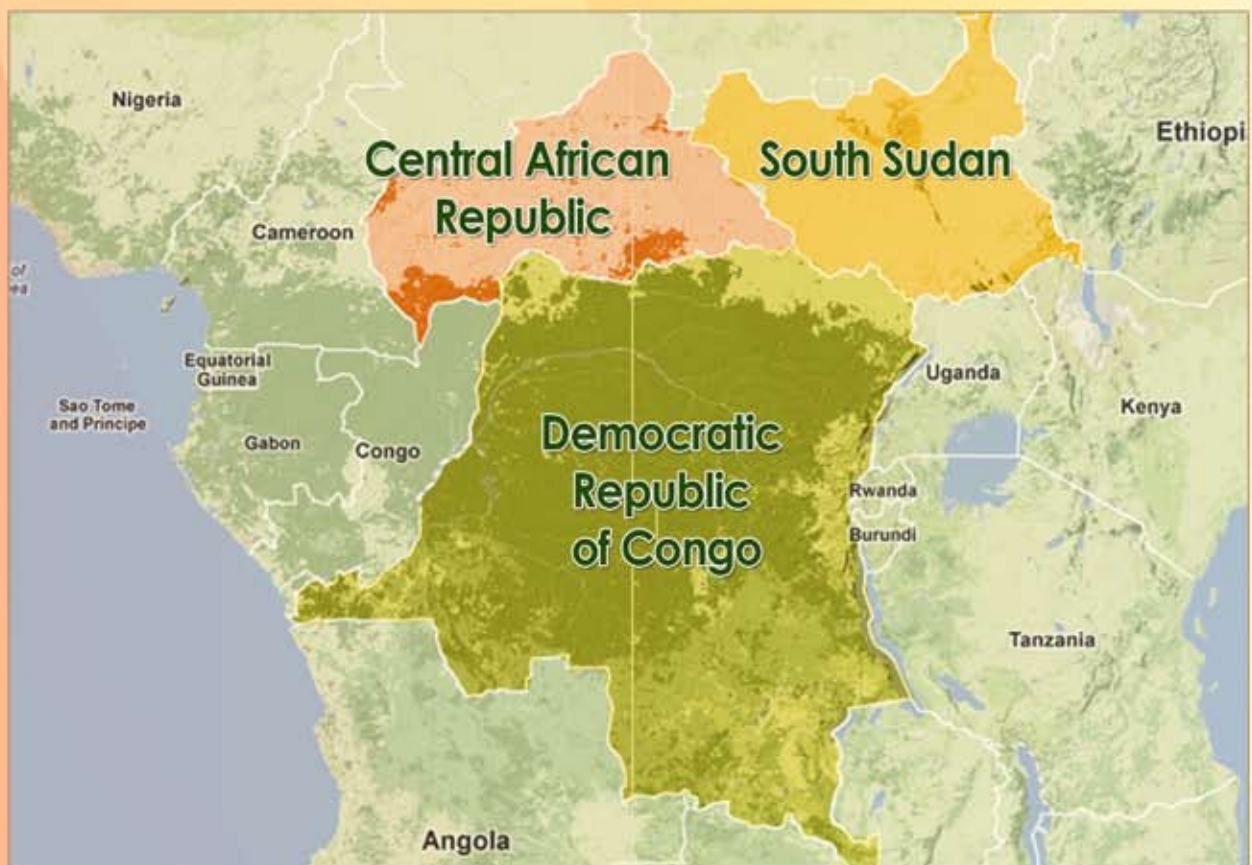




Transitional Demobilization and Reintegration Program

# Assessing the Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in the Context of Instability and Informal Economies

The cases of the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan



*Guy Lamb*



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December 2011

*Guy Lamb*

*With contributions from:*

*Nelson Alusala*

*Amelia Broodryk*

*Jean-Marie Gasana*

*Gregory Mthembu-Salter*

*Orly Stern*



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# List of Acronyms

ACDAKI	Action Communautaire pour le Développement Agro-pastorale de Kiliba
ACDK	Action Communautaire pour le Développement de Kalundu
ANORI	Association des Négociants d'Or – Ituri
AODERPI	Association des Orpailleurs pour le Développement et le Reconstruction de Paix en Ituri
BICC	Bonn International Center for Conversion
BRAC	Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee
CAR	Central African Republic
CNDDR	National Commission for Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration
CNDP	Congrès national pour la défense du peuple
CONADER	Commission Nationale de la Démobilisation et Réinsertion
COOPEC	Coopérative d'Épargne et de Crédit
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CPJP	Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix
D&R	Demobilisation and Reintegration
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DDRRR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EJDP	Encadrement des Jeunes pour le Développement de la Pêche
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
FDLR	Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GOSS	Government of Southern Sudan
HDI	Human Development Index
IDDRS	Integrated DDR Standards
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILDELU	Initiative Locale pour le Développement de Luvungi

ILO	International Labour Office
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDRP	Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program
MONUC	UN Organisation Stabilization Mission in the DRC
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OKIMO	Office des mines d'or de Kilo Moto
PNDDR	National Program of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
PRAC	Ex-Combatant Reintegration and Community Support Project
PRDR	National Programme on Disarmament and Reinsertion
ROC	Republic of Congo
ROSS	Republic of South Sudan
RSSDDRC	Republic of South Sudan Demobilisation, Disarmament, and Reintegration Commission
SAF	Sudanese Armed Forces
SDG	Sudanese pound
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SNG	Special Needs Group
SPLA	Sudanese People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudanese People's Liberation Movement
SSAF	South Sudan Armed Force
TDRP	Transitional Demobilization and Reintegration Program
UFDR	Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNIDIR	UN Institute for Disarmament Research
UNDPKO	UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations
