

# Bottlenecks to the Demobilization and Disarmament of Former Combatants' Process in Mount Elgon Region, Kenya

Lydia Wamocha<sup>1</sup>, Joseph Nasongo<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** *Mount Elgon region of Kenya suffered violent armed conflicts. After the violence was quelled by government security forces, efforts to demobilize and disarm former combatants were undertaken. The study sought to examine the process of demobilization and disarmament. The purpose of the study was to examine the demobilization and disarmament process in Mount Elgon. The desistance theory was used in the study. The study used the cross sectional descriptive survey design. The respondents comprised former combatants, sub county commissioners and peace committee members, religious leaders and NGOs. The stratified and purposive random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 150 former combatants, Three Sub County commissioners and 16 peace committee members, five religious leaders and Four NGO members. Data was collected by use of questionnaires, interviews and Focus Group discussion. The reliability of the instruments was determined through test retest of the instruments. The findings of the study were presented descriptively. The findings of the study showed that: in the context of social reintegration the three dimensions of family and community; sustainable employment; and civic responsibilities should be given proper attention: to achieve the goal of reintegration there should be a major shift in the contemporary DDR approach by moving from the insertion approach towards a social reintegration one; community support is essential for the successful reintegration of former combatants and the sustainable social and economic reintegration of former combatants should be the ultimate objective of disarmament and demobilization and reintegration (DDR). Consequently, the study recommends that the government should budget for and give priority to the reintegration programmes so that they are fully completed instead of leaving them at the reinsertion stage; the communities take the lead in proposing community-based solutions for the issues identified.*

**Keywords:** Combatants, Demobilization, disarmament, Equity, Inclusion, Reintegration,

## 1. Background to the Study

Former combatants not only pose a challenge because of their tendency to engage in violence but their return to civilian life may also create serious rifts in society. During hostilities, former combatants often commit atrocities against the civilian population. These may range from pillaging to physical abuse, rape, mutilation, kidnappings and murder. With the arrival of peace society must deal with these issues, at both national and local levels. Failure to address the need for reconciliation may result in a lack of societal peace creating continuous tensions in society. However it is not possible to reconcile combatants with their communities. Most of them lack formal education and yet their fighting skills are seldom in demand on the job market (Kingma, 1999).

It is a common phenomena that former combatants rearm themselves in order to further their political demands. For example in the Republic of Congo a Ninja splinter group recruited many ex – Ninjas and attacked Brazzaville in 2002. A second risk is that former combatants recreate disbanded guerilla groups or military units and challenge the post war order with arms, which at worst can lead to open rebellion. A related problem is when former combatants sell their military services to armed actors involved in wars in foreign countries. Demobilized soldiers in South African Defense Force (SADF) have fought as Mercenaries in both Angola and Sierra Leone (Kingma, 1999).

Another threat comes from former combatants joining or founding organized, criminal groups. The main reason why former combatants so end up in organized crime is the ease with which clandestine military structures are transformed

into self-sustaining, criminal organizations. A related threat is one of former combatants becoming involved in criminality in a wider sense, such as petty crime. This type of criminality comprises individuals carrying out small - scale theft and banditry with no organized structure (Kingma, 1999).

After being demobilized, former combatants constitute a weak and marginalized group in need of economic, psychological and social assistance in order to survive. Making sure that such assistance is given poses a major challenge to local communities and international donors (Kingma, 2000).

During the height of violent conflicts in Mount Elgon region, there were a number of armed combatants. These included:

### The Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF)

The Sabaot Land Defense Force (SLDF) was a guerrilla militia operating in the then Mount Elgon region of Kenya since 2005. It had been accused of killing more than 600 people, and of committing a variety of atrocities including murder, torture, rape, theft and destruction of property. More than 66,000 people had been displaced in an 18 month period. The group drew its members from the Sabaot people, a sub-tribe of the Kalenjine ethnic group (Anami and Oteba, 2015). The cause is believed to be unfair land allocation which has fueled brutal clashes in the region almost since Kenyan independence in 1963.

This process was started in the 1970s when the government started to relocate the Mosop in order to undertake environmental conservation of the region they came from.

