instrument of military mobilisation. RENAMO used the notion of the patriarchal structure to build analogies with local moral conventions and avoid alienating both combatants and civilians, to be in control of combatants and instill compliance, to validate its fight politically to the enlistees, and to forbid relationships between female and male combatants. FRELIMO also indulged in portraying its leaders as father figures, to garner the same sort of obedience and devotion from its enlistees, who were reluctant and skeptical of the rationalisation of the conflict (Schafer 2005:100-101).

Furthermore, in some areas of Mozambique many young people were drawn to RENAMO, particularly because of the crisis existing in the countryside. A number of young people migrated to town, however unable to get work; they got back to rural areas. The Operacao Producao in 1984 sent back those who were regarded as “unproductive” to the rural areas. These returned young people were now unable to fit into local structures and the unappealing life of the countryside. RENAMO offered these disconnected youth ‘a different purpose in life’ by handing them a gun (Honwana 2002). RENAMO in Mozambique persistently denied using children throughout the war. However, when the conflict came to an end, many of its soldiers during demobilisation parades were in fact children; there was one sixteen year old who was involved in combat since he was just eight (Singer 2006:145).

**FRELIMO**

FRELIMO was established in 1963 when three key nationalist groups combined forces and elected Eduardo Mondlane, an anthropologist, as its first president. It was under Samora Machel who headed the party after Mondlane’s death that FRELIMO acquired a more militant character (Bartoli 2002:363). The original FRELIMO was essentially a mass movement for all those who were opposed to Portuguese rule and fascism (Hanlon 1984: 138). FRELIMO has a history of sustaining a wide-ranging support. During the 1960s at the time of the
anti-colonialism struggle, FRELIMO received aid from China as well as the Soviet Union. During the 1990s, it became part of the British Commonwealth as well as the Portuguese CPLP (Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa) (Hanlon 2007:9).

It was in 1977 that FRELIMO formally adopted Marxism-Leninism, and the same year it also went on to sign ‘a twenty-year treaty of cooperation and friendship with the Soviet Union’. Even though it intended to be non-aligned, the FRELIMO government’s proximity with the Soviet Union indicated a clear inclination towards the communist “camp”. While the west began to distance itself from Mozambique, the latter grew more reliant on Eastern Europe in addition to the Soviet Union for military and economic aid and more acerbic in its rhetoric against the west (Reed 1996:278).

*Child Recruitment by FRELIMO*

Ana Leão notes, much of what’s written on child combatants during the armed conflict in Mozambique perpetuates misinformation. FRELIMO, officially, never recruited child combatants and therefore muted those young people’s voices who spent their youth fighting and later struggled to survive. This supposed non-existence of child combatants in FRELIMO forces has been so resolutely embedded in literature as well as in people’s psyche that when ex-child combatants were being interviewed, those children who had been enlisted by FRELIMO argued ‘...we are not child soldiers; we were only recruited under age’. They were resolute in their thinking that merely those who had been recruited by RENAMO were child combatants. Further, it has not been acknowledged that some (under recruitment age) youth voluntarily joined RENAMO, mainly to escape forced recruitment or since they were assured opportunities that they were denied by the government in power. FRELIMO did engage in forced recruitment. Children or young people were enlisted if they were considered ‘to be big enough to hold a gun’. Students showed interest in scholarships abroad, but eventually ended up in ‘military academies in the host countries’, rather than the promised universities. Others were enticed into joining special national training courses or programmes, which also happened to be military training (Leão 2004:40-41).
Leão notes, students in Mozambique and abroad could only receive their schooling certificates once they had completed their military service, which, according to Leão’s sample, ‘could last between two and sixteen years, or even longer’ (Leão 2004:41). Rosen also points out, FRELIMO regularly employed children as soldiers (Rosen 2005:13-14). FRELIMO did not just frequently organise raids to abduct young males for military service, it also engaged in forcible recruitment of children, although to a lesser extent than RENAMO (Seibert 2003:256).

Peace Process in Mozambique
One of the earliest peace-building missions took place in Mozambique. On December 16, 1992, the Security Council Resolution 797 launched one of the most comprehensive and ambitious missions carried out by the UN up till that time- The UN Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ). Its mandate encompassed humanitarian, military, political, as well as electoral responsibilities not just for the conciliation or pacification of a war-shattered state but ‘for its transformation from a single party state to a multiparty democracy’ as well (Ajello and Wittmann 2004: 437). Like El Salvador and Namibia, in Mozambique too, the UN was the impartial facilitator in dealing with the process, and it got involved and mediated at the time when the demobilisation process was at risk or showed delays (Kingma 2001:412). Initially conceived to last for twelve months, the mandate of the ONUMOZ was later extended to November 15, 1994 and ended on January 31, 1995. According to the peace agreement there would not be any truth commission, and therefore no punishments or penalties would be given for crimes committed during the conflict (Shillington 2005: 1043). The peace agreement espoused a new integrated army comprising 30,000 men, half from each side, however, just 12,000 of the demobilised decided on joining the army (Shillington 2005:1043).

