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# Teaching Notes for CHAPTER 15: Reconsidering Reintegration

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## **TEACHING NOTES**

### **Reconsidering Reintegration**

**By Kim Fletcher\***

#### **Overview:**

This case is designed to be taught in three separate parts; however, the first two parts can also stand alone from the third. In Part I the students are introduced to the characters and they begin to get emotionally involved in the story. They are forced to make a decision that faces many child soldiers: commit an atrocity against your family or in your own town, or be killed. At this point in the case the students may start to recognize some of the broader problems of delineating victims from perpetrators in conflict situations in which some combatants are kidnapped and forced to fight, but it will be made more explicit in Part II.

In Part II several dilemmas are illustrated in the case, each of which reflects larger policy dilemmas. The blurry line between victims and perpetrators is drawn out. Additionally, reintegration programs typically seek to focus on the former child soldier, inadvertently at the expense of his or her family and community.

In Part III the students have the chance to consider the dilemmas posed in Parts I and II in designing their own post-conflict programs. As in most cases, there is no “correct” solution. Instead the students have the opportunity to confront some of the many challenges facing IGOs and INGOs in post-conflict situations. They should walk away with a better appreciation of the many actors involved, their interests, and the ways in which competing interests may impact the implementation of programs on the ground.

#### **The Purpose of the Case:**

This case can be used with students of:

- international relations
- civil society organizations (CSOs)
- international governmental and non-governmental organizations (IGOs/INGOs)
- irregular warfare
- transitional justice
- disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR)

Several questions are raised throughout the three parts of the case:

1. In the case of child soldiers, who do we (as outsiders) consider victims and who do we consider perpetrators?

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2. How might those involved in the conflict delineate victims and perpetrators?
3. How will the differences between the answers in (1) and (2) affect post-conflict planning and programs?
4. In traditional reintegration programs, who has been included and who has been left out? Why?
5. How might the exclusion of the wider community affect the effectiveness of reintegration programs?
6. What are some of the challenges facing IGOs and INGOs involved in post-conflict reintegration?
7. Whose interests are currently represented? Who is being excluded? What impact might that have on the programs?
8. How can reintegration programs be improved?
9. What are some of the constraints on IGOs and INGOs involved in the reintegration process and how might those constraints be overcome?

## **Part I**

### **Background:**

The use of fear, intimidation, and drugs are common in the recruitment and training of child soldiers. In the RUF, the boys were also encouraged to celebrate violent acts openly as a way of socializing them into believing that they were doing something positive.<sup>1</sup> Down the road, these same communities that are victimized will be asked to allow the child soldiers to rejoin their societies, in spite of not knowing anything about how they became soldiers or what happened during the reintegration process. In the next phase of the case, the students will be looking at the family and community's point of view.

### **Learning Objectives:**

There are four main goals for this part of the case:

1. To provide background information on the characters and the war in Sierra Leone.
2. To engage students emotionally in the case. By forcing them to make Alie's decision, they should feel some of the anxiety that a child in a similar situation would feel. Those students who choose to act will have justifications for doing so, while those who choose not to act will understand why someone might choose otherwise.

3. To understand how little of a child soldier's story is seen and would be known by the larger community. The family and the community do not see how Alie got involved with the RUF, the training, the drug use, or the intimidation tactics. All they see are the RUF "soldiers" who commit these acts, including former members of their own communities. While those who know the whole story may see child soldiers as victims, members of their community or family may see them as perpetrators. This distinction will be further drawn out in Part II.
4. To set up some of the broader policy dilemmas that will be drawn out in Parts II and III. At this point in the case, the victim-perpetrator distinction is alluded to but not yet explicit.

### **Teaching Part I of the Case:**

1. The instructor may hand out the case either before or during class. If copies are made for the students to read before class, do not include the task. Part of the tension comes from the short time frame they are given to make a decision. If copies are passed out during class, give the students 10 minutes to read the case and another five to write down their actions.
2. Ask the students to share what they chose to do and why. Remember that in teaching cases, your role is not to offer possible solutions or arguments, but to facilitate the discussion so the students can learn from one another. There is no "correct" answer, and the students will see Alie's decision when they come to Part II.
3. Ask the students to describe what they felt while trying to make the decision and why. This question is intended to get students thinking about the ramifications of their (Alie's) actions. The feelings they describe will likely come not only from a decision to act or not to act, but from the students' thoughts about the likely results of that decision.
4. Discuss how much of Alie's story is known by his family or the villagers. While the villagers can speculate regarding whether Alie ran away or was kidnapped, they do not know of the training, drug use, or the intimidation tactics used on him.

