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REINTEGRATION OF EX-COMBATANTS: ASSESSING THE ROLE OF CO-OPERATIVES. THE CASE STUDY OF MUSANZE DISTRICT.

A thesis to be submitted to the University of Rwanda, College of Arts and Social sciences, Center for Conflict Management (CCM) in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Arts Degree in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation.

BY

CHARLES BARISA

Reference No: 219014941

Thesis Advisor: Dr Celestin   HATEGEKIMANA

KIGALI, JUNE 2021

DECLARATION

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Student Name: CHARLES BALISA

Signed: ....

Supervisor: **Dr HATEGEKIMANA Celestin**
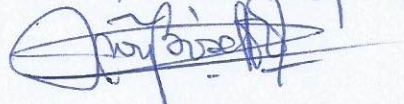
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother Mrs Valeria KAGOYIRE and to the memory of my late father Mr Charles KAYITARE.

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ABSTRACT

From 1989, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programmes have played a major role in peace agreements worldwide. The first United Nations peacekeeping mission with a DDR mandate was ONUCA, (Observadores de las Naciones Unidas en Centroamerica) or the United Nations Observer Group in Central America and involved the reintegration of ex-combatants after the conflict had finished. While the disarmament and demobilization phases of the DDR programs are straightforward events, success in the reintegration phase remains a great challenge. In this thesis, I argue that paying closer attention to the challenges facing ex-combatants at an individual level can help in improving the success of reintegration. To elaborate on this point, I investigated the challenges faced by ex-combatants, separating from the military on an individual basis, in their efforts to reintegrate back into civilian life. Through this effort, I aimed to bring an individual perspective to post-conflict reintegration, which has typically focused on programmes and processes, rather than considering the experience of the individual ex-combatant. A further aim was to establish whether the co-operative model could help ex-combatants meet these challenges.

This research aimed at assessing the role of cooperatives in reintegrating ex- combatants, with a case study of Musanze District. The target population for this study was the ex-combatants in Musanze district, about 100 people, but through a Snowball sampling techniques, 50 ex-combatants were considered as respondents in this study.The data were collected using a questionnaire, group discussion and interview and were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Key words: Ex-combatants, Co-operatives, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)

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ABBREVIATIONS

ONUCA: Observadores de las Naciones Unidas en Centro America

DDR: Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration

IDDRS: Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards

CWCF – Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation

EU – European Union

ICA – International Co-operative Alliance

ILO – International Labor Organization

IRBPHS – Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

SACCOs – Savings and Credit Co-operative Societies

SIDDR – Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration

ST – Sudan Tribune

UK – United Kingdom

UN – United Nations

URNG– National Revolutionary Union of Guatemala

RDRC – Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission

RCA – Rwanda Cooperative Agency

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and Background Information

Recent history gives many examples of post-conflict societies addressing the question of ex-combatants following civil war through what are known as Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) programmes. Beginning in 1989 with ONUCA, (Observadores de las Naciones Unidas en Centroamerica) or the United Nations Observer Group in Central America, which was the first United Nations peacekeeping mission with a DDR mandate, the reintegration of ex-combatants has become a major focus of peace agreements (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2007). To date, the UN has carried out and supported DDR programmes in more than 20 countries around the world, both within and outside of peacekeeping operations (UN, 2010).

Previously, DDR programmes were often implemented in a disjointed and unintegrated manner. This was due to poor coordination, planning and support, and sometimes competition between and among United Nations peacekeeping operations, agencies, funds and programmes (UN, 2006) and resulted in less than optimum outcomes, thus weakening the chances of a successful peace process. In response, the United Nations, in 2006, adopted the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), a set of policies, guidelines and procedures for UN-supported DDR programmes in a peacekeeping context (UN, 2006). In 2010, *The Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS)* was compiled to help users navigate their way around the IDDRS document (UN, 2010).

The objective of DDR programmes is to contribute to security and stability in post-conflict environments so that recovery and development can begin (UN, 2006).While the disarmament and demobilization phases of the DDR programmes are fairly straightforward events, success in the reintegration phase remains a great challenge (Alusala, 2011; Janzen, 2011; Schulhofer-Wohl & Sambanis, 2010; Specker, 2008; Hamber, 2007). Specker (2008) identifies several of these

challenges, three of which are pertinent to this study. Firstly, planning for the reintegration phase is usually started late and this leads to funding challenges. With most donors looking out for immediate results, the disarmament and demobilization phases – events that provide immediate results – are prioritized for funding at the expense of reintegration, which is a long-term process and often links to a country's overall development programme (Buxton, 2008; UN, 2006). If not planned and budgeted for early, funds may not be available for the implementation of the reintegration phase (Alusala, 2011).

Secondly, the socio-economic context in which reintegration is to take place is rarely or inadequately analyzed. Employment and livelihood opportunities for ex-combatants are crucial for successful reintegration. Identifying these opportunities in post-conflict environments, often characterized by devastated economies and constrained labour markets (SIDDR, 2006; Galtung, 1998), is an extremely difficult task that requires deliberate and thorough analyses. Lastly, current evaluation of reintegration programmes focus on achievements as opposed to impact (Schulhofer-Wohl & Sambanis, 2010). The lack of evaluation and monitoring systems on the impact of the reintegration programmes has meant that planners and implementers have not availed themselves of the opportunity to learn about what has worked and what has not. A closer look at these challenges reveals a focus on programmes and processes but largely ignores implementation as it involves the individual ex-combatant.

In recent times, calls are being made to ex-combatants to form co-operatives as a reintegration strategy (ST, 2013; Persorda, Gregov, & Vrhovski, 2012; Babijja, 2012; ILO, 2009). However, this request is still facing the lack of literature that is able to give a systematic structure or exploration of issues at hand. Rather, the current practice in reintegration programming actually goes against the spirit of co-operativism by trying to limit the post-demobilization contact between ex-combatants (Janzen, 2011). These circumstances raise the question: 'Are calls to ex-combatants to form co-operatives as a reintegration strategy justified in theory and practice?'
This study seeks to contribute to the efforts to answer this question, stimulate a discussion about the intersection between ex-combatants and co-operatives, and hopefully spur further research to improve on the understanding of how co-operatives can be better integrated in the design and implementation of socio-economic aspects of reintegration programmes for ex-combatants. In

order to establish a linkage between ex-combatants and co-operatives, it is important to explore three issues. Firstly, I will explore the challenges faced by individual ex-combatants in their efforts to reintegrate into their communities. Secondly, I will explore military characteristics and values that the ex-combatants were exposed to during their active service and how they relate to or compare with co-operative principles and values. Lastly, I will explore any historical evidence of ex-combatants forming co-operatives in an attempt to meet similar challenges.

1.2 problem Statement

In the preceding section, I provided a general overview of the evolution of DDR programmes. From this broad overview, I then focused on the challenges of the reintegration phase of the programmes and pointed out the little attention the reintegration phase pays to the individual ex-combatant.

Because of the little attention paid to the individual ex-combatant, there is scarcity of the literature that comes directly from the lived experiences of ex-combatants and the challenges that they encounter. We know that the challenges are many, but we know little about how ex-combatants face those challenges, and what they do to address or overcome them. It is therefore difficult to justify the calls for them to form co-operatives without empirical data on the challenges they encounter and evidence that such challenges could be successfully met using the co-operative model. As we saw in the preceding section, one of the challenges in the reintegration process was that the socio-economic context in which reintegration is to take place is rarely or inadequately analyzed. It is through such analyses that the role of co-operatives could be identified. My review of the literature reveals quite some interesting interactions between ex-combatants and co-operatives from as far back as the First World War. However, none of the literature has attempted to make a direct link between ex-combatants and co-operatives by comparing military characteristics and values with co-operative principles and values. Because of the growing interest in ex-combatant reintegration by international and national actors, and the increasing calls to ex-combatants to form co-operatives as a reintegration strategy, it is necessary to build a body of research literature on this important topic.

1.3 Research Questions

This research seeks to answer three questions. First is the question of the challenges that ex-combatants separating from the military on an individual basis face in their reintegration back into civilian life, the second is whether a relationship exists between military characteristics and values and co-operative principles and values, and third is whether there exists evidence of ex-combatants forming co-operatives. The answers to these questions will then help us answer the broader question as to whether calls to ex-combatants to form co-operatives as a reintegration strategy are justified.

Based on the issues research questions arise and need to be answered;

1. How and to what extent do cooperatives contribute to reintegration of ex-combatants?

2. What are the challenges affecting ex-combatants in their reintegration efforts for joining cooperatives?

3. What relationship that exists between military characteristics and values and co-operative principles and values?

1.4 General Purpose of the Study

The overall aim of this research is to advance the understanding of the challenges facing ex-combatants who separate from the military on an individual basis in their efforts to reintegrate into their communities and whether these challenges can be met using the co-operative model.

It is my argument that such an understanding would help inform the design and implementation of reintegration programmes for ex-combatants in post-conflict contexts. To this end, I aim to bring an individual perspective to post-conflict reintegration context, which has typically focused on programmes and processes, rather than trying to understand the experience of the individual ex-combatant.

1.5 Specific Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the objectives of this research are:

1. To examine the role of cooperatives in the reintegration process of ex-combatants.

2. To identify the challenges and formulate recommendations on how the co-operative model could be implemented as a reintegration strategy for ex-combatants.

1.6. Research Scope

The researcher undertook this study to find out from ex-combatants in Musanze District, Republic of Rwanda, and the challenges they face at an individual level in the transition back into civilian life after service in the military. By focusing on the lived experiences of individual ex-combatants in peacetime contexts, we will start to comprehend how much more difficult these challenges are in post-conflict contexts. This study is relevant because there is growing realization that more needs to be done to assist ex-combatants to make a successful transition to civilian life, to improve on the success rates of the reintegration phase of DDR programs in post-conflict contexts, as well as the increased call on ex-combatants to form co-operatives as reintegration strategies.

1.7. The structure of the research

This study was organized in five chapters in a detailed manner. The first chapter covers the introduction, the problem statement, objectives of the study, significance of the study, the methodology of the study and the organization of the study.

The second chapter focuses on the existing literature review on the subject under the study.

The third chapter consists of the general approach and methods of data collection such as interviews, questionnaires, qualitative and quantitative methods. This chapter also involved the limitations that will encounter during field work and how they will be overcome. The forth chapter generally focuses on the analysis and interpretation of data. While the firth chapter which is the last one , includes conclusion that will be drawn from the study and displays the different strategies of improving and recommending more effective ways which focused on calling ex-combatants to form cooperatives for successful reintegration.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter investigated into other research done to find out the relationship between the current research and the previous works done by other researchers. The research built the bridge between current study and the previous ones, the gap in literature was pointed out, and it is in this gap that the current research tried to fill the missing information.

2.2 Definitions and key words

Ex-combatant is a former member of an armed force or armed group who was engaged in armed conflict and following an end to the armed conflict either through a negotiated peace agreement or through outright victory by one of the parties, these men, women, and unfortunately, children, had to be released back into civilian life.

Co-operatives are self-governing associations of people who unite freely to address their common social, economic and cultural needs and desires through mutually owned and democratically controlled organizations.

Post-conflict Society is a society that has emerged out of an armed conflict. While a post-conflict society has achieved an end to direct violence, it is faced with a multitude of challenges involving the complex task of rebuilding society, healing the wounds of war, and creating the conditions necessary for a sustainable peace.

Reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain long term employment and income. Reintegration is fundamentally economic and social process with an open time frame, mainly taking place in societies at the local level.

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) is a component of many official peacekeeping missions occurring in post-conflict environments. The objective of a DDR

programme is to contribute to security and stability so that recovery and development can begin. It is a complex undertaking with political, military, security, humanitarian and socio-economic dimensions.