Actors in the Peace Process
Realising that the conflict between FRELIMO and RENAMO could not be resolved through military means, from 1988 efforts were made by the Catholic Church, forces in civil society, various religious groups and certain individuals, to build contacts with and instigate negotiations between the government and the rebels. In 1992 a peace accord was
finally signed between the FRELIMO government and the RENAMO forces through the intercession or mediation of the Italian Government and the Catholic Church (Lundin 1998:105). The Mozambique conflict demonstrates several different roles that informal or non-official organisations can perform: facilitator, communicator, and mediator. However, this is an atypical case and instances of direct intercession by nonofficial groups are rather infrequent (Crocker et al. 2004:66).

The Mozambique case also underscores the significance of collaboration among major third parties. For instance, in the case of Mozambique, the governments of major powers, neighbouring states as well as Sant’ Egidio had an interest in resolving the Mozambique conflict. In Mozambique, the same supportive relations between third parties, this time among the UN and the key states, typified the peace implementation phase (Crocker et al. 2004:71).

**Civil Society**

In Mozambique, sections of civil society contributed vigorously with actions and programmes to maintain peace. A case in point is the management of the Christian Council of Mozambique which developed and executed a programme to convert ‘weapons into ploughshares (or hoes)’. Further, this plan contributed to decreasing the number of arms in the service of crime in the southern part of Mozambique, in addition to encouraging members from different communities to disclose the existence of arms caches (Lundin 1998:114).

NGOs are known to have played a significant role during the disarmament process in Mozambique as people became aware that weapons given to them would finally be obliterated (while it was dreaded that weapons handed over to the police would be simply resold for profit). Therefore, local communities placed ammunition, light weapons, and landmines by the roadside when they were aware that mine clearance groups or humanitarian organisations were close by (Spear 2002:154-155).
Role of the Religion and Church

The churches have played a central role in the Mozambique peace process. Besides a Catholic lay-missionary society which hosted the formal negotiations, various Catholic as well as Protestant churches and organisations have been significantly influential in the manner in which the people in Mozambique and rest of the world saw each other and the need and manner in which the armed conflict would be settled. The churches have been pivotal in real peace-building on the ground (Vines and Wilson 1995: 130).

Religion had a role to play in motivating major actors in the accessibility of resources via network of religious bodies, and in the style and overall vision of the peace process, particularly during its two years and six months at the Sant’ Egidio Community headquarters. The endeavor proved successful since these components were drawn together amicably ‘in the design and implementation of peace as a political process’. Put differently, the political disposition of the peace process did not undergo transformation as a result of the religious elements, but it was basically enriched by them (Bartoli 2002:362).

External Actors

External actors played an important role in Mozambique’s negotiation process and its war-to-peace transition. The peace negotiations were hosted by the Italian government and were observed by Mozambique’s key donors, particularly the USA, Britain, Germany and Portugal. Italy played a major role in arranging the peace negotiations and was set to take the lead in funding its implementation. Prior to and during the negotiation process, donors, in particular, the group of like-minded donors, in addition to the U.S., worked closely with both parties to offer political guidance and support in preparation for the transition stage. The General Peace Agreement (GPA) granted the UN and bilateral donors explicit roles for the implementation and monitoring of the peace accords. During the period 1992-1994, UNOMOZ and international donors had important roles to play in the implementation of the GPA (Manning and Malbrough 2009:81).
Manning and Malbrough point out a number of factors that have led to Mozambique’s success. These include the involvement of the UNOMOZ from 1992-94, longstanding relations between the Mozambican government and the important donors who played a prominent role in the transition to peace, the ramifications of regional and distant international events, and the choices of the leaders of the warring parties. Further, another important factor was the presence of a feasible state structure, which proved capable of fulfilling the promises made during the negotiation process. This state capacity was significantly strengthened and facilitated by donor support during the years preceding the peace accord. The UN mission has been praised for the successful outcome of the Mozambican peace process. Manning and Malbrough further argue, the UN was critical in administering the truce and providing an all-encompassing official framework within which the peace process was executed, however, the success of the process mainly depended upon responsive and flexible interventions by bilateral donors who got involved to supplement the resources and mandate of the UNOMOZ. Although less noticeable, but equally significant, was the impact that many of these donors had on boosting the confidence and capacity of the government of Mozambique in the years preceding the peace accord (Manning and Malbrough 2009:78).