## **Part II**

### **Background:**

By definition, reintegration involves both a former combatant and his or her host community. However, reintegration programs as they are currently practiced often focus on the soldier at the expense of his or her family or community.<sup>2</sup> By excluding the families or the wider community from the process, they never get the chance to discover the child soldier's story from his or her point of view. While the international community may see the ex-combatant as a victim, the local community may continue to view them as a perpetrator of the violence.

This distinction has ramifications for both the successful reintegration of the child and the local community's perceptions of the process as a whole. If the family continues to view the child as a perpetrator of the violence, they may reject him or her. If the rejection takes place while the fighting is still going on, then the child may wind up back on the front lines.<sup>3</sup> If the fighting has stopped, a rejection essentially means one more orphan in Sierra Leone who has

been taught to get what he or she needs by pointing a gun at someone and saying “give me that.” In addition, it is possible for the family to take the child back but for them to then be shunned by the local community for doing so. If a family is forced to leave their community, it can lead to economic difficulties.

The difference in views over who should be considered a perpetrator and who is a victim may also play a role in the local communities’ perceptions of the process because offering skills and job training to ex-combatants may be viewed as rewarding the perpetrators of the violence. Those who are initially victims of the violence are, in a sense, victimized again by being passed over for the chance to receive the education and training that former combatants receive. The discussion here should examine these concerns over the ways in the reintegration process is currently practiced and how to mitigate such omissions in policy and practice.

### **Teaching Objectives:**

Parts II and III of the case allow the students to analyze the case more deeply. Here they will start to connect the dilemmas presented in the case with broader policy dilemmas, which will help them identify that:

1. The reintegration process involves both the combatant and the community. At this point, most reintegration programs focus only on the child soldier, with the expectation that the family and community will be willing and ready to accept them at the proper time. While the case illustrates this idea, it may be useful to assign supplemental reading materials to help students understand how widely it applies. Suggested materials are listed at the bottom of the teaching notes for this part of the case.
2. Reintegration as it is currently practiced leads to “dual victimization,” in which those who were victimized during the conflict are victimized again by not receiving access to the same opportunities that perpetrators receive. Again, in order for the students to see that this situation is not specific to the case, additional materials are suggested below.

### **Teaching Part II of the Case:**

Assign each person in the class one of five roles:

1. Zainab
2. Karamoh
3. Ishmael
4. Natives to Danku now in Bopa
5. Militia members in Bopa

Have them write down whether they want Alie to return to the family (now in Bopa), and reasons why or why not.

### **Suggestions for Guiding Class Discussion:**

At this point in the case, the class can begin to discuss the dilemmas that are presented in the case and the broader policy dilemmas they represent. The dilemmas that are likely to emerge include:

1. **The Acceptance Dilemma.** When former child soldiers are going through the reintegration process, families must sometimes choose between the shame that would come from accepting them back and the pain of losing a family member permanently. Communities must choose between the fear of having a former enemy live among them and the guilt that would come from rejecting a child. This dilemma is played out in the students' decisions at the end of Part II.

In order to draw out the opposing sides of this dilemma, the instructor can have students discuss their decisions for whether to accept or reject Alie and why. Further discussion can be informed by the recommended readings below and be prompted with questions such as:

- a. What might happen if Alie is rejected by the family?
- b. What would happen if the family accepts Alie and is then rejected by the community?
- c. What can be done to diminish the impact of this dilemma? Discussion of this question may lead to the role IGOs and NGOs in reintegration which leads to the second dilemma:

2. **The Efficiency v. Effectiveness Dilemma (aka The Accountability Dilemma).** Any IGO or NGO is reliant on its donors for support and accountable to them for the services provided. In reintegration, a key figure is the number of former child soldiers who have successfully completed the reintegration program. Due to funding limits, however, the organizations must choose between increasing their number of ex-combatants served and involving the wider community in the process. While the increased number served may be seen as more efficient, incorporating the wider community is likely more effective.