2.3 A Review of Reintegration Literature

Most of the literature addressing the issue of reintegration and the military approaches the issue from a post-conflict perspective (e.g. De Zeeuw (ed.), 2008; Pugh & Cooper, 2004; Darby (ed.), 2006). Reintegration in a post-conflict context is usually a part of DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration) programs and is meant to avoid a relapse back into armed conflict by keeping ex-combatants gainfully engaged in social and economic activities (Schulhofer-Wohl & Sambanis, 2010; Ginty & Williams, 2009; Darby (ed.), 2006). While this is understandable, taking into account the upsurge of civil wars following the end of the cold war (Schulhofer-Wohl & Sambanis, 2010 & Ginty & Williams, 2009), the researcher argues that it is a rather narrow approach and could be a contributing factor to the less than optimal results of the reintegration aspects of DDR programs, even in the absence of a relapse to violence (Schulhofer-Wohl & Sambanis, 2010). The researcher further argues that having a good understanding of how ex- combatants cope after leaving the military on an individual basis, will help inform how best to design reintegration programs in post-conflict environments, thus resulting in greater success. Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) who state that support this position:

> At the micro level, strikingly few rigorous attempts have been made to identify factors that might explain why some individuals and not others are able to successfully reintegrate after conflict (p.532).

This literature review will therefore examine the main issues surrounding the reintegration of ex-combatants transitioning from military to civilian as individuals.

Nevertheless, what exactly does the term reintegration mean? The United Nations defines reintegration as:

> 'The process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open period, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the

general development of a country and a national responsibility, and often necessitates long-term external assistance' (UN, 2006, p.2).

Just from the above definition, it is clear that we are addressing a post-conflict context. In this definition, an ex-combatant is seen as a person who participated in an armed conflict and who should be provided with alternative and sustainable means of sustenance, lest he or she resorts to violence, either as part of a relapse to armed conflict or as a criminal activity. I argue that this negative approach to reintegration (avoidance of relapse to armed conflict or engaging in criminal activities) causes us to focus on 'ticking the boxes' (programmes and processes) and to lose sight of the positive contribution that ex-combatants can make to their communities if the skills they acquired while in the armed forces or armed groups could be properly channeled into community development activities. However, in order to do this, there is a need to understand how reintegration takes place at an individual level and the challenges faced and overcome or otherwise by ex-combatants. Why is it important to understand how an individual ex-combatant copes with reintegration? Identity: a prolonged encounter with the military transforms a person and confers a new identity upon him or her.

Several researches on the military as "a social group as opposed to an organization have arrived at the conclusion that there exists a uniquely military identity" (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011 et al). Young in Adams, et al (2010) describes a social group as "a collective of persons differentiated from at least one other group by cultural forms, practices, or way of life". Different people of an association have a explicit kinship with one another due to their related experience that commit them to mutually cooperate as compared to those who don't belong to a specific group (p.36). Separation from the military therefore entails a change in identity and with it, the attendant stress of losing one's identity (Black & Papile, 2010, Military Handbooks, 2008). Black and Papile (2010) describe the military as:

> 'A distinct role-based subculture that differs markedly from civilian life; as such its members undergo experiences with unique impacts. Structure forms the core of military life, and clear, absolute, and rigid rules dominate day-to-day experience. The issues of power, rank, responsibility, compliance, and camaraderie are central to the military organization, and strong feelings of discipline and loyalty are instilled' (p. 384).

According to Michel Foucault (1995), the military has a transforming effect on the soldier. Contrasting the soldier of the seventeenth century with the soldier of the eighteenth century, Foucault describes how the former was born with certain physical characteristics that predisposed him towards soldiering and could literally be spotted a mile away. The latter, by contrast, became something that could be made:

> 'By the late eighteenth century, the soldier has become something that can be made; out of formless clay, an apt body, the machine required can be constructed; posture is gradually corrected; a calculated constraint runs slowly through each part of the body, mastering it, making it pliable, ready at all times, turning silently into the automatism of habit; in short, one has 'got rid of the peasant' and given him 'the air of a soldier.'' (p.135)

Kirke (2009) in his study of group cohesion in the British Army identified four separate social structures that exist in the military. These are the formal command structure, the informal structure, the loyalty/identity structure, and the functional structure. The formal command structure is evidenced in the hierarchical nature of the military, from rank to order of battle. It is the structure through which discipline is enforced, downward orders issued, and reports submitted upwards. It provides the framework for official responsibility and culpability. The informal structure, on the other hand, is manifested in unwritten conventions of behavior in the absence of formal constraints and determines how military personnel conduct themselves off-duty or during stand-downs as well as how they relate, at a personal level, to peers, seniors and juniors. The loyalty/identity structure is the structure of "belonging" and is manifested in a number of ways depending on size of the group in which the military personnel find their identity. An infantry soldier belongs to a fire team, a section, a platoon, a company, and a battalion.

Giving the example of British infantry private soldiers, Kirke explains "the same infantry soldiers would express their identity as members of their platoon and feel loyalty to it in rivalry with other platoons of the same company. However, where their company is in competition with

other companies, these attitudes and feelings would be transferred to the company rather than the platoon" (p.747). Lastly, the functional structure is composed of the attitudes, feelings, and expectations that come with being a soldier and properly carrying out tasks and activities that are considered "soldierly".

Additionally, for developing countries, Zirker, Danopoulos, and Simpson (2008) point out that military establishments exhibit certain characteristics that would qualify them as ethnic or quasi-ethnic groups which they define as having 'behavior that mirrors in some important senses a sense of shared common descent and/or history' (p.322). During recruitment exercises, individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds are enlisted from various parts of the country

In the 2008 edition of After the Military Handbook, it is pointed out that a person separating from the military leaves 'a large portion of his or her identity behind' (p.12) and that this is both traumatic and stressful. In order to improve on the success of the transition from military to civilian life, this loss has to be addressed. In a post-conflict environment, the focus is usually on the stress and trauma resulting from exposure to violence or participation in violent activities (Schulhofer-Wohl & Sambanis, 2010; Black & Papile, 2010). The stress and trauma resulting from loss of identity is not taken into account when designing reintegration aspects of DDR programs and it is my opinion that herein lays one of the key challenges facing reintegration.

Dr. Julius Segal, cited in Military Handbooks (2008), outlines three broad categories of stressful events. These are namely 'events that lead to the loss of a special relationship, events one cannot control that make one feel helpless, and events with lasting consequences' (p.12). Transitioning from the military to civilian life most often than not has aspects of all the three categories of stressful events. *Espirit de corps* is a strong bond that binds military personnel together. *Esprit de corps* is based around a group of individuals belonging to a special group. Individual group member find strength in the knowledge that the group forms part of what they stand for and believe in, determines how outsiders perceive them, and how the members relate to each other. When separating from the military, this is the first casualty. The many special relationships developed during the period of service are no longer a part of one's daily experience. In case of dismissal from the military (involuntary separation), one may feel helpless and not in control of

the situation and lastly, leaving the military is almost always a permanent consequence. These, to one degree or another, apply to ex-combatants in a post-conflict context but are rarely, if at all, addressed and yet they have a great bearing on the success or failure of reintegration. Why is it important to address these issues?

According to an online survey carried out on the transition from military to civilian life by Canadian veterans who had served for at least six months (Black & Papile, 2010) aptly titled 'Making It on Civvy Street', military personnel transitioning into civilian life face several challenges. These challenges may include '(a) physical and psychological injuries resulting from combat and non-combat situations, (b) health issues, (c) substance abuse issues, (d) learning how to function in a non-structured environment, (e) friendship difficulties, (f) family discord, (g) difficulties with authority, (h) issues of perceived support, and (i) identity issues (p.384). The study also identified four factors contributing to a successful transition. These are 'finding satisfying work, stable mental health, family, and relationship with spouse' (p.395). Finding satisfying work is critical to successful transition as it involves livelihood. A person separating from the military still needs to "put food on the table" and provide for those dependents upon him or her. At the same time, most military personnel are averse to being "idle". The end of military service does not necessarily imply complete retirement from work. This is often expressed in the slogan "I am retired, not tired" that can be found on some caps and T-shirts of military retirees.

Secondly, stable mental health, especially for ex-combatants who engaged in combat, is critical. Military personnel need to be helped to understand that however hardened they may be, they are still human and exposure to traumatic events can have psychological effects on them. This in no way reflects a weakness in their character but a human reaction for which it is important to seek help at the earliest sign of struggle. The third and fourth factors of successful transitions are factors of relationships. It is important that family members are given information concerning the challenges of transition from military to civilian life so that they are better equipped to assist and support their ex-combatant.

2.4 A Review of Co-operative Literature

"Co-operatives are a reminder to the international community that it is possible to pursue both economic viability and social responsibility."

The United Nations (UN) has been involved in the promotion of co-operatives for a very long time. For example, in 1996, at The World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, the UN recognized the importance of co-operatives:

"… cooperatives in their various forms are becoming a major factor of economic and social development by promoting the fullest possible participation in the development process of women and all population groups, including youth, older persons and people with disabilities, and are increasingly providing an effective and affordable mechanism for meeting people's needs for basic social services…" (United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/51/58 of 1996)

In June 2002, the International Labor Organization (ILO), a specialized agency of the UN, issued ILO Recommendation 193, *Recommendation Concerning the Promotion of Co-operatives* (ILO, 2002). In this recommendation, ILO recognized the importance of co-operatives in terms of job creation, resource mobilization, and investment. Additionally, co-operatives promoted the fullest participation of all people in economic and social development and could deal with the challenges brought about by globalization. In General Assembly Resolution A/RES/64/136 of 18 December 2009, the UN proclaimed the year 2012 as the International Year of Co-operatives. In making this proclamation, the General Assembly appreciated the positive role that co-operatives played in promoting inclusive economic and social development, noting that co-operatives were becoming 'a major factor of economic and social development' (p.1). The UN's goals for the International Year of Co-operatives were to: 'increase public awareness about co-operatives and their contributions to socio-economic development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, promote the formation and growth of co-operatives, and to encourage governments to establish policies, laws and regulations conducive to the formation, growth and stability of co-operatives' (p.2).

But what exactly is a co-operative? According to the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), a co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise. Co-operatives are guided by the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. Co-operatives across the world operate on the basis of seven principles. These are voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, member economic participation, autonomy and independence, education, training and information, cooperation among co-operatives, and concern for community[1].

Why is there a growing interest in the co-operative model of doing business? To answer this question, we need look at the prevailing global economic crisis that traces its genesis to the financial crisis of 2007-2008. By the end of the International Year of Co-operatives, the world had been through five years of economic turmoil. In the intervening years, several studies of the co-operative model were commissioned. Significant among these were three studies commissioned by ILO, the Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation (CWCF), and the European Confederation of cooperatives and worker-owned enterprises (CECOP). In 2009, ILO commissioned two scholars to undertake a detailed study on the resilience of the co-operative business model in times of crisis. The study (Birchall & Ketilson, 2009) found that:

> "The financial and ensuing economic crisis has had negative impacts on the majority of enterprises; however, cooperative enterprises around the world are showing resilience to the crisis. Financial cooperatives remain financially sound; consumer cooperatives are reporting increased turnover; worker cooperatives are seeing growth as people choose the cooperative form of enterprise to respond to new economic realities" (p.2).