They formerly occupied the Moorland which constitutes a water precious catchment area higher up on Mt. Elgon. Until 2006, three big resettlement plans were initiated in three different phases (Chepyuk I, II, III). Allegations of nepotism and corruption arose as for who would be the beneficiaries of land distributed by the government. The Mosop were the main target of resettlement program, however members of the Soy community claimed that they were from the same community and even more numerous and therefore deserved more plots especially given that many had already settled on the land in Chepyuk III that was to be redistributed a new. According to Lynch (2011) many of them had been living in the area of Chepyuk III for decades as squatters or had developed a sense of ownership to the area.

Rombora (2008) states that a massive increase in population numbers made it even more difficult to resettle people as originally planned. Of the 7500 applicants for phase III only 1753 were on the list of beneficiaries published in April 2006 half of them from the Soy and half from the Mosop. The unsuccessful applicants that had been settling on the Chepyuk III were evicted in 2006. The core of SLDF was formation among those evicted from the land for resettlement in Chepyuk phase III.

Over the years the militia has turned into a kind of rural mafia, extorting money from villagers, raiding farms, carrying out assassinations, burning houses and striking deals with local politicians, who tend to lose elections if they betray the Sabaots' cause. In a national holiday Mashujaa celebration Bungoma county commissioner Mohammed Maalim called on former Sabaot land defense force fighters to surrender illegal arms in their possession or face the full force of the law (Oteba, 2015).

#### **The Moorland Defense Force**

The Moorland Defense Force (MDF) was formed as a reaction to the absence of state protection. The Mosop began to organize their protection for culminating in the establishment of the Moorland Defense Force. This force was named after the high region of the mountains from where the Mosop were resettled during the three Chepyuk phases and to where many Mosop fled back to from SLDF violence. The stated goal of MDF was purely defensive, as protecting the Mosop from SLDF violence and the group ceased to exist when the government security forces engaged more actively in the region. In March 2008, the government launched Operation *Okoa Maishsa* (save life) (Romborah, 2008).

#### **More Militia Groups**

Possibly taking advantage of the chaos witnessed after the polls there are reports that the Mt. Elgon area spawned more militia groups in addition to the 'Moorland Defense Force', further complicating the security situation in the area. These were formed to counter the Sabaot Land Defense Force which controlled Kopsiro and Cheptais divisions. These other groups were 'Progressive Defense Force' 'Janjaweed Militia' all reported allied to local politicians. These were initially active in Mt. Elgon and eventually spread their activities to Bungoma and Trans Nzoia regions. They also started taxing people in the area they controlled. Due to displacement they started raiding cattle in neighboring districts for sale in Uganda in return for bullets and other

supplies. With the entry of many militia groups including the Seven Brothers, the Revenge Force, 40 Brothers and lastly the Brokers complicated and undermined the state of security in the surrounding areas Rombora (2008). The displaced population in Mt. Elgon represented close to 30% of the district population which at the time stood at about 160000 people

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Several actions have been taken in the past to end recruitment and use of armed combatants in Kenya. As a result combatants have been demobilized from the ranks of armed forces and groups and recruitment levels have progressively reduced. However, for thousands of former combatants who remain or risk re-recruitment, the situation remains substantially unchanged. The perpetual conflicts in Kenya undermine the reintegration of former combatants as many of them are re-recruited by different armed groups and at times political interests.

After combatants have been demobilized, their effective and sustainable reintegration into civilian life is necessary to prevent a new escalation of the conflict. In the short term, ex-combatants who do not find peaceful ways of earning a living are likely to return to conflict. In the longer term, disaffected veterans can play an important role in destabilizing the social order and polarizing the political debate, becoming easy targets of populist, reactionary and extremist movements.

The former combatants need to be given an opportunity to be integrated into the community in order to build a cohesive society. This study, therefore, sought to examine the process of demobilization and disarmament of former combatant's role of reintegration of former combatants in Mt. Elgon, Bungoma County.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine the demobilization and disarmament of former combatants' process in Mount Elgon region

#### **Objective of the Study**

The study sought to examine the demobilization and disarmament of former combatant's process in Mount Elgon region in Kenya

#### **Research Question**

The study question was: What was the demobilization and disarmament process of former combatants in Mount Elgon region?