Barnes also points to the role of donors in the successful transition to peace. He states, considering that on the average an annual amount of $1 billion flowed into the country for emergency as well as development assistance between 1990 and 1995, it is imperative to look at the role played by the governmental authorities and the international donor community (UN agencies, bilateral donors) ‘in the definition of aid priorities and the implementation of programmes.’ Even though it was apparent that there was a clear-cut movement ‘from government-led coordination (early eighties) of aid to donor-driven programmes (early nineties),’ the government of Mozambique managed to maintain enough sovereignty as well as state authority to influence the content and shape of the aid packages (Barnes 1998:27).
DDR and Human Security

The Peace Agreement in Mozambique comprised a DDR programme that envisioned the achievement of demobilisation and disarmament in eighteen months. UN observes, the programme gave much importance to disarmament and demobilisation rather than the social and cultural reintegration (UN 2005:19). Consequently, state security was given precedence over human security.

Disarmament

Disarmament experienced problems such as the lack of trustworthy information regarding the number of troops involved in both RENAMO and FRELIMO. RENAMO’s force’s strength was projected to be somewhere between 11,000 and 13,000 while the FRELIMO’s was projected to be several times the size of RENAMO’s force. Though, in the closing stages of demobilisation over 92,000 former soldiers went through the process; around 70,500 on the FRELIMO’s side and over 21,000 from RENAMO’s forces. According to estimates, between 1.5 million and 6 million ammunitions and small arms had been dispersed in the country yet just 200,000 ammunitions and light arms were collected by the UN Operation in Mozambique by the end of its mandate in 1995, of which around 24,000 were destroyed (UN 2005:19).

In Mozambique, within the ONUMOZ mandate, guidelines regarding what comprised disarmament were not present and how to reach this end was also not elucidated. The manner in which the mandate was phrased, it would appear that the process of disarmament was more or less completely included in the definition of demobilisation. One of the effects of these silences, not considering why they were constructed, is that the responsibility lies with the implementers to choose how to move forward. The specifics of the peace accord can be viewed as a top limit for action or a base from which agents can proceed to implement their understanding of the intent of the accords. In the Mozambican case, a number of ONUMOZ personnel considered disarmament as the central element of the peace agreement acting accordingly (Spear 2002:148-149).
Norma J. Kriger observes, when demobilisation is viewed as comprising disarmament, Borges Coelho and Vines consider the case of UN-administered demobilisation in Mozambique a success. Some years later Vines describes demobilisation as separate from disarmament, and asserts that disarmament during the peace settlement in Mozambique was a failure. Above all, he levels criticism against the UN mandate for not making a distinction between demobilisation and disarmament, for not elucidating what disarmament must involve, and for not offering criteria for the success of disarmament. He suggests his preferred criteria. ‘For ONUMOZ to have disarmed all armed individuals’ would have been an impracticable task, however the weapons it did get hold of and which were set aside for decommissioning could have been destroyed (Kriger 2003:18-19). In Mozambique, complete disarmament did not take place and soldiers engaged in selling their arms to dealers who directed them into the townships of South Africa, resulting in the intensification of violence in civil disputes such as the ‘taxi wars’ (Spear 2006:65).

**Demobilisation**

The demobilisation programmes eventually funded by the international community ended up being deficient in the benefits declared to the troops, leading to the resentment among those awaiting demobilisation. Moreover, the sluggishness of the financial support in turn delayed the commencement of the demobilisation process, slowing the peace process and protracting the international peacekeeping operation by a year. However, downsizing in the country was successfully completed in 1994 (Marley 1997).90

**Demobilisation of Child Soldiers**

The demobilisation and reintegration of over 80,000 soldiers was perhaps the most remarkable achievement of ONUMOZ (Ajello and Wittmann 2004: 445). Sixty six thousand soldiers were demobilised by FRELIMO while RENAMO demobilised around 24,000 adult combatants and 12,000 child combatants, according to the UN (Shillington 2005:1043). However, an unknown number of “child soldiers” (below fifteen years of age) were intentionally left out of the demobilisation process in Mozambique. There is no

90 Online Source
precise data on the number of young people below the age of eighteen who served in the forces of RENAMO or FRELIMO during the armed conflict in the country, although their number is widely thought to be somewhere in the thousands.