In 2010, CWCF commissioned a comprehensive study of worker co-operatives in Italy, Mondragon (Spain), and France. The rationale for choosing these three was that 'these countries

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[1]http://ica.coop/en/what-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles

or regions have the largest, most dynamic worker co-op movements in the world' (Corcoran & Wilson, 2010, p.2). In Italy, the study found that:

'Although it was one of the most devastated and poorest regions in Europe at the end of World War II, Emilia Romagna is now among the most prosperous regions in the world. Its per capita GDP is 25% higher than the average for Italy, and 36% higher than the average for the European Union (EU). It has an enviable recent annual growth rate of 2.2%. The unemployment rate, in 2006, was 3% compared to 8.4% for all of Italy, and an average of 9.1% for the EU. In addition, it has one of the lowest rates of inequality in Europe, with a Gini coefficient of .25, or about half the European average. In Emilia Romagna, firms tend to be very small scale' (Corcoran, & Wilson, 2010, p.6).

Mondragon in the Basque country of Spain has one of the most unique co-operative business models in the world. Inspired by Fr. Don José María Arizmendiarrieta, a Jesuit priest, Mondragon Co-operative Corporation is a key player in the economy of the Basque country (Maheshvarananda, 2012; Clamp & Alhamis, 2010). Don José María arrived in Mondragon in 1941 as a parish priest. The impoverished town had been devastated by dictator Franco's bombardment during the Spanish civil war (Gibson-Graham, 2003; Ormaechea, 2001). Recognizing that the youth needed an education (Clamp & Alhamis, 2010), he solicited for funds from local firms and established a technical school. Several years later, five of the graduates of this school approached Don José María with the idea of establishing a business. Being aware of the tendency of both capitalist and Marxist economic models to foster inequalities, Don José María, influenced by Catholic Social Thought, and having studied the work of Robert Owen and his economic model – the co-operative (Gibson-Graham, 2003; Shultze, 2001), suggested that the young graduates should establish a worker-co-operative and thus Mondragon Co-operative Corporation was born (Clutterbuck, 1974). Many years later, Don José María's decision has remained sound. Casadesus-Masanell and Khanna (2003) in a study on globalization and trust, found that:

"There are higher levels of trust, and greater wage equality, in cooperatives (organizations wherein employees own the firm) than in limited liability firms… We document this to be true in the case of one organization… Mondragon Cooperacion Cooperativa (MCC)' p.2"

According to the CWCF study:

> 'The Mondragon Cooperative Corporation has grown from its initial 25 workers in 1956. From the mid-1960s to the mid 1970s, Mondragon grew by about 1,000 workers per year. From 1986 to 1996, Mondragon grew from 19,669 workers to 30,634. Sales in 1997 were $5 billion euros. There are 256 businesses under the umbrella of the Mondragon conglomerate. As of 2009 Mondragon employed 92,773 workers with sales of $33 billion euros. This accounts for 25% of the total sales and 15% of all workers in the worker co-operative sector in Spain. Mondragon is the largest business group in the Basque region and is the seventh largest business in Spain in terms of both sales and the number of workers. Unlike corporations, Mondragon's strategic plan includes job creation goals. In 2003, Mondragon was ranked by Fortune magazine as one of the top ten places to work in Europe. Overall Mondragon has outperformed most private business firms in Spain in almost all respects (Corcoran, & Wilson, 2010, p.12).

What is even more interesting about Mondragon is that The Economist hosted the Spain Summit[2] in Madrid on February 12th, 2013 to address the economic turmoil engulfing Spain, considered one of the 'crisis countries' (Roelants, Dovgan, Eum & Terrasi, 2012, p.8) in Europe. The theme of the summit was 'Beyond Austerity: Getting Back to Growth' and the lineup of the expert speakers included scholars from Europe's premier business schools as well as senior corporate executives from around the world. Missing from this line-up was the Chief Executive Officer of Mondragon, a company that had weathered the economic crisis and could have shared experiences with the participants on how this had been accomplished. Unfortunately, the mainstream media does not appear to be giving the co-operative model the exposure it deserves. This has led to Professor Gar Alperovitz, a political economy scholar at the University of Maryland, to comment that the Wall Street Journal is 'more interested in covering caviar and Foie Gras than employee-owned firms'[3].

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[2]http://cemea.economistconferences.com/event/spain-summit#.Uqd0sWQW030

[3]http://www.alternet.org/economy/revealed-wall-street-journal-more-interested-caviar-and-foie-gras-employee-owned-firms

Building on the momentum generated by the success of the International Year of Co-operatives, and in light of the resilience of the co-operative model during the on-going global economic crisis, the International Co-operative Alliance has embarked on an initiative aiming to make the period 2011-2020 the Decade of Co-operatives. Its Blueprint for the Decade of Co-operatives (ICA, 2013) emphasizes the need for research. In Canada, considered a leader in co-operatives in North America, collaboration between the Rural and Co-operatives Secretariat, the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA), and the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité (CCCM) commissioned a study on co-operative research. In the resulting report (CCA/CCCM, 2012), one of the areas identified for priority research was on the contribution of the co-operative model to the socio-economic development of population groups. As we saw earlier, ex-combatants form a distinct population group. Having personally been a beneficiary of the co-operative movement while in active service, the rising calls on ex-combatants to form co-operatives, and as we shall see shortly, the resilience shown by the co-operative model in light of the prevailing global economic crisis, the researcher has decided to establish a justification for calls on ex-combatants to form co-operatives as a reintegration strategy to meet their socio-economic needs.

With the resilience shown by both small scale and large scale co-operative businesses in a very economically unstable world, the ICA, through its Blueprint, wants the co-operative form of business by 2020 to become the acknowledged leader in economic, social and environmental sustainability, the business model of choice, and the fastest growing form of enterprise (ICA, 2013). This is a very opportune time to explore how this model could be utilized in the reintegration of ex-combatants. But before we can do this, it is imperative that we compare military characteristics and values with co-operative principles and values.

2.5. Military Characteristics and Values vs. Co-operative Principles and Values

Comparing and contrasting military characteristics and values with co-operative principles and values, we can identify quite a number of areas of convergence that need to be reinforced as well

as areas of divergence that would need to be reconciled if the co-operative model is to become an effective reintegration strategy for ex-combatants.

The military profession the world over has certain characteristics and values inculcated into those entering the profession as part of their transformation into effective fighting forces. These characteristics include trust, military expertise, honorable service, esprit de corps, and stewardship (US Army, 2013).

Beginning with trust, the citizens of a country place special trust and confidence in their military. The military, as a profession, considers service to the country its highest priority. Trust is the bedrock of the military's relationship with the citizens. Every military professional's responsibility is to preserve this earned trust in his or her conduct. 'Internal to the military itself, individual trustworthiness creates strong bonds among military professionals that serves as a vital organizing principle necessary for the military to function as an effective and ethical profession' (US Army, 2013, p.2-1). Just like it is with the military, trust is central in successful co-operatives. According to ILO (2001), 'co-operation depends upon the existence of mutual trust' p.10, and that this 'trust must exist between members and between members and their co-operative' (p.13).

In terms of military expertise, everyone's professional responsibility is to continually advance and certify his or her expert knowledge and skills in military power. To sustain this expertise, 'lifelong learning is required of all military professionals' (US Army, 2013, p.3-1). In co-operatives, the principle of education, training and information reflects this value. Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so that they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. 'They inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation' (Smith, 2004, p.61).

Every military professional is expected to provide honorable service to the nation. The military exists as a profession for the sole purpose of serving the country by supporting and defending the constitution in a way that upholds the rights and interests of the citizens. 'It is every military

professional's responsibility to strengthen their honorable service by daily living the military values' (US Army, 2013, p.4-1). Members of co-operatives should equally strive to provide honorable service to their co-operative in a way that upholds the rights and interests of the members of their co-operative. The co-operative 'principle of member economic participation' (Smith, 2004, p.60) that requires members to contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative, part of which is usually the common property of the co-operative would require honorable service from the membership.

Esprit de Corps is what makes military professionals -spirited, dedicated and bonded together by a common purpose to serve the country- to persevere and win in war and to prevail over adversity in military operations. It requires a deep commitment to the highest standards of individual and collective excellence. 'Military professionals are bonded together by mutual trust, shared understanding, and commitment to the military ethic' (US Army, 2013, p.5-1).The co-operative principle of voluntary and open membership, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, coupled with the co-operative values of self-help, self-responsibility, and solidarity (Smith, 2004), reflect *esprit de corps* and should be the foundation for building "*esprit de co-ops*" in the co-operative movement.

Stewardship is about special responsibilities. 'The military is responsible and duty-bound not only to complete its missions with the resources available, but also to provide candid advice and accurate assessments for future requirements' (US Army, 2013, p.6-1). The co-operative 'principle of concern for community' (Smith, 2004, p.61) requires that members work for the sustainable development of their communities. This requires good stewardship from members of the co-operatives.

Hand-in-hand with these five essential characteristics of the military, are the seven values that undergird them: loyalty, duty, respect, self-less service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. *Loyalty* means that one bears true faith and allegiance to the country's constitution, the military, one's unit and fellow soldiers. *Duty* means that one fulfills his or her obligations. *Respect* means treating others with dignity and respect while expecting others to do the same. *Honor* means living military values on a daily basis. *Integrity* means doing what is right, legally and morally.

Lastly, *personal courage* means enduring physical duress and at times risking personal safety (US Army, 2013). These military values are relevant to the co-operative movement and will need to be inculcated into members of co-operatives in order to achieve the ambitious plan in ICA's "2020 Vision" Blueprint for the co-operative form of business by 2020 to become:

- The acknowledged leader in economic, social and environmental sustainability
- The model preferred by people
- The fastest growing form of enterprise

(ICA, 2013, p.3)

However, there are some co-operative principles that do not come naturally to military personnel and which will need to be inculcated into ex-combatants in order to ensure the success of their co-operatives. Key amongst these is the principle of democratic member control. Co-operatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. On the other hand, the military, by its very nature, is highly hierarchical and authoritarian. It will require a lot of effort in terms of training to get ex-combatants to embrace this principle. However, this should not be an insurmountable challenge since we have evidence, historical and contemporary, of ex-combatants forming successful co-operatives. It is to this evidence that we now turn.

2.6. Ex-combatants and Co-operatives: Historical and Contemporary Evidence

Historically, ex-combatants and co-operatives have had a longstanding relationship. According to Weihe (2004),

> 'The defining period for cooperative solutions to the problems arising from crises was the late 19th and the early 20th century, especially in the aftermath of World War I and II where cooperatives were introduced or rebuilt in Europe and Asia as recovery programs. These cooperatives included… creation of employment and resettlement of ex-combatants through workers' cooperatives' (p.32).

Nowhere is this relationship more evident than in the Emilia Romagna region of northern Italy. But before exploring this relationship, some background information on this region will help us contextualize issues.

Emilia Romagna was one of the most devastated and poorest regions in Europe at the end of the Second World War. Today, it is Italy's most prosperous region and its capital – Bologna – among its wealthiest and best-governed cities. The region's per capita income is Italy's highest and some 40% of its GDP comes from cooperatively owned enterprises (Restakis, 2010). Its unemployment rate in 2006 was 3% compared to 8.4% for all of Italy, and an average of 9.1% for the European Union. Lastly, the region has one of the lowest rates of inequality in Europe, with a Gini coefficient of 25, or about half the European average (Corcoran & Wilson, 2010; Restakis, 2010). Why is this so?

The region's economy is an interesting network of cooperatives, small manufacturing companies, innovative social service programs, and a complex and dynamic partnership between business, labor, and government. What is even more interesting in light of the failure of the communist economic model is that the Italian Communist Party governed this region for over thirty years. Consequently, most labor, social and business organizations and leaders still identify with the Left. At the same time, there is a strong Catholic tradition among those sectors. Lastly, there is a smaller presence of similar companies, organizations, and networks that identify with the Right (Restakis, 2010).