#### **Significance of the Study**

The study is significant in various ways: It provides greater insight on best ways to handle former combatants. Furthermore, the study is useful in making reintegration efforts more effective by taking the existing theoretical knowledge into consideration and learning from practical experiences. The study further contributes towards providing a deeper understanding of strategies required in carrying out demobilization and reintegration.

### Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The study was conducted in Kopsiro, Kapsokwony, Cheptais and Kaptama of Mt. Elgon region where the former combatants underwent the reintegration programme. Mount Elgon is an administrative unit in Bungoma County. The study focused on the reintegration of former combatants in Mt. Elgon region. The respondents included the sampled 150 former combatants, Four Sub- County Commissioners and 16 peace committee members from the the four locations, 5 Church elders and 5 Non Governmental Organization leaders.

The study focused on the year 2005 when the Sabaot Land Defense Force came into being up to 2017. This enabled the researcher to look at the current levels of reintegration and their contribution towards social cohesion. The theoretical framework for the study was desistance theory which is pertinent in terms of conceptualizing the offender rehabilitation. It outlines assistance models of ex-offenders recovery into society and addresses the question of social reintegration.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Marcan (2001) says a theoretical framework can be likened to lens through which the researcher views the world (study). Existing knowledge, or theory, serves as the foundation of this research. A preliminary theoretical framework contributes to problematizing the issue under investigation and identifies the different variables that are measured in the work. Furthermore, it helps to clarify the researcher's objectives and values

The theoretical framework for the study was the reintegration needs of former combatants. The desistance theory according to Maruna (2001) a social and political psychologist is a criminological phenomenon which describes how criminal offenders stop their offending behavior. It is particularly pertinent in terms of conceptualizing offender rehabilitation and the career of a criminal, as well as having practical applications for probation workers working with convicted criminals in the community.

Desistance theory strives to explain the process by which offenders come to lead lives free from criminality. A number of factors are implicated in the natural (changes over time) and manufactured (changes due to rehabilitation programs or community strategies) processes of desistance. Some aspects of desistance include ageing. Some researchers claim that offenders, particular juveniles, essentially "grow out" of criminality.

The second aspect is life stability whereby engaging in regular employment helps offenders to focus their attention on something more meaningful than criminality. Similar to how a particularly aggressive individual may turn to sport, maintaining a routine of working and earning money can act as a kind of catharsis, meaning that motivation to engage in crime because of a lack of other activities or financial stress is replaced by the regularity of the work. Job satisfaction is suggested as a far better indicator as to whether or not an offender will desist. A second stability related factor is

marriage. Satisfaction here again is an important factor in guaranteeing change of behavior patterns

The third desistance aspect is social identity which will almost exclusively be adopted in conjunction with a condemnation narrative script, meaning that the offender living in the community feels little hope of resisting from criminality in the long term. This lack of hope is widely cited as a risk factor for recidivism. Contrastingly offenders with redemption script tend to actively seek out positive social identities, such as 'good father', 'volunteer', or 'hard worker'. These individuals are likely to be met with increased support and acceptance from their wider community, which increases the likelihood of long term desistance.

Maruna (2001) states that desistance is the long term abstinence from crime among individuals who previously engaged in persistent patterns of criminal offending. This highlights the need to look at a long term perspective and it also hints at the need to be realistic about circumstances of life. If people have previously engaged in persistent patterns of criminal offending it is likely that there are some entrenched problems that will take time to resolve.

From a theoretical standpoint, desistance theory offers an opportunity to test specific variables connected with the cessation of criminal behavior. Practically, desistance theory helps in identifying potential ways of reducing reoffending in the community.

Offenders are often seen as a threat to society until they are able to 'prove' their reformation. For this reason desistance is viewed as a long term relapse prevention measure. Related to this, there are some cases where attempted reintegration is met with outrage by the public.

The desistance theory outlines assistance models of ex-offenders recovery into society and addresses the question of social reintegration can be perceived and structured effectively DDR operational landscape. The proposed approach is presented through a matrix of relationships between the elements of 'emphasis on the combatant' and 'emphasis on the community' in terms of 'low' and 'high' levels, resulting in the four main models for community reentry: 'self - demobilization', 'reinsertion', 'community' - located reintegration and 'social reintegration'.