According to the technical unit of the UN mission in Mozambique (ONUMOZ), 27 percent (about 25,498) of the soldiers who were present for demobilisation were younger than eighteen when the demobilisation process was formally initiated in 1994. However, child soldiers below fifteen, who fought the war for many years, could not be considered soldiers under International Law, according to the Geneva Conventions. Underage combatants seeking facilities under demobilisation schemes were not given the same benefits as regular soldiers and were instead referred to NGOs, such as the International Committee for the Red Cross and Save the Children Alliance (Honwana 2005:137).

When the conflict came to an end, Accion Sociale, Mozambique government’s demobilising agency, concluded that there were just 850 children below the age of fifteen remaining in the RENAMO’s forces, of whom 574 were identified and referred for rehabilitation (Maslen 1997:20). Save the Children Federation (US) pointed out, prior to the 1992 peace accord, it worked with around 2,000 child combatants; 850 were present in RENAMO bases at the time of demobilisation in 1994; while an additional 6,000, communities reported, had returned spontaneously when the rebels allowed them to go at the time of the peace process. These 6,000 children were mostly domestic help and porters, while the 850 found in RENAMO bases until the demobilisation process were probably soldiers. These 850 children found in nineteen RENAMO bases were moved to twelve transit centres (three in government-administered areas while nine in rebel or RENAMO controlled regions) ‘in seven provinces in a joint SCF/UNICEF/Red Cross project’ before reintegration assistance and reunification with their families (wherever this was achievable). Most children had been abducted during the period 1988-1990 and had stayed in the bases for many years; only a few had been kidnapped after the initiation of the peace negotiations (Maslen 1997:20-21).
Reintegration

DDR programme in Mozambique gave precedence to disarmament and demobilisation over reintegration. And even in the case of reintegration, psychological aspect was neglected especially when compared to economic reintegration. Military security was the overriding concern of the DDR planners. As mentioned previously, child soldiers below the age of fifteen were excluded from the DDR programme and former girl soldiers were neglected. This in turn threatened human security.

In Mozambique, much emphasis was laid on economic reintegration and occupational skills and training programmes were developed, however, little was done officially to deal with the psychological requirement of the former soldiers, and prepare them to enter civilian life. Further, peace accords do not offer a complete basis for reconciliation, which is apparently not regarded as an "essential" component of peacekeeping mechanisms. However, it is important to bear in mind that Mozambique is a community state 'where social order within community life and between neighbouring communities' is imperative for the social reproduction of the existing form of life; and reconciliation and healing subsequent to a conflict, between individuals, communities, and social groups, is not just important but essential (Lundin 1998:105-106).

Regardless of the shortcomings in the official reintegration programmes, individuals and communities contributed to the post-conflict rehabilitation and reintegration of combatants. In Mozambique, where no official truth commission existed, Alcinda Honwana has dealt with the influence of local beliefs and notions of self on approaches to healing. Traditionally in Mozambique, illness, including mental health, exceeds 'the control of an individual', and could lead to the involvement of both the family and the community. The spirits of the deceased may also hold an important place in the healing of the individual. Likewise, there is this conception of 'social pollution', where those who have perpetrated killings during the conflict become polluted, and thus become potential conduits for spirits of the deceased to enter and bring about suffering on themselves, their families and even their communities (Marshall 2007:148-149).
Therefore, 'rehumanisation' or cleansing processes which traditional healers perform are crucial for the protection of community and reintegration of those drawn in the conflict. Since many Mozambicans believe that talking about experiences of trauma may lead malicious humans and spirits to return, these practices or rituals may not entail verbal expression of the trauma, and instead re-emphasise the leaving behind of traumatic experiences symbolically and the creation of a ritual transformation in status from anarchism to social conformance. According to research, in such societies healing rituals seem to work with victims much more than talk therapy. These healing practices and reinstatement of harmony are effective since they are carried out within a wider milieu of family, community and the spirit realm, in tune with cultural notions regarding health and self. These notions and beliefs are more common in rural areas, which were most badly hit by the conflict, but are nonetheless still consonant in urban areas. The refusal to talk about the conflict and past atrocities was seen across classes, and truth mechanisms were categorically rejected. Subsequent to the truce and lacking a truth mechanism, one possible factor in Mozambique’s swift and widespread reconciliation was the lasting strength of traditional approaches to healing (Marshall 2007:149).