UNMIS	UN Mission in Sudan
UNPDDR	Unité Nationale pour le désarmement, la démobilisation et la réintégration
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme



# Introduction

The implementation of effective disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes in countries emerging from violent conflict are essential for building and maintaining peace and security. In many instances the disarmament and demobilisation of former combatants was achieved, but reintegration remained a challenge, due to the long-term focus and the substantial resources that are required for such a process to be successful.

Income generation and livelihood opportunities are arguably vital for the success of reintegration processes. That is, in order to discourage the remilitarisation of ex-combatants, alternative and appealing means of making a sustainable living should be available to these individuals. In addition, if former combatants are able to make a constructive economic contribution to the communities to which they settle, these communities are more likely to be receptive to their presence.

Reintegration processes are, nonetheless, often implemented in fragile environments, that include fragmented economies, in which most income generating activities are informal or unreported. Such economies are often characterised by unregulated, illicit activities, in which official governance is weak. In this context, formal sector employment and income generating opportunities are limited. However, to date, there has been limited and dispersed data on the manner in which former combatants interact with the informal economic sector.

Given this state of affairs, the Transitional Demobilisation and Reintegration Program (TDRP) of the World Bank commissioned the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in South Africa to undertake a research project

on the extent to which ex-combatants interact with the informal economy in order to sustain themselves and their dependents. The research was undertaken in three countries: the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC – in the regions of Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu) and South Sudan. This project was indelibly linked to another research project that exclusively focused on the reintegration of ex-combatants in the eastern DRC, the results of which are included in a separate report<sup>1</sup>.

The four specific focal areas of the research project were as follows:

1. An assessment of the state of conflict in terms of how it impacts on the economy in all the three case study areas;
2. An assessment of the nature of the economy (and labour market) in the case study areas;
3. An assessment of the employment and sustainable livelihood options that former combatants pursue in the case study areas; and
4. An analysis of the types, dynamics, successes, challenges of ex-combatant income-generating activities in the three case study countries.