Emilia Romagna has 90,000 manufacturing enterprises, some of which are world-class, such as Lamborghini, Ferrari, and Ducati. Small and medium enterprises predominate in this region. Other private companies and cooperatives work together in flexible networks that combine a number of smaller firms into joint projects. To complete the loop, the regional government has played a powerfully positive role in creating sector-based service centers that assist smaller companies to enter the global economy. This has resulted in what is referred to as the Emilian Model – an economic model that integrates cooperative and capitalist firms with small and medium enterprises, allowing them to compete globally (Restakis, 2010).

This region pioneered the post-fordist production techniques or what has been called elsewhere "flexible specialization". Small-scale, general-purpose machinery is integrated into craft production, and frequently switches between different product lines. It follows a lean production model geared to demand, with production taking place only to fill orders. This model, which has been extensively used by manufacturers such as United Colors of Benetton in neighboring Lombardy, revolves around the use of groups of artisan workers who supply goods as they were needed (just-in-time) rather than holding large warehouses of inventory. This approach revolutionized the production cycle. Supply chains are predominantly local and so is the market. Although a significant share of Emilia-Romagna's output goes to the export market, its industry would suffer far less dislocation from a collapse of the global economy as was confirmed by the CWCF study (Corcoran & Wilson, 2010).

Given the small scale of production and the shorter, local supply chains, a switch to production for local needs would be relatively simple. As Restakis (2010) reckons, 'at the heart of this economic powerhouse and a key reason for its success, is the world's most successful and sophisticated cooperative economy" (p.56).

Returning to the relationship between ex-combatants and co-operatives, SACMI is a worker co-operative in Emilia Romagna. According to Restakis (2010), 'the co-op was established in December 1919 by a group of nine unemployed mechanics, all veterans, who founded a mechanical workshop to deal in general construction and repair' (p.65). The term 'veteran' is equivalent to the term 'ex-combatant'. Headquartered in the city of Imola, SACMI is among the city's most respected institutions. During the German occupation of Imola, the company dismantled its equipment and hid it in the countryside, away from the prying eyes of the Germans. After 1945 and with a contract from a neighboring ceramics co-operative to repair their tile-making presses damaged by German bombardment during the war, SACMI resumed operation. While repairing the presses, the company realized that it could actually manufacture them and soon began doing exactly that. Today, SACMI is "one of Italy's most important designers and exporters of specialized ceramics presses and furnaces" (Restakis, 2010, p.66).

Another example of the ex-combatant/co-operative relationship, albeit an indirect one, is the immensely successful Mondragon group of co-operatives in the Basque region of Spain. Father Jose Maria Arizmendiarrieta, the Jesuit priest and brain behind Mondragon Co-operatives, though not an ex-combatant in the true sense of the term, worked with the Republican Army as a journalist during the Spanish Civil War (Clutterbuck, 1974; Morris, 1992; Cause for canonization of Fr Jose María Arizmendiarrieta, 2011). In 1941, following the end of that war, Don Jose Arizmendi as he became popularly known arrived in the town of Mondragon as a parish priest. In the midst of the devastation, he started a technical school, which opened its doors to its first batch of students in 1943 (Gibson-Graham, 2003). In 1956, five graduates of this technical school, at the recommendation of Don Jose Arizmendi, started Ulgor, the first of the co-operatives that form the Mondragon group of co-operatives (Corcoran & Wilson, 2010). From its modest beginnings in 1956, Mondragon has grown to become one of "the world's most well-developed co-op model" (Maheshvarananda, 2012, p.107).

The environments and circumstances in which these two cooperatives were founded are equally of great interest. The SACMI cooperative was founded in the aftermath of the devastation of the First World War. SACMI's operations were disrupted during the Second World War but resumed after the end of the war, and as we saw earlier, its first contract was to repair equipment damaged during the war (Restakis, 2010). Mondragon Cooperative was founded at the end of the Spanish Civil War in the Basque country of Spain, a region that had been devastated by General Francisco Franco's bombardment for having aligned with the republican forces (Gibson-Graham, 2003). From the foregoing, we can see that these co-operatives were founded in the aftermath of conflicts by participants in those conflicts and in post-conflict communities devastated by the conflicts.

In the more recent past, the case of Nuevo Horizonte in Guatemala, gives us a glimpse into a unique experiment. Following the Guatemala Peace Accords of December 1996, a DDR process was set in motion. In this process, a group of ex-combatants of the rebel group National Revolutionary Union of Guatemala, known by its Spanish acronym URNG, opted to reintegrate collectively in a co-operative community. According to Janzen (2011), these ex-combatants:

"Borrowing from their experience of forming Catholic-based cooperatives in rural Guatemala in the 1970s and 1980s, they envisioned and subsequently actively negotiated the terms of their reintegration to include the purchase of collectively-held land and the establishment of legally recognized cooperatives where they would have the opportunity to create a social, political and economic model of life based on the principles of equality" (p.22-23).

Beginning with an abandoned estate of 900 hectares with no permanent housing or infrastructure, 14 years of long term vision and hard labour, the cooperative's successes include: "local potable water system, an eco-tourism project that attracts international visitors, a restaurant and hostel, a fish farm, livestock, fruit and vegetable production, a chicken and egg project, a reforestation project, a community health centre, library, woodworking shop, daycare and their own independent high school (Janzen, 2011, p.23).

In Angola, following the end of the country's civil war, the Aldeia Nova project is another example of ex-combatants reintegrating collectively in a co-operative community. The project is based on the Moshav, the Israeli program of rural settlements for masses of refugees. The project aimed to accomplish three objectives. Firstly, it wanted to modernize smallholder agriculture to boost food production in order to achieve food security as well as to generate surpluses for the fresh produce market and for value-added processing. Secondly, it aimed to reintegrate demobilized ex-combatants together with their families in the countryside, away from the capital city. Lastly, it wanted to achieve reconciliation between ex-combatants who had fought on opposing sides during the 40-year civil war. Accommodating an initial 600 families, the village was a modern agricultural settlement, a rural 'co-operative with joint marketing and purchasing that works closely with a regional centre of output processing, input supplying and service providing enterprises' (Kihmi, 2009, p.2).

Croatia provides us with another example of this relationship. Undertaking a study on social entrepreneurship, Persorda, Gregov, and Vrhovski (2012) decided to focus on veteran's co-operatives. With a total of about 315 registered veterans' co-operatives, Croatia must rank among countries with the highest number of veterans' co-operatives. The membership of these

co-operatives is mainly drawn from the ex-combatants who served in the Croatian Armed Forces during the 5 August 1990 to 30 June 1996 war. Most of the 20 veterans' co-operatives that were the subject of the study were engaged in smallholder agriculture as a business with a membership ranging from six to 15 members per co-operative. The motives given for joining the co-operatives included the need for sustainable livelihoods as well as the need to socialize with peers.

For its size, Rwanda has a very high number of veterans' co-operatives, at 104 (Babijja, 2012). The Kigali Veteran Co-operative Society, voted the best co-operative in Rwanda for the year 2012 (Mugoya, 2012), is involved in car security and street parking in the capital city. The government continues to encourage demobilized ex-combatants to join co-operatives (Babijja, 2012).

The foregoing cases provide the required linkage between ex-combatants and the co-operative model. But despite this, not enough stress is being placed on the role that co-operatives can play in the reintegration of ex-combatants. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has been at the forefront of promoting the cooperative model beginning with ILO Recommendation 127, Co-operatives (Developing Countries) of 1966. In 2001, ILO released a report titled *The Role of Cooperatives and other Self-Help Organizations in Crisis Resolution and Socio-Economic Recovery* (Parnell, 2001). In 2002, the ILO released Recommendation 193 concerning the promotion of co-operatives. This was a revision and update of Recommendation 127 of 1966. Unfortunately, the role of co-operatives in crisis resolution and socio-economic recovery was not mentioned in this recommendation.

In 2009, the United Nations released its *Policy for Post-Conflict Employment Creation, Income Generation and Reintegration* in which co-operatives received prominent mention. Specifically, the policy had this to say about co-operatives: "Cooperatives can generate employment and provide viable solutions to post-conflict challenges, by offering alternative protection and empowerment to conflict-affected groups" (UN, 2009, p.37). In its Guidelines on Socio-Economic Reintegration of Ex-Combatants (ILO, 2010) the ILO, while encouraging ex-combatants to form co-operatives, does not make any reference to historical precedence of ex-

combatants forming co-operatives. As we saw earlier, SACMI (Italy) and to a lesser extent Mondragon (Spain), could be considered pioneers in the use of the co-operative model in the reintegration of ex-combatants. We have also seen examples of the ex-combatant/co-operative relationship in Guatemala, Angola, and Rwanda.

The United Nations (2006), in the 772 pages of the Integrated DDR Standards, does not mention the role of co-operatives in the reintegration of ex-combatants. Neither does it mention co-operatives in the 285 pages of the Operational Guide on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, published in 2010, after the release in 2009 of the *UN policy for Post-Conflict Employment Creation, Income Generation and Reintegration*. This anomaly needs to be addressed urgently. It is hoped that this study will contribute to correcting this situation.

How can co-operatives facilitate the successful reintegration of ex-combatants? Before we attempt to answer this question, we first have to identify the challenges that ex-military personnel face at an individual level in their transition into civilian life. This will be accomplished through the collection of empirical data from the field.

Figure 1 : Conceptual framework
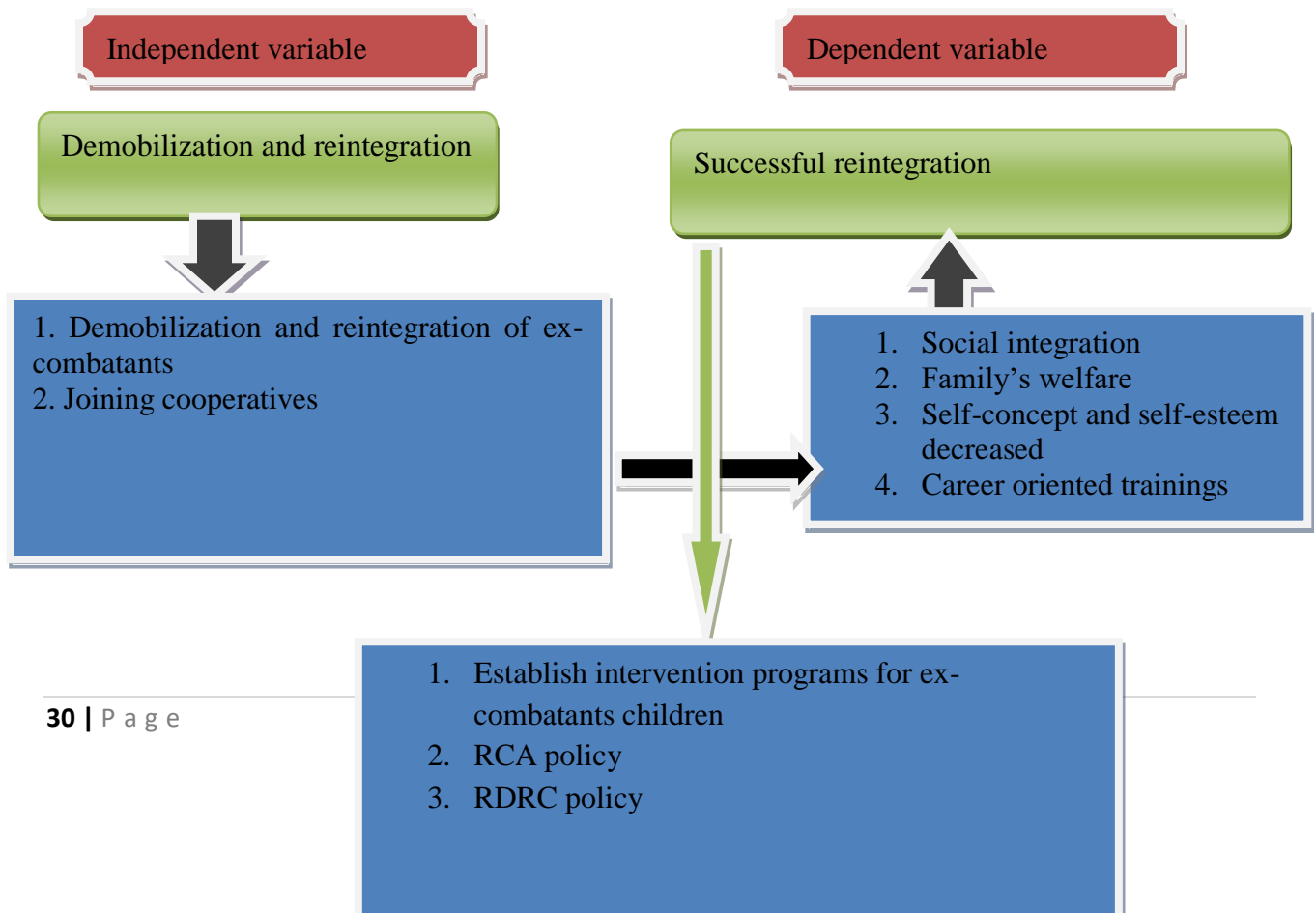
2.7. Conclusion