### Relevance of desistance theory

From the theoretical standpoint, the desistance theory offers researchers the opportunity to test specific variables connected with the cessation of criminal behavior. It enables historical criminological approaches to be considered in relation to modern day society, which allows for validation or refutation of classical ways of thinking. This leads to a more accurate picture of criminal behavior to be painted, and enables criminology, and its related fields of psychology, politics and social policy, to collaborate strategically in order to reduce reoffending rates.

The desistance theory is most suited for this study since it addresses the three dimensions of social cohesion under economic, political and socio cultural aspects.

### 3. Literature Review

#### Review of Related Theories

Existing knowledge, or theory, serves as the foundation of this research (Khan 1999). A preliminary theoretical framework contributes to problematising the issue under investigation and identifies the different variables that will be measured in the work. Furthermore, it helps to clarify the researcher's objectives and values. Embedded within the interdisciplinary field of social science, this research draws on a number of other related theories and concepts situated within the field of former combatants. It utilized also concepts from contemporary conflict studies.

Most prominent here is the theory of conflict transformation. The philosophy of conflict transformation may differ between actors and contexts, and this study makes use of important concepts from the founder of modern peace studies Galtung (1996) which were later visited by Laderach (1997), Miall (2004) and Ramsbotham et al. (2008). Conflict transformation conflicts such as ethnic conflict, are transformed into peaceful outcomes. It is therefore a process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and if necessary the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict.

Through the lens of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory which is a key theoretical perspective that helps conceptualize the ex combatants unique needs following their return from fighting is Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory; a theory which posits that individuals cannot achieve their full potential unless their lower needs are met partially if not fully (Maslow, 1951; 1971). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is an appropriate theory which researchers and social workers can use to categorize, prioritize and evaluate ex combatants needs in the years following the war. This is because the ex combatants lack the resources to meet their basic needs, it is extremely difficult and almost impossible to reach full human potential. The purpose of this theoretical framework is to describe the factors that contribute to the ex-combatants experiences during reintegration. An important part of this study is to explore the former combatants reintegration experiences as they transition to civilian living. From this theory soldiers experience abnormal stress since they are not given the opportunity to experiment with various social role. For this reason they are going to grow up into adults who lack the necessary sense of competence and self – efficacy. According to the Bronfrenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, the ex-combatant's environments have significant influence on their overall development and subsequent reintegration experiences. Thus the effects of being former combatants can be explained through an ecological systems theory that examines the relationships between individuals and their environment An ecological systems theory is the concept of role that denotes the usual behaviors of individuals occupying particular social positions. It is evident that abducted young soldiers experience significant stress and trauma as a result of role transitions they face. The ecological systems theory emphasizes the role of social contexts in human development and comprises five environmental systems, ranging from direct interaction with social agents to the overall general influence of culture (Bronfrenbrenner, 1998).

This theory outlines assistance models of ex combatants' reentry into society and addresses the question of how social integration can be perceived and structured effectively in the overall DDR landscape. The proposed approach is presented through a matrix of relationships between the elements of 'emphasis on the combatant' and 'emphasis on the community' in terms of 'low' and 'high' levels, resulting in the four main models of community reentry: 'self-demobilization', 'reinsertion', 'community located reintegration', and 'social reintegration'. The social reintegration approach is structured over the dimensions of 'family and community'.

The purpose of this review of theories is to describe the factors that contribute to the former combatants' experiences during reintegration. An important part of this study is to explore the ex combatants reintegration experiences as they transition to civilian living. Erikson's theory explains child soldier's development during adolescence and how military experience affects their identities. Bronfrenbrenner's theory suggests the effects of five systems on reintegration experience.

#### Review of Empirical Studies

The three phases of DDR are interconnected, and the successful completion of each phase is essential to the success of the others. The goals of DDR are both short term and long term. The immediate goal is the restoration of security and stability, through the disarmament of warring parties. Demobilization of armed groups is another fundamental step in the improvement of security conditions at the end of an armed conflict. Progressive disarmament reduces the mistrust that fuels a security dilemma between the fighting factions, allows aid workers to intervene more effectively, and allows peaceful social and economic activities to resume (Fusato, 2003).

Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) has become an integral part of post-conflict peace consolidation, featuring prominently in the mandates of peace keeping operations over the last twenty years. The objective of DDR process is to contribute to security and stability in post conflict environment for political and peace processes by dealing with security problems that arise when ex-combatants are trying to adjust to normal life, during the transition period from conflict to peace and development.