The research took place between February and September 2011, with the research findings and analysis being presented in this report. In addition to a literature review and an assessment of published research and data on the subject matter, the project utilised a comparative case study field research method in each of the three countries, which included:

- Semi-structured interviews with key DDR stakeholders;

- Focus group discussions with former combatants;
- Focus groups with affected community members wherein sizeable numbers of ex-combatants are residing.
- Semi-structured interviews with practitioners in agricultural, trade, commerce, mining and other economic sectors; and
- Semi-structured interviews with key informants in the same communities as ex-combatants.

The following persons undertook the in-country research:

Nelson Alusala (DRC)  
Amelia Broodryk (South Sudan)

Jean-Marie Gasana (DRC)  
Guy Lamb (South Sudan)  
Gregory Mthembu-Salter (DRC)  
Orly Stern (CAR)

This report is comprised of three parts. Part one includes a review of the literature on the reintegration of former combatants and the informal economy in Africa; a synopsis of post-conflict economies; and an outline of the analytical framework. Part two presents the findings of the case study research, focusing on the economies and DDR processes in each of the three countries, as well as assessing the reintegration process in relation to the informal economy. The third component of the report provides a comparative analysis of, and conclusions from, the research findings.

## **PART I**

Conceptual framework

Literature review

Assessment of post-conflict economies



# 1 Economic reintegration in Africa: Literature review

This review provides a critical assessment of the literature on reintegration, particularly economic reintegration. In this regard it considers the extent to which the DDR discourse, analysis and technical recommendations take account of the informal economy. This literature review also examines and assesses a wide range of DDR documents, including peer reviewed journal articles, technical reports, handbooks, guidelines, training manuals and edited volumes by independent publishers.

## 1.1 Reintegration literature: the early years

The body of literature on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants in post-colonial Africa primarily emerged in the early-1990s. This was the result of the establishment of DDR programmes in mainly Southern and East Africa, and included countries such as Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda, Chad and Angola. Such studies were largely technical documents or were part of post-war publications on sub-Saharan Africa, and in most cases focused on the disarmament and demobilisation components.

The landmark study of this period was the World Bank's 1993 Discussion Paper on demobilisation and reintegration (D&R) of military personnel, a comparative assessment that drew evidence from seven country experiences. This paper provided a detailed analysis of the design, institutional management, the funding and results of D&R programmes. It focused predominantly on formal sector economic reintegration, but the findings of this paper implied that the

informal sector had an important reintegration role. The paper recommended that reintegration should be linked to established community-based development projects, and that the families of ex-combatants, rather than individual former fighters should be targeted for reintegration support.<sup>2</sup>

From the mid-1990s the compilation of DDR literature gained momentum, mainly due to the increased interest in peace-making and peace-building by international organisations and researchers alike. A catalyst was the 1992 UN Secretary-General Boutros Ghali's 'Agenda for Peace', which sought to re-define the role of the UN in promoting international peace, and included "post-conflict peace-building". Consequently, the UN, through a number of its agencies, especially the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) began to increasingly focus on DDR.<sup>3</sup> Academics based at universities and research institutes also began to dabble in DDR. Both broad analyses of DDR (in the context of peacekeeping and peace-building) as well as specific country case studies were undertaken, with articles, chapters and books being published.<sup>4</sup> However, as many of the DDR programmes were still in preliminary stages, the reintegration component in this published research tended to be superficial and prescriptive, or was absent.

During this period the World Bank further invested in research, monitoring and evaluation to accompany its investment in post-conflict reconstruction programming. For example, in 1996, the World Bank published a detailed technical report on D&R in Ethiopia, Namibia and Uganda, as well as a more

general analysis on the transition process from war to peace.<sup>6</sup> Other international organisations, such as the International Labour Office (ILO)<sup>7</sup>, the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and others, including consultancy organisations, compiled basic handbooks, guidelines and technical assessments on DDR.<sup>8</sup> Despite the limited data available at the time, these technical documents and handbooks provided useful information and recommendations on reintegration for the designers and implementers of DDR programmes.