This chapter called literature review is was designed to link current research to the previous researches done by other authors in the domain of demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants and the roles played by cooperatives. In fact, previous researchers tried to study the role of cooperatives in promoting community development, but no one had tried before to see how cooperatives could play a role in the reintegration of ex-combatants. This chapter just summarized the views of different researchers on the challenges met by ex-combatants and different livelihoods strategies adopted by ex-combatants as they struggle to settle in the new life.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Introduction

As an introduction to this chapter, the researcher to reiterate the goal of this study, its purpose and significance. We have undertaken this study to find out from ex-combatants in Musanze District, Republic of Rwanda, the challenges they face at an individual level in the transition back into civilian life after service in the military. By focusing on the lived experiences of individual ex-military personnel in peacetime contexts, we will start to comprehend how much more difficult these challenges are in post-conflict contexts. This study is relevant because there is growing realization that more needs to be done to assist veterans to make a successful transition to civilian life, to improve on the success rates of the reintegration phase of DDR programs in post-conflict contexts, as well as the increased call on ex-combatants to form co-operatives as reintegration strategies.

3.2. The description of the study area

The study area is only relevant to the first research question. As pointed out earlier, this study aimed to interview ex-combatants in a post-conflict environment, but due to security considerations, this is not possible. Instead, I opt to interview ex-combatants in Musanze District, Northern province in the Republic of Rwanda.

3.3 Research design

This research has taken qualitative and quantitative approaches. Additionally, the study is to take place within a limited timeframe that will not lend itself to more rigorous strategies, for example, grounded theory, ethnography, or case study (Bhattacherjee, 2012). While the individual is the

unit of analysis, three focus group discussions were undertaken, as well as key informant interviews and data collection using questionnaires was employed.

The target population for the study was ex-combatants (those who have served in the Rwanda Defense Forces (RDF) and Ex-armed group members living in Musanze district. Because there is no central repository of data on ex-military combatants to act as a sampling frame, and the fact that the respondents did not inhabit the same geographic space, the snowball sampling method was employed in the identification of respondents (Orodho, 2009; Bhattacherjee, 2012).

The questionnaire interviews have been conducted for 50 ex-combatants in Musanze District, Rwanda, in order to gain from them an understanding of the challenges that they are facing since their separation from the military and what they are doing in order to cope. In addition, The researcher conducted one focus group discussion with an all ex-combatants membership self-help group.

Interviews with key informants within the mediating institutions for ex-combatants as well as within the co-operative movement, were undertaken to get an exceptional and in depth perspective of pertinent issues. Within the mediating institutions for ex-combatants in Rwanda, the Reserve force staff and the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) are targeted. Within the co-operative movement in Rwanda, the Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA) and the Ministry of trade and industry (MINICOM) (responsible for co-operatives) are targeted. My intention is to gain a deeper understanding of the co-operative movement in Rwanda as well as the efforts being made to promote co-operatives.

3.4 Sample and sampling methods

This research used a Snowball sampling research method, given the complexity of the targeted group for the research. In fact, after demobilization, the ex-combatants are still mobile for the search of livelihoods, after years out of the community. In this method, the researcher managed to find five ex-combatants who started an exercise to search for others. Even though the total population (ex-combatants in Musanze district) is around 100 people, this exercise reached 50 ex-combatants dispatched in different cooperatives in Musanze district. According to Everitt, B.

S. & Skrondal, A. (2010), snowball sampling is called so because (in theory) "once you have the ball rolling, it picks up more "snow" along the way and becomes larger and larger". Levine, D. (2014) adds that:

> "Snowball sampling is a <u>non-probability sampling method.</u> It does not have the <u>probability</u> involved, with say, <u>simple random sampling</u> (where the odds are the same for any particular participant being chosen). Rather, the researchers used their own judgment to choose participants".

To avoid breaking ethical considerations, the study participants were not asked to identify other potential respondents, but to request others to come forward. Levine, D. (2014) makes it clear that "Snowball sampling can be a tricky ethical path to navigate"

Table 1: List of respondents

Individual Questionnaire Interviews		Focus group		Key informants	
34		16 in two groups		2	
Gender of the respondents					
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
32	2	15	1	2	0

Source: Fieldwork data, July 2020

The two key informants were the Chief operations officer for the Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission and the Chef inspector Northern Province (RCA)

Table 2 : Types of cooperatives attended by the respondents

Multiplication of seeds			Bricks making			Lending scheme			Handcrafts		
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
29	**1**	**30**	**5**	**1**	**6**	**6**	**1**	**7**	**7**	**0**	**7**

Source: Fieldwork data, July 2020

3.5. Data Collection

The study depended on primary and secondary data; Secondary data was collected from textbooks, peer-reviewed journals, periodicals, reports, published and unpublished theses, and Internet sources. The researcher examined secondary sources describing the reintegration phase in what are known as Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programmes that have become an increasing part of the transition from war to peace. The researcher further examined secondary sources on the use of co-operatives in the reintegration of ex-combatants.

Primary data was collected using questionnaires and interview schedules. Because all the respondents are literate, the questionnaire was in English and contain both closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaire was pilot-tested on 10 respondents and then fine-tuned for clarity and comprehensiveness. For key informants, a set of questions were sent to them in advance of the scheduled interview meetings.

The researcher interviewed 50 ex-combatants in Musanze District, Rwanda in order to gain from them an understanding of the challenges that they are facing since their separation from the military and what they are doing in order to cope. In addition, one focus group discussion was conducted with an all ex-combatants membership self-help group.

Interviews with key informants within the mediating institutions for ex-combatants as well as within the co-operative movement, were undertaken to get an exceptional and in depth perspective of pertinent issues. Within the mediating institutions for ex-combatants in Rwanda, the Reserve force staff and the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) were targeted. Within the co-operative movement in Rwanda, the Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA) and the Ministry of trade and industry (MINICOM) (responsible for co-operatives) were targeted. The intention of the researcher was to gain a deeper understanding of the co-operative movement in Rwanda as well as the efforts being made to promote co-operatives.

3.6. Data Analysis

Once the data was collected, it was examined using the variable-oriented analysis (Babbie, 2001) to see if there was any inter-relations that created patterns or themes that could help in formulating generalized challenges facing this group of ex-military personnel. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed in the data analysis. This is because the research objectives require in depth information for drawing analysis and conclusions. The questionnaires were checked for completeness, cleaned and coded to represent specific responses to specific questions. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as numbers and percentages. For qualitative data ,the researcher created notes of the profound points from interview responses. The researcher edited and cleaned the field notes and then categorize these into themes in line with study objectives and the data was then analyzed. The results were presented in narrative text form.

3.7 Limitations

The first limitation of this study is the size and representativeness of the sample. Given that the researcher used purposive snowball sampling, the sample size of 50 respondents in one district out of the 30 districts in Rwanda is divided cannot be said to be representative of the population being studied. Secondly, these results reflect the experience of these individuals in their efforts to reintegrate back into civilian life in Musanze District. Future survey results may provide a totally different picture of the military-to-civilian transition with a more diverse sample. Finally, there is

no way of knowing whether referring respondents alerted their colleagues of the interview they had set up for them with the researcher and in the process shared with them how they had responded to some of the questions in the questionnaire. However it is unlikely that this would have skewed the results as each respondent had a personal experience that he needed to share with the researcher and there were no incentives for answering the questions in any particular way.

Due to these limitations, it is important to recognize that the current study offers no conclusions regarding predictive factors related to the transition of ex-combatants back to civilian life. It is my hope that the results of this study will lay a foundation for future research in this important area.

3.8 Ethical consideration

To conduct research requires not only expertise and diligence, but also honesty and integrity, this is done to recognize rights and the human subjects to render the study ethical, the rights to self-determination, secrecy, confidentiality and informed consent was observed. Subject permission was obtained before they complete the questionnaires. Burns and Groves (1993) defined informed permission as the prospective subject's agreement to participate voluntarily in a study in which is conducted after an assimilation of necessary information about the study. Researcher need to exercise care that the rights of individuals and institutions are protected (Polit&Hungler 1999).

3.9 Conclusion

This third chapter (research methodology) indicated the population of the study, the sample selection method, the way used to correct data, the data analysis techniques and data presentation. Under this chapter, the way of preserving research validity and reliability were outlined alongside with the ways used to avoid plagiarism allegation.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher revisits the research questions and presents the results of the study. This has been divided into three major sections. The first section provides the results from the questionnaires administered to the respondents on the challenges facing ex-combatants in their efforts to reintegrate back into civilian life in Musanze District, Rwanda. The second section reports on the focus group discussion held with ex-combatants' members of four different ex-combatants' cooperatives. The last section reports on the outcomes of interviews carried out with key informants in the two mediating institutions as well as with a select number of co-operative-related institutions in the Republic of Rwanda.

This study set out to answer the following research questions:

- How and to what extent do cooperatives contribute to reintegration of ex-combatants?

- What are the challenges affecting ex-combatants in their reintegration efforts?

- What relationship that exists between military experience and values and co-operative principles and values?

The results presented here are in relation to the first research question. Results for the second and third research questions were presented in the review of literature and will be revisited in the discussions in Chapter 5.

Table 3 : The gender of the respondents

Respondent's gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	47	94
Female	3	6
Total	**50**	**100.0**

Source: Fieldwork data, July 2020

As one can see from the above table, there are some careers where women are still few, the military included. Even though we do not have statistics about how many women are involved in the army in Rwanda, but the figures on ex-combatants shows that women are still few in the army due to different factors that this study has not researched on,

4.2. Questionnaire Results

Table 4 : The age of the respondents

Respondent's age	Frequency	%	Length of service in the military		
			Years	Number	%
40-50	10	20	1-5yrs	10	20
51-60	22	44	6-10 yrs	5	10
Above 60	18	36	11-20yrs	5	10
Total	**50**	**100.0**	21-30yrs	30	60

Source: Fieldwork data, July 2020

The researcher interviewed 50 ex-combatants in Musanze district using a questionnaire. Part I of the questionnaire collected demographic data. The ages of the respondents ranged from 40 years for the youngest and 62 years for the oldest. Ten of the respondents were in their 40s, 22 in their 50s while 18 were in their 60s. Three of the respondents were commissioned senior officers (one Lieutenant Colonel and two Majors), five officers from second lieutenant to Captain, while 42 were enlisted person ranging in rank from Private (the lowest) to Warrant Officer Class I (the highest). All groups for ex-combatants were represented that is Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA), Rwanda Defence Force(RDF) and Armed group members (AGs).