According to Fusato (2003) demobilization includes the dismantling of military units and the transition of former combatants from military to civilian life. In times of peace, demobilization programmes can be gradual and tuned to the needs of the groups being demobilized. At the end of a conflict, demobilization presents the same logistical challenges as do programmes of emergency relief and resettlement of displaced people. Demobilization includes assembly of ex-combatants, orientation programmes, and transportation to the communities of destination. Case studies of Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala are significant in accounting for the post conflict demobilization exercise, disarmament, and the structure and role of the army. Each case study looks at the crucial aspect of support for the demobilization and reintegration process including external support.

Post-conflict demobilization in Nicaragua started with the foundation of peace in 1991 after many leaders received security assurance and therefore agreed to disband. Demobilization was delayed for two years due to funding, political will, security, ongoing political conflict and the lack of guaranteed reintegration assistance for the former combatants. The demobilization of the Nicaraguan Resistance included the destruction of weapons voluntarily handed over by the combatants.

If unprepared and unplanned, the disarmament, demobilization exercises could have a greater negative than positive impact in a country such as Guatemala, where over half of the population lives in poverty. Based on the final peace agreement signed in Guatemala the army was to be reduced to one third and the opposition forces were completely demobilized (Fusato, 2003).

The incomplete disarmament process in Nicaragua and El Salvador following the end of the civil wars continues to pose a threat to security in the region. Efforts in Nicaragua to reduce the number of weapons in the hands of rearmed ex-combatants were successful in reducing violence. The main method used by the special Disarmament Brigade (BED), created by the government of Nicaragua, to collect weapons was the gun buy-back program. Similar efforts to reduce the number of weapons in the hands of civilians is now being seen in El Salvador in the form of gun buy-back schemes. Both the UN mission in El Salvador and the Salvadorian Defense Ministry estimate that 200,000-300,000 weapons remain in the hands of civilians.

### Restating the Research Problem

Just like in the case of the reviewed theories and empirical studies reintegration of ex combatants in Mt. Elgon needs to be done fully so that the affected former combatants can once again fit into the community after engaging in fighting. This study, therefore, sought to investigate the role of reintegration of former youth combatants on cohesion in Mt. Elgon, Bungoma County, Kenya

### Research Design and Methodology

#### Introduction

Outlined is the procedure and methodology the research employed in order to obtain data needed for the study.

#### Research Design

The cross sectional design of the descriptive survey method was used. Descriptive research methods are pretty much as they sound since they describe situations. Surveys are good because they don't take as long as observational studies. The cross sectional design includes the study of individuals at one point in time (Jackson, 2009). This design was employed in this study in an attempt to gather large scale data in order to make generalizations on the role of the reintegration of former combatants on social cohesion.

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) posits that descriptive design measures the characteristics of a large population and yields a great deal of information which is not manipulated. This design was adopted because it allows the collection of large amounts of data from the target population. In addition this

study fits within the provisions of this design because the data was collected and reported the way things are without manipulating any variable. The design is therefore considered an appropriate tool for collecting information where research calls for both qualitative and quantitative data.

### The Study Area

The study was conducted in Mt. Elgon Sub County. This is an administrative unit in Bungoma County. It is located in the South Eastern slopes of Mt. Elgon covering an area of 940 square kilometers with a population of about 160,000 living in the Southern part which is more fertile and inhabitable that the northern part which is higher in altitude and almost entirely covered by forests. Mt Elgon is predominantly occupied by the Sabaot, Iteso and Bukusu communities. The Sabaot community is further divided into several clans comprising the Kony, Bok, Sebei and Bongom sub clans (Rombora, 2008). This region has 4 administrative units namely Cheptais Sub County with its head- quarters at Cheptais, Mt. Elgon Sub County with its headquarters at Kapsokwony and a recent one Kopsiro with its head-quarters at Kopsiro and Kaptama.

### Target Population

The study targeted all the former Sabaot Land Defense Force members. These former combatants who were reintegrated are a total of 1200 from the Mt. Elgon region. Four Deputy county commissioners, 16 peace committee members, six church leaders and Five NGO coordinators.