A discussion of this dilemma may be prompted using questions referring to the case and the reference material such as:

- a. In the reintegration process, who is usually included and who is excluded by IGOs and NGOs running the programs?
- b. What impact does that decision have on the reintegration process?
- c. Is the decision between focusing on child soldiers and the community necessarily an "either/or" or can it be an inclusive approach?
- d. What constraints are placed on IGOs and NGOs?
- e. How might the local community view the work of the IGOs and NGOs? This question may then lead to the third dilemma:

3. **The Perpetrator v. Victim Dilemma (aka The “Dual Victimization” Dilemma).** In the case, the RUF “perpetrators” receive skills training while victims such as Karamoh are victimized again by being left out. The NGOs see all child soldiers as victims and provide them with skills training. However, the victims in the war may see all the soldiers—children or not--on one side as perpetrators. Therefore, when the IGOs and NGOs follow their mandates and provide job and skills training for child soldiers, civilian victims of the conflict may view it as rewarding the perpetrators. This “dual victimization” may lead to hostility among the local community toward the IGO or NGO. Further discussion of this dilemma could be prompted by asking the following questions. More informed answers may be provided if students refer to the supplemental readings.
- a. In your role (as a family member or local community member), who do you think are the victims in this case and who are the perpetrators?
  - b. As such, who should benefit if outside resources are used to provide job-skills training in the country?
  - c. Who usually benefits? Why?
  - d. What do you think is the result of these discrepancies?
  - e. How might they be remedied?
  - f. What constraints face NGOs and IGOs in enacting the proposed solutions? With these dilemmas and possible solutions in mind, continue to Part III.

**Reference/Suggested Background Material:**

While the case can be taught by itself, several background readings would assist in having more informed discussions and debates regarding the dilemmas above. The following sources are recommended:

Betancourt, Teresa S., Stephanie Simmons, Ivelina Borisova, Stephanie E. Brewer, Uzo Iweala, and Maria de la Soudière. “High Hopes, Grim Reality: Reintegration and the Education of Former Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone,” 2008 November 1, 52(4):565-587. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2662600/>

Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. “Child Soldiers and Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration in West Africa,” 2006, [http://www.child-soldiers.org/library/Nov\\_2006\\_-WestAfrica\\_Surveydoc\\_-\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.child-soldiers.org/library/Nov_2006_-WestAfrica_Surveydoc_-_FINAL.pdf)

Hamakawa, T. and Katherine Randall. “Measuring the Unmeasurable: Community Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers in Cote d’Ivoire,” April 2008, <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/cchrp/pdf/Hamakawa%20-%20Randall.pdf>

Legrand, Jean-Claude, "Lessons Learned from UNICEF Field Programmes for the Prevention of Recruitment, Demobilization and Reintegration of Child Soldiers," October 1999, [http://unddr.org/docs/Lessons\\_learned\\_field\\_programs.pdf](http://unddr.org/docs/Lessons_learned_field_programs.pdf)

### **Teaching Notes – Part III:**

#### **Background:**

In Part III students are able to apply some of the solutions they determined in Part II of this case. They are faced with the dilemmas that many IGOs and NGOs face when planning for humanitarian intervention including:

- Focus on quality or quantity? Donors would like to see a large number of people "helped," indicating an "efficient" program. However, the IGO (or NGO) wants to ensure that its program is sustainable, causing some resources that could have been used to increase quantity to be used for quality programming instead.
- Favor one group over another? Which one? Why? If students involve individuals who are not child soldiers in the reintegration process, they will not have the funds to include all child soldiers. However, involving other members of the community may make their program more effective.

Students will also have to consider the constraints of the local community. For example, when deciding which skills to teach, students should take the resources available in Bopa into account. They will not need 50 mechanics and 25 plumbers with only a few cars in town and one or two buildings with indoor plumbing.

The instructor may need to illustrate the difference between efficiency and effectiveness in programming. Resources for students are provided in the suggested reference materials.

Note, UNICEF is just one example of an organization working on the issues addressed here. Other NGOs that can be substituted are listed in the reference materials section below. If the instructor uses the other organizations, the specific task may need to be modified to suit the missions and mandates of those organizations.

#### **Teaching Objectives/Takeaways:**

1. Students are able to apply proposed solutions to dilemmas in Parts I and II in creating a plan for "sustainable reintegration."
2. Students understand and work within the constraints put on IGOs in reintegration cases in particular and all humanitarian aid in general.
3. Students begin the basics of program evaluation in determining the strengths and weaknesses in their own proposals.

#### **Proposed Task:**

The following task can be given to the students after they read UNICEF's mission statement and funding sources. Alternatively, other NGOs can be assigned and the students can be given the chance to research those organizations on their own. Sample NGOs are given at the end of these teaching notes.

You are a member of UNICEF's planning taskforce which is about to enter Sierra Leone. You are heading the reintegration team that will be in charge of the town of Bopa and the surrounding villages.