Part II of the questionnaire was on the transition experience

	Very easy	**Easy**	**Difficult**	**Very difficult**	**%**
15 respondents					30
6 respondents					12
10 respondents					20
19 respondents					38

Source: Fieldwork data, July 2020

Part II of the questionnaire was on the transition experience. The respondents were first asked to characterize their transition experience in terms of the level of ease, selecting from four choices: very easy, easy, difficult, or very difficult. Of the 50 respondents, 15 characterized their transition experience as very easy, 6 as easy, 10 as difficult and 19 as very difficult. From these responses, we find that 42% of the respondents found it very easy or easy to make the transition into civilian life while 58% found it difficult or very difficult. Next, the respondents were asked whether they believed they had made a successful transition. For the purposes of this study, a successful transition meant that the respondent was enjoying a standard of life similar to or better than what he had enjoyed while in active service.

Factors contributing to successful transition

	Sustainable income through cooperatives	Good health	Social capital (social networks)	Family support	Planning ahead	**%**
21 respondents						42

6 respondents		🟥				12
10 respondents			🟩			20
7 respondents				🟧		14
6 respondents					🟪	12

Source: Fieldwork data, July 2020

As one can observe from the above table, most of the ex-combatants (42%) have adopted joining cooperatives as a livelihood strategy. Likewise, those who argue to survive from social assets or social networks (friends and relatives) 20%, survive from running small business from the money borrowed from these friends and family relatives. However, they also survive from a community-lending scheme called *"Ibimina "* which are also sort of informal cooperatives.

Training of the ex-combatants

The next question was whether the respondents had attended a pre-separation seminar prior to their release from the military, 35 respondents (out of 50) said they had attended such a seminar while 15 said they had not. When asked whether they had a clear idea on what they were going to do in civilian life, 13 responded in the affirmative while a majority (37) said they did not have a clear idea. Of 35 respondents who had undergone a pre-separation seminar, sixteen also stated that they had a clear idea of what they were going to do in civilian life. On the other hand, of the 15 that did not attend a pre-separation seminar, eight reported having had a clear picture of what they were going to do in civilian life (Individual Interviews, July 2020)

Part III of the questionnaire was on the current means of sustenance.

The respondents were asked to select one or more sources of their current sustenance from a selection of employment, business, farming, and pension. Six of the respondents were in full-time employment, with one of them also being a pensioner. 15 were pensioners with pensions ranging from the equivalent of US Dollars 25 to 200 per month, while 29 were engaged in small businesses. All 50 respondents reported being engaged in small-scale farming to supplement

their income. Of the 29 who responded as being engaged in small businesses, 19 reported that the businesses were not related to the jobs they were doing in the military (Individual Interviews, July 2020)

Part IV of the questionnaire was on the challenges of reintegration.

Asked to indicate one or more of the eight possible challenges identified by the Black and Papile (2010) study that they may have faced or were facing in their transition efforts, an overwhelming majority cited identity (40), functioning in a non-structured environment (24), and the perceived lack of support from the military once they had separated (10). Next were health and friendship difficulties, cited by 14 respondents each. Difficulty with family relationships and authority were next in line with eight respondents citing each of them. Last on the list was substance abuse, cited by only three respondents. Part V of the questionnaire was on membership of mediating institutions. All 50 respondents in this study are members of reserve force while only 15 are not beneficiaries of Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) (Individual interviews, July 2020)

The link of ex-combatants and cooperatives

The last three questions on the questionnaire were on co-operatives. The first of these was whether the respondents had ever been members of a co-operative. Of the 50 respondents, 5 said that they had been members of a co-operative while 45 had not. When asked whether they were currently members of a co-operative, all the 50 respondents replied that they are currently members of a co-operative. The 5 respondents who had been members of a co-operative were asked why they left their former co-operative, they stated that when separating from the military, they were advised to go back in their communities of origin and focus more on social integration in a community where some had left more than 3 years, this forced them to not rush to cooperatives and left them. The last question was whether the respondents would be willing to join a co-operative if it could help in meeting the challenges they were facing in their reintegration. All the 50 respondents answered that they would join such a cooperative both as a

livelihood strategy and a strategy for social integration after some years out of the community (Individual Interviews, July 2020).

4.3. Focus Group Discussions Results

At the end of the individual interviews, the researcher had planned to hold focus group discussions with the ex-combatants members of four ex-combatants cooperatives in three different trades namely; security, farming and brickmaking. However, it turned out that only two were fully registered and operational. The other two were still informal as they were yet to complete the registration process. The interview schedule that guided the discussions had four broad questions. These were: the motivation for forming or joining the group, the objectives of the group, the current activities in which the group is engaged and lastly the future direction of the group (Interviews with Focus Groups, July 2020).

All ex-combatants' cooperatives are a non-political socio-economic group that, according to their constitutions, were formed to promote the unity, improve the socio-economic status of their members, create income-generating projects, encourage togetherness, solve members' disputes and promote respect among the community. Membership is voluntary and open to ex-combatants of good conduct. On joining the cooperative, a new member pays a one-time membership fee and a monthly subscription. The cooperative holds monthly meetings to discuss, plan for and execute their activities as well as one annual social gathering at Christmas. The researcher was privileged to attend the monthly meetings held on June 24th, 2020 where the researcher carried out focus group discussions with 26 members of the four mentioned cooperatives.

The members in the focus group were asked to elaborate on the motivation of forming or joining the self-help group. There were varied responses and some of the profound ones are quoted below:

> "The Reintegration grant one receives on separation from the military is not adequate to sustain one and the family"(Focus Group Interview, July 2020)

> "When we are recruited into the military, we are brought from different corners of the country and then trained and transformed into a family. When we leave the military, each

goes his own way. We find it difficult to relate with civilians in our communities and that is why those of us who are near each other form a cooperative within which to socialize." (Focus Group Interview, June 2020)

"There is so much poverty in the village that as soon as you retire, you start getting pseudo-friends who are only interested in making you spend your terminal benefits on alcohol and other vices. As soon your benefits are finished, they vanish, satisfied that they have reduced you to their level. The only way to avoid such is by coming together as retired ex-combatants to help each other with ideas that can build us" (Focus Group Interview, June 2020)

The cooperatives are currently involved in various activities of both an economic and social nature, meaning, members can make money, and they meet together and discuss other issues that their community is facing, and try to draw together the way for solution. In view of the above, it is clear that cooperatives contribute to reintegration of ex-combatants at a very large extent. But the discussion also shows the challenges that made some ex-combatants to not rush into cooperatives, then highlighting the relationship that exists between military characteristics and values and co-operative principles and values.

4.4. Key Informant Interviews Results

Key informant interviews were carried with two mediating institutions that are meant to support ex-combatants in their reintegration efforts - the Reserve force and the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission(RDRC). Additionally, in order to gain a deep understanding of the co-operative movement in Rwanda, key informant interview was also undertaken with Rwanda Cooperative Agency(RCA).

4.4.1. Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) &Reserve Force
The researcher requested the management of Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC) for data collection and interviews, which was granted on 24th June 2020. From the permission, the researcher conducted interview with the Chief Operations Officer who

is the head of operations at RDRC. In the first question, the key informant was asked to define the organization and state its objectives; in response she stated that; "The overarching Goal of the Demobilization and Reintegration Commission/Program (RDRC/P) is to contribute to consolidation of peace in the great lakes region, especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and foster national Unity within Rwanda.''(Interview with a key informant, June 200)

One of the key guiding principles of the RDRP is to deliver support towards social and economic reintegration of the demobilised ex-combatants that reflects the provisions of wider recovery and development frameworks, particularly the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy, as a way of ensuring continuity and sustainability of the reintegration process.

The RDRC/P encourages ex-combatants to voluntarily form or join cooperatives with other community members, as one of means to accelerate unity and reconciliation, as well as social and economic reintegration. The RDRP supports such cooperatives through capacity building, learning tours, advocacy, and organise project competition for ex-combatants' cooperatives whereby the winners receive awards. The project competitions help to generate updates and situation analysis of the cooperatives of ex-combatants. The competitions also allow the RDRC to analyse the trends of memberships and activities of the cooperatives, vis-a-vis the guiding principles regarding fostering unity and reconciliation, and mainstreaming of support to ex-combatants (Interview with a key informant, June 200)

RDRC works in close collaborations with Reserve force for following up ex-combatants cooperatives, which encourages all ex-combatants to form or join voluntarily cooperatives. Both RDRC and Reserve force are in charge of supporting the successful reintegration of ex-combatants regardless of their background or military affiliation (Interview with a key informant, June 200)

4.4.3. The Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA)

To gain a deeper understanding of the current state of the co-operative movement in Rwanda, key informant from Rwanda Cooperatives Agency (RCA) was interviewed. The interview with

the chief Cooperative Inspector for Northern Province took place on 29th June 2020. In my interview, the researcher wanted to understand the government's policy on co-operatives, especially as it concerned military and ex-combatants. The interview was guided by four questions (Interview with a key informant, June 200)

The question of the role of the government in the co-operative movement. In his response, the key informant stated that the main role is to provide the legal framework within which the co-operatives operate. Through the Rwanda cooperative policy, the Rwanda Cooperative Agency is charged with the responsibility of registration and deregistration of co-operatives, inquiring into any issues raised by co-operative societies or individual members of co-operative societies, inspection of co-operatives to ensure compliance with the provisions of the law, and providing an enabling environment for the growth of the co-operative movement (Interview with a key informant, June 200)

Currently in Rwanda there are 8,406 registered cooperatives operating in 11 socio-economic sectors: Agriculture, Livestock, Trading, Service, Transport, Handicraft, Agro-processing, Mining, Fishing, Housing, and Finance (SACCOs). Those are grouped into 141 cooperative Unions 2, and 15 cooperative Federations which together form the National Cooperatives Confederation of Rwanda (NCCR) as a national umbrella of the cooperative movement. However, since 2006 when the first cooperative policy was drafted, cooperatives have increased tremendously in number from 919 (2005) to 8,406 as of September 2018 with about 3.5m members. Share Capital has increased from 7.1bn FRW to 42.1bn FRW. An assessment conducted on over 500 cooperatives has indicated that they have accumulated investment worth 240 Billion FRW (Interview with a key informant, June 200).

CHAPTER FIVE

GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter the researcher discusses the results of the study of ex-combatants in Musanze District, Republic of Rwanda to identify the challenges they face in their transition to civilian life. The study collected descriptive information regarding their: transition experience, current means of sustenance, challenges of reintegration, and membership of mediating institutions. The first section discusses the results of the study in relation to the issue under investigation and the research questions. The second section discusses the limitations of the study's design and findings. In the third section the researcher makes a case for the co-operative as a viable reintegration option. The fourth section makes recommendations for future research. Lastly, the researcher draws conclusions regarding the results of the study.

5.2. Discussion

The results from this study offer some very interesting information on the challenges this select group confronts after separating from the military. Although the results show that a majority of the ex-combatants interviewed feel they have made a successful transition, a significant portion of them do not believe they did. The results indicate that transition from military to civilian life is fraught with many challenges. The challenges identified were related to identity, functioning in a non-structured environment, support from the military after separation, health, friendship difficulties, difficulties with family and authority, and alcohol.