Reintegration of Child Soldiers

The official DDR programme in Mozambique lacked mechanisms for reintegration of those former combatants who were below fifteen years of age. In 1995 the US Department of State reported, the Government did not make ‘children's rights and welfare a priority’. And little attempt was made to reintegrate large numbers of child combatants who were involved in the RENAMO and the government forces or assuage the situation of the rising numbers of street children in urban areas, many of whom lost their parents or families as a result of the conflict. During the year, the rebels (RENAMO) began to give the ICRC in addition to other NGOs better access to child soldiers in its forces, some of whom had been coerced into being combatants. Of the 3,500 children who had been in the custody of the rebels (RENAMO), around 500 had been employed as combatants. At the end of the year, all but a minority of problem cases (where parents were either dead or
could not accept their children) had been settled, and the ICRC declared plans to end its operation (US Department of State 1995).91

UN notes, demobilisation of child combatants took place at separate centers where they were given special attention. Efforts at reuniting families were successful. Female ex-combatants who experienced sexual abuse were provided with psycho-social support and reunited with their families (UN 2005). However, it is important to note that children under the age of fifteen, who were to be involved in programmes by humanitarian agencies such as Children and War Project (CWP), were unhappy with their exclusion from the formal DDR process. Consequently, a group of RENAMO child combatants (below fifteen) staged a revolt in the headquarters of RENAMO in Maputo and overwhelmed RENAMO leaders (Honwana 2006: 139). The CWP and the ICRC offered to provide these children basic livelihood goods.

The Children and War programme was successful in reunifying these children with their families, however, providing effective follow-up support was a big challenge. Given the lack of publicly provided services, most children were left to fend for themselves. Some were successful, while others ended up as street children or drifted into criminal groups (Honwana 2005:140). However, the Mozambican case is considered a success in terms of reintegrating large numbers of ex-child soldiers through the community-based and local healing methods. In 2001, as regards the reintegration of ex-combatants, the government informed the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child that western style psychological treatment ‘did not fit the traditional African perspective on the interpretation of trauma, and thus caused the rejection of families or the stigmatisation of children assisted by these programmes’, whereas treatment and healing by traditional healers encouraged reintegration (CSC 2004).92

Reconciliation and forgiveness are both part of Africa’s cultural heritage. Therefore, unsurprisingly, these concepts were being recovered and strengthened in

91 Online Source
92 Child Soldier Coalition Online Source
Mozambique. To commemorate the first anniversary of the peace accord in 1993, those religious leaders who were involved in instigating the peace process, being aware of the significance of the concept of reconciliation, organised an ecumenical service in public in the two key cities – Beira and Maputo. In addition, the Churches organised "peace education programmes" which took place at community level. However, the most important activities were those arranged by the communities themselves. As part of former combatants' reception, the communities carried out rituals of reintegration in places where these individuals opted to settle down. These rituals aimed at reconciling the ex-combatant in three stages: firstly, with her/himself, to rid the spirit of conflict and violence ‘from the heart and soul’ of the former combatant, a type of exorcism to recondition the ex-soldier socially and psychologically; next, with the community and community life; and finally, with her/his former enemies (Lundin 1998:107).

There were community methods of reintegration in both rural and urban areas, with specific features for different localities and regions. At all places these mechanisms functioned autonomously, as ‘cultural elements of reintegration’ dispensing with financial support from outside the community. According to the evidence these methods or mechanisms seemed to work better in rural areas than urban centres (Lundin 1998:107).

In 2004 a study of ex-child combatants in the country was reported to have found that they were:

As much integrated as the rest of the population and did not seem to have any problem specific to the group. They felt respected by their families and communities and many belonged to either a religious or community group. Most children had never seen a psychologist or a social worker (CSC 2004).93

However, reportedly former girl combatants were frequently neglected during the integration process. Young women and girls who were forced into sexual slavery or exploited as slave labour in both government and RENAMO’s fighting forces had frequently been excluded from reintegration programmes for former soldiers. In fact, in

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93 Ibid
some cases, these programmes allowed the continuance of human rights abuses, such as leaving these girls and young women in the custody of those men who had kidnapped them during the conflict (CSC 2004). The segment on girl soldiers discusses their demobilisation and reintegration at length.

*The Lhanguene Rehabilitation Center for Child Soldiers*

During the period 1988-2004, information was prospectively gathered on 39 male ex-child combatants in Mozambique. The research commenced in Maputo at the Lhanguene Rehabilitation Center, continued after the reintegration of subjects into their families and communities, while concluding in a study in 2004 to learn how these ex-child combatants were now doing as adults. Journalistic accounts in 1988 and 1990 termed Mozambique’s children “future barbarians” and a “lost generation”. However, Boothby et al. assert, their research demonstrates that this is far from true. They continue, in fact, the huge majority of the group of ex-child combatants who were followed for around sixteen years had grown to be capable, caring and productive adults. Very few carried on with their violent behaviour, or are so distressed that they have not been able to come to terms with their lives. At the same time, none of these ex-child combatants are really liberated from their pasts. They continue to fight back psychological distress connected with their experiences. Their study also identified particular interventions that were vital in facilitating substantial reintegration and recovery of these ex-child combatants (Boothby et al. 2008:239).