Bopa is an SLA militia stronghold in the eastern portion of the country. There is electricity but it is intermittent. The local high school and government offices have indoor plumbing, but the rest of the 1,000 person town relies on wells and five communal solar-powered pumps for water. The only cars in town are owned by government officials.

The region is relatively secure, but on the outskirts of your designated region there are RUF rebel groups who are known to have up to 250 child soldiers. There are also an estimated 200 child soldiers in the local militia. The two groups engage in occasional skirmishes.

Design a plan for a sustainable reintegration process in the region that addresses basic education, psychological health, physical health, skills training, and re-entering the host community. Assume you have the funding for 450 people to complete a 2-month program spread out over a 6-month period (i.e., 150 people per program) if they all are encamped in one location.

In your plan, consider the following:

1. Who will be included in the process? Will you include only the child soldiers or other members of the community?
2. Will you keep them in a camp? Will members of the RUF and militia be in the same camp? Assume conducting the process in the home community will increase your costs which decreases the number of people you can serve by 30%, adding another camp will decrease the number you can serve by 15%.
3. What skills will you teach? Who will you teach?
4. How will you approach reintegration into the home community?
5. How will you assess the impact of your program?
6. What are some of the weaknesses of your program?
7. How will you market the worth of your program to potential donors?

### **Suggestions for Guiding Class Discussion:**

1. After students have completed a draft of their plan, walk through the "consider the following" questions at the end of the section as a group. Let them debate the relative merits of including different groups in the process, encampment v. living in the community during

the program, the different skills to teach, their approach to reintegration, and the various assessment techniques they come up with. Illustrate that there is no “best” method, but each has strengths and weaknesses to be considered.

2. Discuss the challenges and constraints the students faced, and how they dealt with those challenges or worked around the constraints.
3. Alternatively, students may be assigned an NGO from the list below, and be required to do their own research to determine the mission, mandates, and constraints of that organization. The fictional town of Bopa may be used, or a real town may be assigned to be researched as well.

### **Reference/Suggested Background Materials**

Academics at American Jewish University. “Efficiency Versus Effectiveness”  
<http://academics.ajula.edu/Content/ContentUnit.asp?CID=1138&u=2445&t=0>

Centre for International Cooperation and Security. “Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration in West Africa: An Overview of Sierra Leone and Liberia,”  
<http://www.ddr-humansecurity.org.uk/images/DDR%20Case%20Study%20West%20Africa%20Overview%20Paper.pdf>

Child Soldiers International. “Child Soldier DDR Bibliography 2009,” [http://www.child-soldiers.org/childsoldiers/Final\\_June\\_2009\\_DDR\\_Bibliography.pdf](http://www.child-soldiers.org/childsoldiers/Final_June_2009_DDR_Bibliography.pdf)

Farr, Vanessa A. “Gender-aware Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR): A Checklist,” [http://www.crin.org/docs/unifem\\_ddr\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.crin.org/docs/unifem_ddr_checklist.pdf)

Parmar, Sharanjeet, Mindy Jane Roseman, Saudamini Siegrist, Theo Sowa, “Children and Transitional Justice: Truth-Telling, Accountability and Reconciliation,”  
[http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/tj\\_chapter6.pdf](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/tj_chapter6.pdf)

Save the Children. “Child Soldiers: Care and Protection of Children in Emergencies, A Field Guide,” [http://www.ecdgroup.com/docs/lib\\_005191315.pdf](http://www.ecdgroup.com/docs/lib_005191315.pdf)

### **Other Possible Organizations**

Caritas. <http://www.caritas.org/>

Child Soldier Relief. <http://childsoldierrelief.org>

Children Assistance Program. <http://projects.tigweb.org/helpachild>

International Committee of the Red Cross. <http://www.icrc.org/>

Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program. [http://www.mdrp.org/about\\_us.htm](http://www.mdrp.org/about_us.htm)

Save the Children-UK. <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/>

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<sup>1</sup> Myriam Denov. "Girls in Fighting Forces: Moving Beyond Victimhood." Last modified 2007. [http://www.iiav.nl/epublications/2007/girls\\_in\\_fighting\\_forces.pdf](http://www.iiav.nl/epublications/2007/girls_in_fighting_forces.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Wessells, Michael. "Psychosocial Issues in Reintegrating Child Soldiers," *Cornell International Law Journal*, 37 (2004):513-525.

<sup>3</sup> Beah, *A Long Way Gone*.