### *International research institutes initiated DDR research projects from the mid-1990s.*

International research institutes initiated DDR research projects from the mid-1990s. The most notable was the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC -Germany), which recruited DDR specialists and published annual Conversion Surveys (which included a demobilisation component), from 1996. In addition, in 2000 BICC published two edited books on D&R, which sought to discern D&R trends and dynamics by means of comparative analysis.<sup>9</sup> The UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) established a Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Project, which led to a number of DDR-related publications, with disarmament being the main focus.

Some African think tanks, universities and NGOs undertook research and produced publications on DDR. The Institute for Defence Policy (now the ISS) published an edited monograph of demobilisation and reintegration in Africa.<sup>10</sup> In the late-1990s the Centre for Conflict Resolution (in collaboration with BICC) established a research project on demilitarisation and peace-building in Southern Africa, which commissioned research from the Instituto Superior de Relações Internacionais, University of the Witwatersrand, University of Zimbabwe, University of Namibia and the Eduardo Mondlane University (amongst others). DDR was a key focus area of the research, and three books were published as a result.<sup>11</sup>

The literature of this period was generally descriptive, and based on qualitative research methods. However, there were some quantitative studies, as in the case of Mozambique. For example, a survey of 1,000 ex-combatants was undertaken by UNDP (1996), which included a useful reintegration component. The research findings indicated that 71% of the sample considered themselves to be 'unemployed', despite being

able to survive by means of subsistence agriculture. Research reports by Creative Associates International Incorporated (1996)<sup>12</sup> and the Chr. Michelsen Institute (1997) also added considerable knowledge on the peace-building process in Mozambique at that time.

From the late-1990s further interest and research in DDR was stimulated by: the establishment DDR processes in Liberia; agitation by military veterans in Zimbabwe; and a military downsizing process in South Africa.

In Zimbabwe, protest action by military veterans combined with an acute governance crisis resulted in former combatants becoming the vanguard of a controversial land redistribution process. A few publications, the most notable being authored by Norma Krieger and Knox Chitiyo, provided fairly comprehensive analyses of what was essentially reintegration failure. These publications specified evidence that the mismanagement of reintegration processes, particularly compensation for ex-combatants, could result in outbreaks of violence.<sup>13</sup>

In South Africa, research institutes, namely the Group for Environmental Monitoring, the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, the ISS and the Centre for Conflict Resolution, undertook extensive and fairly comprehensive research on the reintegration of former combatants.<sup>14</sup> Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were adopted, with all studies indicating that reintegration processes had largely been ineffective, with high levels (close to two-thirds) of former combatants from the liberation armed groups defining themselves as unemployed. Nonetheless these publications suggested that many former combatants were able to generate income via the informal sector.

## **1.2 Impact of the West African DDR processes, the MDRP and the IDDRS**

The brokering of peace agreements to end to civil wars in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the early- to mid-2000s led to the creation of DDR programmes in these countries. DDR processes were also reinvigorated in Angola, Rwanda, Uganda and the Republic of Congo, mainly through the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP). There was consequently a flurry of research and publications

on DDR in Africa. In addition, some scholars and researchers took a more diverse approach to D&R by addressing lesser-studied areas, such as female ex-combatants and children associated with armed conflict. The research in these areas prioritised psychological and social reintegration, particularly with respect to children. Some of the studies relating to women did consider the challenges of economic reintegration.<sup>15</sup>

The World Bank, the African Development Bank and the UN, in consultation with a range of donor governments and agencies, launched the MDRP in 2002. Its geographical focus was the greater Great Lakes region of Central Africa, with the specific countries being: Angola, Burundi, CAR, the DRC, the Republic of Congo (ROC), Rwanda and Uganda. The MDRP coordinated and provided assistance to close to 300,000 ex-combatants in these seven countries. The MDRP was concluded in June 2009.