However, Honwana is quite critical of the Lhanguene Rehabilitation Center. She states, when the armed hostilities ended most child combatants were moved to demobilisation centres. The Red Cross as well as other international and local organisations helped in reuniting many children with their relatives and families or placed them in foster care. The very first child combatants who came from the rebel camps were placed in a recovery centre in town, with a group of child psychologists working with them. In Honwana’s view, this experience turned out to be unsuccessful since these children were completely disconnected from both their cultural environment and

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94 Ibid
communities and were also asked to verbalise their excruciating past as part of their healing and recovery. She maintains, western psychological approaches frequently employ such practices. Western understandings and definitions of childhood, of trauma and distress, and of healing and diagnosis were employed in a society that embraces extremely different ontologies and socio-cultural patterns (Honwana 2002).

Honwana asserts, in other socio-cultural context much emphasis is laid on the role of the ancestral spirits in addition to other spiritual forces in the course ‘of causation and healing of mental health problem’. Further, in contrast to modern western psychology, not just the individual but the collective body is taken into account. According to this perspective, if the focus is merely on the individual then this would undermine the efforts of family and community to participate in the healing process. Similarly, in Mozambique, research on healing war trauma has demonstrated that recollecting the distressing experience through verbalisation, for the purpose of healing it, is not always effective. In several cases people would not look back or speak about the past, they would rather start afresh following certain ritual practices, which do not essentially entail verbalisation of the affliction (Honwana 2002).

**DDR of Girl Soldiers**

In Mozambique, DDR programmes gave priority to peace and security issues, this in turn led to giving precedence to male combatants over females and gender concerns. Since female soldiers are not directly considered a major security hazard, they are generally excluded from the DDR programmes; this was seen in the case of Sierra Leone, Mozambique, and several other states (Bouta et al. 2005:17). Females as well as some males who performed support roles were frequently excluded from the demobilisation process (Bouta et al. 2005:14).

Those implementing DDR in Mozambique adopted gender-sensitive language; nevertheless, this was a top-down imposition leading to ‘ad hoc and informal attention to gender at the level of implementation’ (Ollek 2007: 41). Most of the females associated with RENAMO and FRELIMO were either abandoned or forced to accompany their
“husbands” in the reintegration process. Financial shortages and problems in accessing supplies resulted in the delay of the DDR process which in turn contributed to insecurity at cantonment sites. The peacekeeping orientation of the ONUMOZ focused more on immediate security concerns over long-term development (Ollek 2007: 40).

Moreover, in the case of Mozambique, based on the ‘male breadwinner’ logic, demobilisation programmes did not include female former combatants. They were not provided with adequate demobilisation package. Also demobilised female combatants were not informed or were not included in encampment of former soldiers. A small number of small-scale training programmes for female former soldiers also underpinned gender stereotypes by imparting secretarial and sewing skills. Consequently, this strengthened pre-existing gender disparity. High male unemployment led to the demobilisation programme encouraging females to become housewives to assist their husbands find work in formal sectors. Moreover, during the post war negotiations Regulos (local male chiefs) dominated the dialogue. Secondary status of gender concerns and dearth of gender-sensitive programmes in post war processes prevented females from taking part in formal reconstruction processes. The Peace agreement (1992) failed to acknowledge rape and did not prosecute rape as a human rights violation of women. Also, the accord never acknowledged female former soldiers. Although women’s organisation, through civic education, worked towards encouraging females to cast their vote during the first democratic elections (1994), there was no communal or institutional support to wipe out discrimination against females in communities as well as in the electoral monitoring process (Nakamura 2004:10-11).

Similarly, when the conflict ended in Mozambique, even though girls comprised 40 percent of the minors at first documented at the rebel (RENAMO) camps, ‘the great absence in many programmes are were the girls’. Reportedly, some girls who yearned to reunite with their families were forced into staying with their RENAMO partner or ‘husband’ or leave with him to his house even though Lobolo or traditional marriage had not taken place. Further, according to reports some women and girls were abandoned by their so called RENAMO “husbands” at the time of demobilisation (McKay and