Starting with the concept of a successful versus an unsuccessful transition, it is interesting to note that 40% of those interviewed indicated they did not feel they had successfully transitioned into civilian life. The majority of respondents rated their transition as at least "difficult" (66%). While it is encouraging that the majority of respondents felt they had made a successful transition, a significant portion felt that they had not and warrant further consideration. Taking into account

that the big number of respondents were from a professional national military, these difficulties in transition are likely to be compounded when dealing with ex-combatants in a post-conflict environment. The main factors contributing to a successful transition were reported to be adequate and sustainable source of income, good health, ex-military friendships, stable family relationships, and planning ahead for separation. Any reintegration programme for ex-combatants should focus on these five factors.

The first contributing factor – adequate and sustainable income – is directly linked to sustenance. The results of the study indicated the respondents were depended on at least two means of sustenance. This means that whatever the primary source of income, it cannot sustain him and the family. Taking into account the fact that some of these respondents are in their late 60s, it gives credence to the slogan "I am retired, not tired" that can be found on some caps and T-shirts of military retirees. Supplementing their income was also given as one of the reasons necessitating the formation of self-help groups. The co-operative model can provide adequate and sustainable income as we have seen in the review of literature on the relationship between ex-combatants and co-operatives. But this can be made even more effective by teaching ex-combatants co-operative principles and values and making a connection between these and military characteristics and values as well giving historical and contemporary examples of successful co-operatives associated with ex-combatants.

The second success factor is friendship with ex-combatants comrades. This is a very interesting finding and one that is best understood within the context of military training and military culture. Responsibility and loyalty to comrades are crucial components of military life. During military training, soldiers are conditioned to believe and behave as though they are responsible for the lives of their colleagues, "to watch each other's back" (Siebold, 2007, p.288). Given this strong identification with the group, it is not surprising that ex-combatants develop strong connections with one another, connections quite unlike those found in civilian life. It is therefore natural for ex-combatants to seek each other out once out of the military. Unfortunately, in post-conflict contexts, this critical reality is often overlooked as those responsible for reintegration programmes try their best to limit the post-demobilization contact between ex-combatants (Janzen, 2011). This could be attributed to the fact that while the military plays a central role in

disarmament and a support role in demobilization, reintegration is purely a civilian affair (UN, 2010, UN, 2006). It therefore becomes critical that agencies involved in reintegration programmes incorporate ex-combatants on their staff in order to improve on the success rates of these programmes. The co-operative model could provide a great opportunity for interactions between ex-combatants. However, since integration takes place in communities, ex-combatants should not isolate themselves in these co-operatives but should incorporate local citizens, especially the youth who also face challenges of unemployment as we saw in background information on Musanze District and its similarity with post-conflict countries.

The third success factor is stable family relationships. This should be understandable, as instability in the family does not provide a conducive environment for reintegration. It is therefore important that family members are involved in the transition process. To do this effectively, family members, especially the spouses, need to be provided with information on the challenges of transition from military to civilian life and on how they can assist their ex-combatant in this transition. This is clearly reflected in the operations of two of the four cooperatives for ex-combatants interviewed for this study where we have spouses actively involved in the activities of the cooperatives. Stable family relationships are even more critical in post-conflict contexts where the social fabric is usually one of the casualties of the just ended conflict (Weihe, 2004).

The last success factor given is planning ahead. Planning is a central practice in military operations. It is therefore very interesting that some respondents decided to apply this to their future transition to civilian life. According to Walker (2012), various studies that have been carried out on transition from military to civilian life confirm that anticipating and therefore planning for exit from the military greatly improves the chances of successful reintegration. As we will see in the three examples provided in the next paragraph, militaries around the world have started to realize the importance of preparing their personnel for eventual transition to civilian life.

Rwanda introduced pre-demobilization orientation program (PDOP) for personnel scheduled for demobilization from the Rwanda Defence Forces and members of armed groups. During the

interviews, the eighteen respondents who went through these PDOPs found them useful, however one of them lamented that the PDOP had come too late after he had spent most of his resources in laissez-faire living during his military service.

The British Ministry of Defence (MoD) has a three-tier resettlement programme for service personnel that can start up to two years before the individual is scheduled to leave the British Armed Forces (Walker, 2012; Hyslop, 2011). Tier one is a unit level assistance where the Service member who is slated for separation makes initial contact with a designated officer who will provide him or her information on what support to expect from the system. At Tier two, support is provided by individual Services on a regional basis through a resettlement adviser who gives advice and guidance on the resettlement package that will best suit the Service leaver. Tier three is a tri-Service support that is provided under the Career Transition Partnership (CTP). This is a partnership between the MoD and a civilian contactor. CTP provides a range of resettlement services on behalf of the MoD to help Service leavers make the transition back to civilian life (Hyslop, 2011).

The United States Army has initiated the "Soldier for Life" program aimed at successful reintegration of veterans into their communities (Ferdinando, 2013). The Soldier for Life program, which supports both active service soldiers and veterans and their families, has four objectives. The first objective is mindset and is meant to inculcate a "Soldier for Life" mindset across the US Army family. The second objective is access and is meant to improve access to employment, education and healthcare. The third objective is relationships and is meant to encourage community relationships that embrace, support, and enable soldiers, veterans, and their families. The fourth objective is trust and is meant to enable the US Army, government and community efforts to sustain the all-volunteer Army.

It is interesting to note that all programs being implemented by the three countries cited in the foregoing paragraphs have the sole aim of enabling veterans make a successful transition to civilian life. The benefits due to the veterans are also quite similar, addressing the issues of employment, education and training, healthcare, including mental health, and relationships in the communities.

While advance planning may not be an option in armed groups that are participating in DDR programmes, it is important that during the demobilization phase, the ex-combatant is given as much information and assistance as possible before entering the reintegration phase which takes place in the community. This information and assistance should be aimed helping the ex-combatant meet the challenges of reintegration.

Results of the study identified eight challenges to successful reintegration. These were related to identity, functioning in a non-structured environment, support from the military after separation, health, friendship difficulties, difficulty with family relationships, difficulty with authority, and substance abuse.

As we saw in the review of literature, on joining the military, through training and induction, an individual acquires a new identity. This identity is likely to stay with the individual more or less for the rest of his or her life (Woodward & Jenkings, 2011; Kirke, 2009; Zirker, Danopoulos, & Simpson, 2008; Nesbitt & Reingold, 2008; Jackson, Thoemmes, Jonkmann, Lüdtke, & Trautwein, 2012; Black & Papile, 2010). From this study, we have seen that indeed a majority of respondents faced this challenge. It is important that reintegration programmes take this fact into account both during separation in peacetime and post-conflict contexts.

It is not surprising that a majority of respondents reported struggling with functioning in a non-structured environment. Structure and the military are synonymous. From the day one joins the military, clear, absolute, and rigid rules dominate one's daily experience (Black & Papile, 2010). From a service number that is unique to ensure that no two individuals can be confused even if they share names, a military person is part of a very rigid structure. The longer one serves in the military, the more likely that this structure will become deeply engrained. This was evident during the focus group discussions. Every day's routine is known at the morning "muster" parade while the day's activities are recapped at the evening "team up" parade. Even the response to the "unexpected" would have been rehearsed over and over such that it becomes almost automatic. An ex-combatant leaving this kind of regimented and structured life into civilian life is likely to have a very hard time readjusting.

The issue of friendship difficulties and difficulties with family are relationship challenges which have been addressed in the preceding discussion of success factors. On difficulties with authority and alcohol abuse could be related. Alcohol is part and parcel of the military culture (Ames, 2004). If the challenges of transition become overwhelming for ex-combatants, there is a tendency to turn to alcohol as a coping mechanism (Ames, 2004). On the other hand, it has been pointed out that "soldiers are taught how to react quickly and often violently to danger" (Bradley, 2007 cited in Black and Papile, 2010, p.384). Combining these two factors, ex-combatants may react violently to perceived danger when under the influence of alcohol and end up on the wrong side of the law. According to Black and Papile (2010), 'after the completion of military service, the use of alcohol may continue as a way to cope with the difficulties of the transition'. The co-operative model, by providing decent work and continuous contact with comrades could significantly reduce the frustrations that could lead an ex-combatant into excessive consumption of alcohol that could in turn lead to conflict with the law.

While these findings provide an interesting insight into the challenges that individual ex-combatants face in their efforts to reintegrate into civilian life, they have a number of limitations and to these, we now turn.

5.3 From Corps to Co-ops: Co-operatives as a Strategy of Reintegration

This study set out to answer the broader question of whether calls to ex-combatants to form co-operatives as a reintegration strategy are justified. In order to answer this question, I set out to do three things. Firstly, I had to find out the challenges that ex-combatants face at an individual level in their efforts to reintegrate into society. This I did in order to help us appreciate the enormity of these challenges to ex-combatants in a post-conflict context. Secondly, I needed to compare and to contrast military characteristics and values with co-operative principles and values to determine areas of convergence as well as areas of divergence. Lastly, I needed to find both historical and contemporary evidence of ex-combatants forming co-operatives and the circumstances under which they formed those co-operatives. All these three things have been accomplished. This then leads us to last task of this study, which is how the co-operative model could be incorporated in reintegration programmes for ex-combatants.

As we saw in the review of literature, ex-combatants and co-operatives have had a long-standing relationship. According to Weihe (2004), the defining period for this relationship was the late 19th and the early 20th century and more so in the aftermath of the First and Second World Wars. The co-operative model was used in the creation of employment and resettlement of ex-combatants through workers' cooperatives as well as agricultural cooperatives. We have also seen the co-operative model being used in more recent times in the reintegration of combatants in Africa, Latin America, and Central Europe. This long-standing relationship, both historical and contemporary, makes a very strong case for the co-operative model to be incorporated in reintegration strategies for ex-combatants. But how can this be best accomplished?

Co-operatives are a form of doing business, albeit differing from normal business enterprises in that their end-goal is not profit per se but to meet an autonomously identified, shared need of the members. This need is not synonymous with common identity or common experience (ILO, 2009). According to ILO (2009), being a group of ex-combatants does not, of itself, facilitate the formation of a co-operative, rather the group should independently identify a shared need and agree to collectively work towards meeting this need using the co-operative model. As we have seen from the results of the fieldwork discussed earlier, ex-combatants in Musanze, Rwanda independently identified several shared needs and decided to organize themselves into cooperatives in order to work towards meeting those needs.

The current approach in DDR programming includes an exercise referred to as socio-economic mapping. Making a case for this exercise, the United Nations (2006) states that:

> "Armed conflicts invariably damage or destroy productive assets and weaken the labour market. Conflict can also cause considerable damage to physical, social and economic infrastructure, which may further reduce productive employment and income-generating activities.
>
> In this degraded environment, it is essential that UN DDR programmes avoid creating unrealistic expectations among beneficiaries. Expectations can best be managed if programme managers have a clear understanding of the actual economic opportunities available to those being reintegrated. DDR programme planners should prioritize the

development of a countrywide systematic mapping to identify existing and potential employment opportunities, whether in existing business enterprises, in self-employment and/or through creating microenterprises" (p.4.30 10).

Some of these microenterprises could be in the form of co-operatives. This mapping exercise takes place in the pre-programme assessment stage by UN DDR staff and does not involve ex-combatants themselves. Once the opportunities have been identified, they are then presented to the ex-combatants as a menu of options for reintegration during the demobilization stage. As we saw earlier, the first co-operative principle is voluntary and open membership. The co-operative model cannot therefore be imposed on ex-combatants. So, how can the ex-combatants be motivated to exploit the identified opportunities by employing the co-operative model? *From Corps to Co-ops* is a proposed framework that could be employed in motivating ex-combatants to embrace the co-operative model.