The MDRP generated a considerable amount of self-published literature on reintegration, mainly in the form of technical and evaluation reports on the implementation of D&R programmes in the greater Great Lakes region of Africa. In 2006, a working paper on reintegration assistance (good practices and lessons) was published. This paper provided extensive recommendations on reintegration, including economic reintegration that drew from previous DDR country programmes and established MDRP processes. There was a focus on supporting income generation and sustainable livelihoods by former combatants in both the formal and informal sectors. However, as the bulk of previous reintegration programming appeared to have had a formal sector bias, the paper had more of an emphasis on this sector.<sup>16</sup> Another working paper, which highlighted the plight of ex-combatants in Burundi, implied that lesser educated former combatants used the informal economy to generate an income.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, in an MDRP Dissemination Note on Rwanda, it was suggested, as a “lesson learnt”, that former combatants had used the reintegration assistance provided by the MDRP to generate an income.<sup>18</sup>

The MDRP’s final report (2010) provided an in-depth analysis of the wide variety of reintegration activities that were undertaken. The report also recommended a series of lessons and implications for future programmes in which the limitations of the formal economy for successful reintegration were emphasised.

However, no detailed suggestions on how to enhance reintegration in relation to the informal sector were provided.<sup>19</sup> The final MDRP independent evaluation report (2010) suggested that: “livelihoods viability is primarily dependent on dynamics in the larger economy”.<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless, there was no expansion on this recommendation, and there was no reference to making a distinction between the formal and informal sectors in terms of reintegration programming.

Some independent research was conducted in parallel to the MDRP process. One such example was a project managed by the University of Bradford (Centre for International Cooperation and Security) titled: DDR and Human Security: Post-Conflict Security-Building in the Interests of the Poor. Elements of this project focused on thematic areas of DDR and country case studies that were relevant to the MDRP, but also generated knowledge on DDR in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Reintegration was a key focal area of the project; nonetheless, economic reintegration in relation to the informal sector only received cursory attention.<sup>21</sup>

Two prominent examples of recent studies on DDR (with a focus on reintegration) include edited volumes by Robert Muggah, as well as by Mads Berdal and David Ucko. The former assesses the DDR process in Afghanistan, Colombia, Ethiopia, Haiti, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Timor-Leste and Uganda.<sup>22</sup> The latter publication analyses the challenges of reintegration former members of armed groups into civilian society in Afghanistan, Angola, DRC, Iraq, northern Uganda, Sierra Leone and Tajikistan.<sup>23</sup>

*The MDRP generated a considerable amount of self-published literature on reintegration.*

In 2006 the UN launched its Integrated DDR standards (IDDRS), which were designed to provide direction, co-ordination and guidance to those engaged in preparing, implementing and supporting DDR programmes. The IDDRS have been used as a reference in designing DDR process in Sudan, Haiti and elsewhere. The IDDRS emphasises the need “to understand the macro- and microeconomic forces that affect the post-conflict communities into which they [ex-combatants] hope to reintegrate”.<sup>24</sup> The module on social and economic reintegration emphasises the need for reintegration labour market analyses, as well as training and skills development, to take the dynam-

ics of both the formal and informal economic sectors into account. This module nonetheless recognises that information about the labour market is unlikely to exist, and consequently recommends that preliminary and ongoing surveys of the economy, particularly the labour market, be undertaken.

### 1.3 Recognition of the informal sector and longer-term peace-building

Over the past five years there has been increased focus on economic reintegration by international organisations, some governments<sup>25</sup> and NGOs<sup>26</sup>. Literature, particularly technical material, has emphasised the need to take economic realities into account when designing reintegration processes. Constructing reintegration mechanisms suited for the informal economy have also gained credence, with recommendations being included in handbooks and policy manuals developed by the international organisations and processes, such as the Stockholm Initiative on DDR (SIDDR), the ILO and the UN.