In Mozambique, females were believed to be more receptive than males to new values and army discipline, and therefore more compliant and easier to instruct and train. Yet, the fact that the warring parties have valued females must not obscure the truth that many females, like several males do not join armies voluntarily, especially irregular armies (Bouta et al. 2005:13). Further, in Mozambique, many females joined the army at quite an early age, therefore ‘they had little education or work experience’ (Bouta et al. 2005:27). In 1994, AMODEG, a veterans’ organisation, created a women’s branch since only issues concerning men were being tackled, and embarked on lobbying for equal rights for female former combatants. It dealt with following issues- specific economic reintegration courses for females, proper clothing for females, women’s entitlement to resettlement allowances, psychological support for females as well as males, and the idea that ex-combatants should be regarded as a heterogeneous group which includes men, women, young people or children, and disabled soldiers (Bouta et al. 2005:30). A peace organisation called PROPAZ established by ex-combatants, stated that the veterans’ association failed to address issues pertinent to female fighters and there was a need for independent associations for these women (CSC 2004).95

**Challenges faced by DDR in Mozambique**

DDR process in Mozambique faced many challenges such as ONUMOZ’s short-term focus, former combatants’ low education levels, the unwillingness of many former combatants to go back to their rural communities, the unremitting flow of a great number of arms and ammunitions as well as financial constraints that resulted in ‘the formation of a smaller integrated army’ (11,000 rather than the 30,000 agreed) (UN 2005:20).

A major problem in Mozambique’s (1992-94) DDR process, was that the RENAMO, the government, and individual combatants, clandestinely established weapons caches outside the disarmament programme. Weapons caches in Mozambique

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95 Ibid
(in addition to Zimbabwe and Swaziland) have been responsible for fuelling regional arms trafficking, and crime including armed criminality in cities of South Africa. However, regional co-operation, through South African technical assistance in particular and cooperation with the police force of Mozambique and SADC helped in the exposure of caches as well as the destruction of armaments that would otherwise have encouraged crime and violence in the region. During the latest stage of Operation Rachel the Mozambican police collected information on weapons caches. Regional cooperation in addition to developing the competence of the police is critical to addressing specific problems of weapons caches and to ‘broader PCR and governance goals’ (Ginifer et al. 2004:8).

Further, despite the success of Mozambique’s peace process, UNOMOZ encountered many of the similar problems which less successful operations experienced elsewhere. Jett states, UNOMOZ achieved ‘the key elements of its mission. It was not an unqualified success, however, as will be seen by a closer look at how it operated and how well it went about fulfilling its many and varied responsibilities’. One particularly difficult aspect of UNOMOZ the way it was originally planned was the demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants, which was meant to be supervised by the UNOHAC. But the UNOHAC’s excessive bureaucratic obstructions, heavy infrastructures, and sluggish, rigid approaches to humanitarian aid exasperated donors. This resulted in the donors questioning the long-term approach of UNOHAC to humanitarian assistance, for which no mandate existed. Therefore, as Jett states, rather than the UNOHAC, donors and NGOs themselves took the lead in the redesigning and implementation of demobilisation and reintegration programmes. Manning and Malbrough note, in Mozambique, the success of DDR which is integral to peace process, cannot be credited to UNOMOZ alone (Manning and Malbrough 2009:84).

Moreover, UNICEF found it extremely problematic to determine the accurate age of the children, however, it supposed that most had been abducted at between eight and twelve years of age. UNICEF maintained that the children did not generally show signs of trauma. Nevertheless, a pilot project on trauma counselling was set up in Gaza.
provinces and the capital Maputo by an NGO called Associação Moçambicana de Saúde Pública (AMOSAPU), involving several mental health practitioners. Qualified Mozambicans were employed in the project to provide counselling and psychological support to 75 young people, some of them former child combatants. According to UNICEF the project was made untenable over the long term as a result of the use of extremely educated staff and the limited number of children assisted and it was also incapable of replication across the country (Maslen 1997:24).

Further, from the human security perspective the official DDR process in Mozambique cannot be regarded as a success. As mentioned previously, disarmament and demobilisation were given precedence over reintegration. In 2005, the UN reported, reintegration which is a long-term process was not given high priority and it became more difficult due to former soldiers’ low education levels. Skills development activities were made available to the former soldiers, however, just 7,700 could benefit from such activities (UN 2005:20). Child soldiers (those who were below fifteen years of age) were left out of the demobilisation process. Girl soldiers were marginalised.