### Description of Sampling procedure and Sample Size

Target population informed the sampling procedure and sample size.

### Sampling Procedure

The stratified random and purposive sampling technique was used in order to help the researcher to achieve the desired representation of various respondents in the population. The stratified random sampling technique involves dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a simple random sample in each group. The sample was selected in such a way to ensure that certain subgroups are represented in the sample in proportion to the population for them to have equal chance to be included in the study. A purposive sample is non probability sample that is selected based on the characteristics of a population and the objectives of the study. This type of sampling can be very useful in situations where the researcher needs to reach a targeted sample quickly and where sampling for proportionality is not the main concern.

### Sample Size

In this case the 1200 reintegrated former combatants were targeted. A sample of 150 reintegrated former combatants was taken, Four Deputy county commissioners, six members of Cheptais, Kopsiro and Kapsokwony and Kaptama peace committees, Five church pastors and Five NGO leaders as shown in the sample size Table

**Table:** Sample Size

Category	Population	Sample
Reintegrated combatants	1200	150
Deputy County Commissioner	4	4
NGOs	6	6
Pastors	5	5
Peace Committee Members	64	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>1279</b>	<b>181</b>

### Description of the Research Instruments

The data was collected using questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions.

### Questionnaires

The questionnaire was the principal tool for collecting primary data. Questionnaires are used to collect basic descriptive information from a broad sample (Kathuri and Douglas, 1993). They are suitable for this study because they allow the researcher to reach a larger sample within limited time. Confidentiality is ensured besides gathering more candid and objective replies. The questionnaires were prepared for the sub - county commissioners and members of the peace committee. The questionnaire will had both open ended and closed ended questions. It was divided into two sections. Section one had questions related to demographic data, section two will have questions related to the reintegration process in relation to peace, identity, equity and unity.

### Interview

The interview guide was used to gather data from the four sub county commissioners, and the peace committee members. The interviews guide had questions on the activities of reintegration, the challenges being experienced and the role of reintegration on cohesion.

### Testing validity and Reliability of the Instruments

The validity and reliability of the instruments was tested.

### Testing for Validity of Instruments

Validity is defined as the extent to which an instrument actually measures what it is supposed to measure (Dane, 1990). To ascertain the validity of the research instruments, the researcher sought to ensure both construct and face validity of the research instruments. Critical analysis of both test items was done to assess the relevance and appropriateness of the items in each instrument (content validity) and the sequencing, wording and instructions therein (face validity). The instruments to be used were given to experienced experts in the area who will review them and give guidance accordingly. Their comments and suggestions were used to adjust the items. This ensured that the instruments measure accurately the salient research characteristics that they intent to measure (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

### Testing for the Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability is defined as the degree of consistency that an instrument or procedure demonstrates (Best & Kahn, 2004). The reliability of the instruments was determined through the test retest reliability technique (Gay, 1992). This test retest method was used to confirm the reliability of the instruments. The instruments were administered to the same

respondents twice within an interval of three weeks. The responses to these items were computed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis. A correlation coefficient 'r' of 0.72 was obtained indicating the instrument was reliable and consistent for the study.

### Piloting of the Instruments

Piloting of the instruments was done in order to have a feel of the instruments, to find out if they are clear and also test for reliability. They were administered to people who have similar characteristics but not in the sampled group.

### Description of Data Collection Procedures

Before proceeding to collect data an introductory letter was obtained from the university. The researcher then applied for a research permit from the National Council of Science and Technology (NACOSTI). The researcher then sought permission from the CEO of the area of study. Finally the researcher then sought permission from the specific place.

### Description of Data Analysis Procedures

After fieldwork, before data analysis, all the questionnaires were adequately checked for completeness and organization to ensure that questions were answered adequately.

Data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative procedures. To facilitate the analysis, the raw data was summarized in tables and coded before they are entered into the computer for analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages was used to describe the results. The quantitative analysis was supplemented by qualitative description to provide a fuller picture of the findings particularly in those areas that are not easily amenable to quantification. In addition there were verbatim quotations. Data from in-depth interviews was audio taped and transcribed. The transcripts were organized into themes and categories as they emerged from the field.