The SIDDR commissioned and published a study by Anton Baaré on transitional economic integration, in which the economic realities of reintegration were

*A conceptual shift suggests that reintegration should be located within the context of socio-economic reconstruction and development rather than DDR.*

highlighted. The paper emphasised that in order to reduce possible incidents of insecurity, transitional economic reintegration should be “delineated” from longer-term peace-building processes, and introduced at an earlier stage in the DDR equation. The paper made a series of specific recommendations, especially in relation to: the ‘neglected beneficiaries’ (such as women, girls, boys and landless youth); the use of cash/vouchers; micro-credit; land allocation; public works programmes and vocational training.<sup>27</sup>

The ILO has produced guidelines on the socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants (2009). The focus of this document is the reintegration of former combatants into the formal economic sector, but there is an acknowledgement of the value of the informal sector, which is defined as that sector of the economy which,

“absorbs workers that would otherwise be without work or income...mainly consisting of women and youth...characterised by a lack of social protection, representation, property rights, [and] access to legal and judicial system...”<sup>28</sup>

The ILO recommended that labour market assessments by reintegration programmers should consider both the formal and informal economies, and that reintegration training programmes should be geared towards the informal sector (where appropriate). In addition, the ILO has stated that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are well placed to assist ex-combatants to generate an income. Therefore it has made recommendations that, in the view of the ILO, will foster the growth and development of SMEs. These include, amongst others, reduced regulation and transaction costs, tax incentives and enhanced land tenure.

The UN Policy for Post-Conflict Employment Creation, Income Generation and Reintegration (2009) highlights the key role that the informal sector can play in promoting post-conflict peace-building. It recommends that employment programmes “must provide positive and productive alternatives to violent and illegal activities, creating legal (though perhaps informal) jobs for young workers”. It also stipulates that: there should be entrepreneurship and other skills training which should target the informal sector; and there should possibly be regulatory exemptions for the informal sector businesses. Nonetheless, the policy specifies that in order for there to be sustainable employment creation and decent work the informal economy needs to be formalised.<sup>29</sup>

The written work of NGOs largely echoes the position on the informal sector taken by international organisations. For example, International Alert, which has published a series of documents on the issue, has also highlighted that the informal sector is often overlooked in the planning of reintegration processes.<sup>30</sup> These reports have also indicated that, in reality, income generating opportunities in the informal economy are the only options for demobilised ex-combatants in the short- to medium-term. In addition, these strategies should take into account what motivated ex-combatants to take arms and what roles they played during the conflict, as in many cases ex-combatants were engaged in the informal economy during a conflict.<sup>31</sup>



As reflected above, reintegration has been most commonly assessed and discussed in the peace-building and security sector reform literature as being integrally linked to disarmament and demobilisation. However, due to the persistent challenges and shortcomings of implementing reintegration programmes, there has been a recent conceptual shift that suggests that reintegration should rather be located within the context of socio-economic reconstruction and development processes.<sup>32</sup> Some academics, such as Joanna Spear have even argued that (in line with the SIDDR background paper) reintegration should be sequenced before disarmament and demobilisation phases have been completed, and that reintegration should have a higher peace-building profile. Further to this there have been recommendations that there should be a more nuanced approach to reintegration, especially making a distinction between urban and rural reintegration programmes. The reason for this is that urban approaches tend to be more complex than rural.<sup>34</sup>

## 1.4 Conclusion

It is evident that considerable literature on all elements of the reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life exists. Some of the literature is based on sound research and rigorous evaluations of previous programmes. Other documents are more descriptive

and/or prescriptive, and adopt a normative position on why reintegration processes should be pursued. The work of economic reintegration is, however, underdeveloped. There appears to be research and publication momentum building in this area, but more in-depth, detailed investigation of how former combatants are able to generate income is required.

Since the emergence of DDR literature, a fundamental assumption, although often not explicitly stated, is that a significant number of demobilised ex-combatants will generate a livelihood through the informal economy, as training and material support for small business development and subsistence agriculture have been systematically advocated. However, the apparent bias in most of the literature is that income generation in the informal sector should only be temporary, with formal sector employment options being preferred. The negative consequence of this partiality has been that the dynamics of the informal sector in post-conflict environments have not been sufficiently scrutinised. As indicated in the recent policy and programming guidelines by the ILO and the UN, there is a greater focus on the contributory role of the informal economic sector in reintegration. Nonetheless, more detailed and objective analyses of this sector are essential for increased reintegration success.