Glenn Oosthuysen (1998) argues, in Mozambique, there seemed to be an increase in the occurrence of armed crime. Most sources blamed the large number of jobless, but armed, demobilised combatants for it. The disappointment of former combatants even became apparent in riots and strikes in Maputo, when they demanded greater government support. According to Oosthuysen, during the late '90s, this objective could perhaps 'form the basis of an armed campaign to’ pressurise the government to agree to their demands. In rural areas wandering groups of armed bandits got into looting and robbery, taking advantage of the poor state of policing. Oosthuysen further stated in 1998, the tensions between the FRELIMO and RENAMO, particularly in RENAMO supporters’ dominated provinces which are however under the control of a provincial governor appointed by FRELIMO, are likely to erupt at any time. In 1998 there were a huge number of armaments in the country to transform any such enmity into armed conflict (Oosthuysen 1998:79).
Moreover, the 1992 peace settlement between the FRELIMO and RENAMO managed to end the conflict, but it failed to address its root cause. Peace is not possible if the roots of the conflict continue to exist. In post-conflict Mozambique, there still existed tensions concerning issues such high unemployment among former combatants (most former soldiers who were given training were unable to find employment in that sector); no provision of providing pensions to RENAMO soldiers in contrast to the FRELIMO government forces; and the failure to offer reintegration benefits or assistance to governmental and paramilitary militia fighters.

Conclusion
The UN’s mission in Mozambique is considered a huge peacekeeping success (Fortna 2008:48). The UN and many international observers considered the DDR as well as ‘the larger UN peacekeeping mission successful (McKay and Mazurana 2003:32). In Mozambique, Sant’Egidio, a Catholic lay organisation mediated the peace agreement while the UN was brought into the peace process only towards the end (Krasno 2004:248).

ONUMOZ in Mozambique learnt from the failure and shortcomings of UNAVEM II in Angola. It successfully organised and supervised elections that officially ended the armed conflict, demobilised warring factions in addition to augmenting ‘the co-ordination of humanitarian aspects’ of the peace accord and post-conflict peacebuilding. ONUMOZ could achieve all this due to the fact that ‘a larger peacekeeping force’ was deployed by the UN. This peacekeeping force had a mandate and a sufficient budget to carry out the task. Although FRELIMO defeated RENAMO in the elections, the latter did not resume the armed conflict. “Effective use of ‘carrot and stick’ diplomacy” by various external actors, particularly the major powers, obliged RENAMO to respect the peace accord and accept the process of democratic transition. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) Aldo Ajello played a critical role in this strategy. Ajello employed the Italian government’s services to provide US $ 35 million for the purpose of assisting RENAMO’s democratic transition. Ajello paid the monthly amount of US $ 300,000 for over a year to the RENAMO leader for co-operating with the UN. However, the
ONUMOZs’ accomplishment was made possible as a result of the international community’s good will, especially the substantial external economic assistance given to the government of Mozambique and the post-conflict peace building process. Besides, Mozambique is deficient in strategic natural resources which would offer either ‘spoiler’ prospects or encourage the exploitation of a conflict economy which in turn would ensure the continuation of conflict or inducement for further decline into war (Francis 2006: 104-105).

Richard Synge points out, the Mozambique experience (1992 to 1994) was one of the UN’s rare peacekeeping successes, which forms a remarkably ‘rich source of lessons for an international community’ that seems to be increasingly challenged to handle armed conflicts and complex emergencies in Africa (Synge 1997:3). He further adds, in Mozambique, the UN’s task was made significantly easier due to the genuine willingness on both parties (the FRELIMO and the RENAMO) ‘to halt the fighting’- one of the important factors that can make all the difference as far as success and failure are concerned in peacekeeping operations (Synge 1997:6). It may be argued that the critical factor responsible for making ONUMOZ a success was both parties’ strong desire for peace. Without it, external actors’ efforts could only go so far. In a situation where the parties are able or eager to resort to military options, then even more sound operations are not without their limits (Ajello and Wittmann 2004: 447).

Further, despite a number of shortcomings in the official DDR programme in Mozambique such as gender bias and marginalisation of child soldiers (those who were below fifteen years of age), the case of Mozambique illustrates the critical role an afflicted but committed community could play in healing or alleviating the wounds of conflict and reintegrating individuals into civilian or community life. Although, the process of social reintegration could be quite complex and difficult, however, as far as Mozambique is concerned the community reception mechanism has played quite a significant role. Community mechanisms that motivate demobilised combatants to view themselves ‘as citizens belonging to communities’ are a significant asset. Besides, it is imperative to focus on community development while reflecting on programmes to
reintegrate former combatants into civilian life. This is because of the fact that it is a situation where the fabric of social life is ruined and physical infrastructures demolished, many groups (including returnees, refugees, and vulnerable or at risk groups in general) are in need of help, and discriminatory or unfair treatment will not facilitate the reconciliation process (Lundin 1998:115). On the whole, it may be argued that the official DDR process in Mozambique did not give much attention to human security, its focus was mainly short-term development which led to the marginalisation of long-term reintegration of former soldiers, particularly children and among these children girls were neglected the most. However, traditional healers and community mechanisms helped in healing the wounds of former child soldiers.