Descriptive analysis is appropriate for this study because it involves the description, analysis and interpretation of circumstances prevailing at the time of study. This study will use frequencies and percentages because they easily communicate the research findings to majority of readers (Gay, 1992). Frequencies easily show the number of subjects in a given category.

## 4. Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

The chapter deals with data presentation, analysis and discussion of data collected. The chapter is divided into five parts. The first part embraces the background information of the study respondents. The findings are presented systematically from part two to five focusing on these research questions:

- 1) What was the demobilization and disarmament process of former combatants in Mount Elgon?

### Disarmament and Demobilization

The Question that was answered here was: what was the disarmament and demobilization process of former combatants in Mount Elgon?

Former combatants were asked to explain how disarmament and demobilization was carried out in Mt. Elgon.

They reported that Disarmament, Demobilization and re-integration (DDR) phases in Mt. Elgon were well coordinated by the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) and proceeded well, particularly after the conflicting parties were brought under control.

The SLDF combatants were disarmed and demobilized by the military. In Mt. Elgon demobilization operation was spearheaded by the KDF. The Kenyan military employed coercive means to facilitate disarmament and the reestablishment of security in Mt. Elgon. King (1997) states that the basic purpose of DDR in Mt. Elgon was to eliminate the SLDF capability and re-establish rule of law and ensure a legitimate monopoly over the use of force and restoration of government authority in the region.

According to Fusato (2003) Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of ex combatants is a first step in the transition from war to peace. DDR is much more complicated in a post conflict environment, when different fighting groups are divided by animosities and face a real security dilemma as they give up their weapons amidst civil society structures that have crumbled with a stagnant economy.

Usually the objective of DDR process is to contribute to security and stability in post conflict environments so that recovery and development can begin. DDR helps create an enabling environment for political and peace processes by dealing with security problems that arise when ex-combatants are trying to adjust to normal life during the vital transition period from conflict to peace and development. DDR supports ex-combatants to become active participants in the peace process through: removing weapons from the hands of combatants; taking the combatants out of the military structures; integrating combatants socially and economically into the society.

### **Disarmament**

Disarmament is the first phase of DDR, and logically precedes demobilization and reintegration. However, it is often a long-term process. A Major problem is the collection of small weapons and light arms which are easy to conceal and difficult to account for. A safe environment greatly enhances the effectiveness of voluntary disarmament programmes, by decreasing the need for civilians

Respondents reported that Operation Okoa Maisha carried out disarmament in Mt. Elgon. The operations' primary aim was only to combat the SLDF menace and dismantle the group. But the respondents pointed out that this was a one sided effort which ignored other militias that were formed to counter the SLDF threat. The military disarmament drive was a forceful one. It never offered the militia members an equal chance of returning arms voluntarily.

The Soi who still are in possession of illegal guns were asked to surrender them to the security agencies before an operation to flush out suspects and forcibly get those illicit

weapons is launched. Area residents were called upon to identify the people they suspect to own illegal firearms

In order to establish a safe environment and break the security dilemma, it is necessary that all parties be included in the DDR program and be disarmed at the same time. Otherwise, it is easy for one party to resume fighting, taking advantage of its opponents' disarmament. It is important that all parties develop ownership of the process and do not feel discriminated against, that different parties feel that they are being treated equitably, and that they are given the same opportunities to reintegrate into society (Fusato, 2003)

The respondents reported that disarmament was not sufficiently done because there was a lot of bias when arms were being collected from the communities. The Moorland Defense Force and Political Revenge Force militias were disarmed using the voluntary method. A majority of these were the Ndorobo community members who admitted that very few arms especially the faulty ones were returned.

The SLDF members who were mainly the Soi were requested to return the arms but they never complied. As a result some innocent community members were tortured. Today people still poses a lot of arms which is risky to the community. Eventually the real culprits who had the arms were left.

Disarmament criteria may focus on specific weapons, individuals or groups although; an exclusive focus on weapons may attract individuals who seek the benefits connected to the disarmament program, but who are not ex-combatants willing to demobilize; focusing on individual disarmament is considered an aggressive attitude by the military leaders, who may decide not to cooperate if they believe that they have lost control of the whole process; a combined approach requires both surrender of weapons and individual verification of combatant status. This approach reduces abuse and shifts the program entry criterion toward eligibility as a combatant (United Nations, 2005).

In a focus group discussion members said that in 2008 the army followed the Ndorobo in the bush where the army leader asked for guns but the Ndorobo refused and claimed that the weapons were used for protection. They could only surrender on condition that they are protected. As a result the army left them to own the guns. One respondent said that only 20 faulty guns were surrendered.

Ndorobo disarmament was voluntary. They were favored unlike the Soi. The Soi were harassed including those who had never owned guns. Military deserters left with their guns and filtered into the forest of Mt. Elgon.

Disarmament in Mt. Elgon involved the collection of small arms and light weapons within Mt. Elgon conflict zone and any other lethal weapons in possession of the SLDF and other organized gangs. It frequently entailed the assembling of combatants in a military cantonment and collection of illegally held weapons including their safe storage accountability and eventual disposition.

### Demobilization

Demobilization in Mt. Elgon involved the process by which the SLDF fighter's structures were disbanded and combatants absorbed into transformation programmes into civilian life. The operation succeeded in recovering assortment of weapons including those stolen from government security forces, especially the dreaded GPMG weapon stolen from the GSU by the SLDF. It generally entailed registration of former combatants and including them in some life support programmes to enable them re-integrate into the society and meet their immediate basic needs (Ginifer, 2003). Increasingly the DDR programs in Mt. Elgon was one of the key inducements used by the military to manage spoilers in post conflict situations, to the extent that DDR programmes were designed to reintegrate combatants into non -military life and enable them to find gainful employment. DDR programs were also becoming part and parcel of larger efforts to reform societal structures in post-conflict environments (Walter, 1995).

According to Torjesen (2013) demobilizing fighters represents a dual challenge: On the one hand, they are reconstructing relationships and identities as they reintegrate into civil society. On the other hand, they are frequently viewed as violent perpetrators who inspire fear in those around them. The broader communities to which they return may rightly demand some accountability for the harms these combatants have caused.

While many demobilized persons seek to go back to their original communities, it has not always been possible. Men and women exiting armed forces used to head to cities, where they'd enjoy greater anonymity and, therefore, security. But in the last few years, especially in the south, the demobilized are staying more often in the area where they demobilized for one important reason: "we are starting to get the sense that they're losing fear of the organizations,"

In Zimbabwe demobilization and reintegration suffered from programmatic and institutional gaps and by 1990 up to 25, 000 ex combatants were unemployed. The founding of the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veteran Association (ZNLWVA) provided the ex combatants with an institutionalized structure and a platform to lobby for governments recognition, welfare support and their own relevancy within a post conflict society. Consequently, the identity of the ex combatants as war veterans became entrenched (Krieger, 2003).

### 5. Summary of Findings

The findings of the study are based on the objective and research question raised to generate data in its analysis. The study therefore sought to:

- 1) Examine the process of demobilization and disarmament of former combatants in Mount Elgon region;

The researcher examined the demobilization and disarmament process of former combatants in Mount Elgon. The SLDF combatants were disarmed and demobilized by the military. In Mt. Elgon demobilization operation was spearheaded by the KDF. The Kenyan military employed coercive means to facilitate disarmament and the

reestablishment of security in Mt. Elgon. The basic purpose of DDR in Mt. Elgon was to eliminate the SLDF capability and re-establish the rule of law and ensure a legitimate monopoly over the use of force and restoration of government authority in the region.

Respondents reported that Operation Okoa Maisha carried out disarmament in Mt. Elgon. The military disarmament drive was a forceful one. Disarmament in Mt. Elgon involved the collection of small fire arms and light weapons within Mt. Elgon conflict zone and any other lethal weapons in possession of the SLDF and other organized gangs. It frequently entailed the assembling of combatants in a military cantonment and collection of illegally held weapons including their safe storage, accountability and eventual disposition. The operations' primary aim was only to combat the SLDF menace and dismantle the group. But the respondents pointed out that this was a one sided effort which ignored other militias that were formed to counter the SLDF threat.

### 6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

The findings show that in order to successfully demobilize and disarm former combatants, it is necessary to undertake mapping of all combatant groups adopt equality in the process so that no single group feels disadvantaged and entire process considered unjust. In addition, the process should aim at achieving social reintegration bearing in mind the three dimensions of family and community; sustainable employment; and civic responsibilities.

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