This framework is composed of two stages – preliminary and implementation. The preliminary stage involves sensitization of ex-combatants on the benefits of the co-operative model. During this sensitization, co-operatives principles and values will be shared and discussed with the participants. In the discussions a comparison will be made between military characteristics and values and co-operative principles and values, highlighting areas of convergence as well as areas of divergence and what has to be done to address this divergence. Critical to this preliminary stage will be examples of how ex-combatants, past and contemporary, have used co-operatives in their reintegration efforts and how the success of these co-operatives has depended on continuous involvement and interaction with other members of the community. Identifying those participants who would like to embrace the co-operative model in their reintegration will conclude this sensitization stage. Those opting for this option will be asked to form groups according to their geographic areas of reintegration. Once these groups have been formed, the members will enter the second stage, implementation.

The implementation stage will target both ex-combatants in post-conflict settings, ex-combatants not qualifying for veteran benefits in peacetime contexts as well as other members of their community of reintegration, especially the youth. This stage has two broad goals. The first is to help participants start successful co-operative businesses from the opportunities identified during

socio-economic mapping exercise carried out by the UN DDR team. The second is to help participants develop the skills and commitment needed to run those businesses democratically. The basic *From Corps to Co-ops* philosophy is that in the development of co-operatives, these two goals are like the wings of an aeroplane – both are needed in order for the plane to fly. Consequently, the participants need to be owners of their businesses and the business development process from inception; and they need to learn and continuously nourish personal and organizational values of equality, tolerance, openness and commitment to growth.

Cascading from the two broad goals of developing successful businesses and developing successful "co-operators," are five specific objectives of the program. These are to help participants: (a) learn how to conduct a business feasibility study; (b) identify a viable business; (c) learn how the co-operative model can be used to run such a business; (d) learn how to transfer their military skills to the co-operative model in order to facilitate group cooperation, positive communication and effective decision-making; (e) reinforce the shared vision, values and trust in each other. The details of the *From Corps to Co-ops* framework are outside the scope of this thesis.

However, a very important potential of the *From Corps to Co-ops* framework is that if it were to be adopted by ex-combatants across the continent, it could take the ex-combatant/co-operative relationship to a higher level – to resist and challenge the hegemony of neo-liberal capitalism and the problems it has created on the continent as a result of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) that required many African governments to roll back their spending on basic social services.

Following the demise of Communism and current global economic crisis, which many attribute to the failures of neo-liberal free market Capitalism, many thinkers and authorities are attempting to find an alternative to these two economic systems (Restakis, 2010). Co-operativism is a top contender. Co-operativism as formulated by Robert Owen and its realization in the opening of the Rochdale shop on 21 December 1844, historically falls between Adam Smith's *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) and Marx's and Engels' *Communist Manifesto* (1848). The economic systems born out of these foundational books - Capitalism and Communism - relied on military power to propagate and sustain themselves (Levitt, 2011; Greenfeld, 2001; Zycher& Daley, 1988). On the other hand, as Restakis points out, Co-

operativism avoided militant confrontation and this may have contributed to its being eclipsed by the two. According to Restakis, '…avoidance of confrontation with established power, the refusal to acknowledge the inevitable need to use force in the struggle for social change… were signal weaknesses of the movement' (p.46). *From Corps to Co-ops* hopes to address these weaknesses by bringing a military aspect to co-operativism, albeit a benign form, as opposed to the lethal form employed by both Capitalism and Communism. How would this work?

Most ex-combatants have fought in conflicts that could in part be attributed to horizontal inequalities. These are inequalities between "culturally" defined groups, as opposed to vertical inequalities that are inequalities among individuals or households. Horizontal inequalities have become increasingly recognized as a major cause for violent conflicts, where inequalities are defined in terms of economic opportunities and unequal access to land and other natural resources (Green, 2008). We have also seen from the examples of Emilia Romagna in Italy and Mondragon in Spain that co-operativism contributes to more egalitarian societies. If ex-combatants can be made to understand how horizontal inequalities contributed to the conflicts that they participated in, they can transform the zeal with which they fought to aggressively promote co-operatives in a new struggle to create more egalitarian societies.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should include larger and more representative samples to determine whether the findings highlighted in this survey hold true for a larger population of more diverse veterans. In Rwandan context, a study covering the whole country should be undertaken in order to assist the Commission to understand the challenges facing ex-combatants to formulate responses that are relevant to the situation.

For the post-conflict context, the researcher recommends that a study employing a longitudinal design following groups of ex-combatants over time be undertaken to facilitate a greater understanding of the challenges experienced in the years following demobilization. Finally, to prove the efficacy or otherwise of the co-operative model, it would be beneficial to experiment

with a co-operative approach to reintegration for a voluntary group of ex-combatants who want to reintegrate in a co-operative community.

5.5 Conclusion

This study provides information on the subjectively reported experiences of ex-combatants in Musanze district in the Republic of Rwanda transitioning from the military into civilian life on an individual basis. It also provides evidence from secondary sources of the relationship between ex-combatants and co-operatives. Given the challenges reported by the respondents in this study and the recorded use of co-operatives by ex-combatants to deal with similar challenges in the past, it is crucial that research continues to explore this select population in order to provide them with the most effective supports and services, including the promotion of the co-operative model to help them move "from corps to co-ops" and from *Esprit de Corps* to "*Esprit de Co-ops*". A symbiotic relationship can thus be created whereby ex-combatants meet their socio-economic needs through the co-operative model while on the other hand the co-operative movement gains aggressive promoters that it has lacked in the past.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

INFORMED CONSENT FORM
University of Rwanda

CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH SUBJECT

Purpose and Background: Charles BARISA, a graduate student in the Center for conflict Management at the University of Rwanda is doing a study on reintegration of ex-combatants who have separated from the military on an individual basis in Musanze District, Rwanda. Current research on reintegration focuses on reintegration as the final aspect of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programs in a post-conflict context. The researcher is interested in understanding the challenges that confront ex-combatants separating from the military on an individual basis and how they deal with those challenges. I am being asked to participate in this research because I am an ex-combatant resident in Musanze District, Rwanda. If I agree to be a participant in this study, the following will happen:

1 I will complete a short questionnaire giving basic information about me, including age, gender, religion, level of education, service, rank, length of service, and when I separated from the military.
2 I will complete a survey about my reintegration back into civilian life.
3 I will participate in an interview with the researcher, during which I will be asked about my military experience and challenges I have encountered, if any, since my separation from the military. I may also participate in group discussions involving other ex-combatants at a venue of mutual convenience.

Risks and/or Discomforts

1 It is possible that some of the questions on the reintegration survey may make me feel uncomfortable, but I am free to decline to answer any questions I do not wish to answer or to stop participation at any time.
2 Participation in research may mean a loss of confidentiality. Study records will be kept as confidential as is possible. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study. Study information will be coded and kept in locked files at all times. Only study personnel will have access to the files.
3 Because the time required for my participation may be up to 2 hours, I may become tired or bored.

Benefits

There will be no direct benefit to me from participating in this study. The anticipated benefit of this study is a better understanding of the reintegration process for ex-combatants separating from the military on an individual basis.

Costs/Financial Considerations

There will be no financial costs to me because of taking part in this study.

Questions

I have talked to Mr. Charles BARISA about this study and have had my questions answered. If I have further questions about the study, I may call him on his number, which he will provide to me at the beginning of the study. If I have any questions or comments about participation in this study, I should first talk with the researcher.

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH IS VOLUNTARY.

I am free to decline to be in this study, or to withdraw from it at any point. My decision as to whether or not to participate in this study will have no influence on my present or future status.

My signature below indicates that I agree to participate in this study.

Subject's Signature   Date of Signature

_____   _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent   Date of Signature

Appendix 2

University of Rwanda

Center for Conflict Management (CCM)

MA in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation

QUESTIONNAIRE
(For Ex-Combatants)

RESEARCH TOPIC: Reintegration of Ex-Combatants; Assessing the Role of Cooperatives.

RESEARCHER

Mr. Charles BARISA, Graduate Student, MA in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation

University of Rwanda, Center for Conflict Management (CCM)

THE ISSUE

A Call to Ex-Combatants to form co-operatives as a reintegration strategy: is this call justified in theory and practice?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Identify the challenges that ex-combatants separating from the military on an individual basis face in their reintegration into civilian life

2. Explore the relationship, if any, between military characteristics and values and co-operative principles and values
3. Explore historical and contemporary evidence of ex-combatants forming co-operatives to meet the challenges similar to those identified in the first objective
4. Formulate recommendations on how the co-operative model could be implemented as a reintegration strategy for ex-combatants.

MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the challenges faced by ex-combatants separating from the military on an individual basis in their reintegration efforts?
2. What relationship, if any, exists between military characteristics and values and co-operative principles and values?
3. Is there historical and/or contemporary evidence of ex-combatants forming co-operatives to meet the challenges similar to those identified in the first objective?

PART I. DEMOGRAPHICSTATISTICS

Age: Gender: Marital Status:

Service: RDF Ex-FAR   Ex-Armed Group (AG)   Rank at Separation:

Profession/Trade: Highest Academic Achievement:

Duration of Service: Participated in Actual Combat? YES/NO

Year of Separation: Reason for leaving: Retirement; Discharge; Dismissal

PART II. TRANSITION EXPERIENCE

1. How would you characterize your transition to civilian life?

   a. Very Easy   b. Easy   c. Difficult   d. Very Difficult

2. Did you make a successful transition? YES/NO

3. If yes, what were the contributing factors to successful transition?

   a. Adequate and sustainable income
   b. Good health
   c. Stable family relationships
   d. Planning ahead
   e. Ex-combatant friendships

4. Did you have a clear idea of what you were going to do upon separation from the military? YES/NO

5. If YES, what helped you in the development of that idea?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. Did you undergo any form of pre-separation preparation prior to your separation from the military? YES/NO

7. If NO, do you think that a pre-separation program would have been helpful prior to your separation? YES/NO

PART III. CURRENT MEANS OF SUSTENANCE

8. What is your current means of sustenance?

   a. Employment   b.Business   c. Farming   d. Pension

9. If doing business, is the business related to your job while in the military? YES/NO

10. If NO, what is the reason for the difference?_____

_____

_____

11. Are you receiving a monthly military pension? YES/NO

12. If YES, how much?

PART IV. CHALLENGES OF REINTEGRATION

13. What are the challenges you encountered upon separation from the military?

   a. Identity
   b. Functioning in a non-structured environment
   c. Health issues
   d. Substance Abuse (alcohol, drugs)
   e. Friendship difficulties
   f. Difficulties with authority
   g. Family problems
   h. Support from the military

PART V. MEMBERSHIP OF MEDIATING INSTITUTIONS

14. Are you a member of Reserve force? YES/NO, Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. Are you a member of the Military Medical Insurance Scheme? YES/NO, Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

16. Are you currently a member of a co-operative? YES/NO

17. Have you been a member of a co-operative? YES/NO
18. Why did you leave your former co-operative?

_____

_____

_____

_____

19. If a co-operative was formed that accepts ex-combatants into its membership, would you join
    such a co-operative? YES/NO

Appendix 3

Focus Group Discussion Interview Schedule

1. What was the motivation for forming or joining the cooperative?

2. What are the cooperative's objectives?

3. What activities is the cooperative currently engaged in?

4. What is the future direction of the cooperative?

Appendix 4

Key Informant Interview Schedule – Mediating Institutions

RESERVE FORCE

1. Could you please define the organization and state its objectives?

2. What is Reserve Force's organizational structure from the national to the grassroots level?

3. How does Reserve force recruit its members?

4. Has Reserve Force ever commissioned or been involved in any study to establish the socio-economic status of retired/demobilized combatants?

5. Does Reserve Force maintain records of all retired/demobilized combatants and where they are?

6. What sort of projects does Reserve force have and how do these projects benefit members?

Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC)

1. What is the involvement of ex-combatants in co-operatives in Rwanda?

2. What is the government's policy on co-operatives for ex-combatants?

3. What is the government's strategy for promoting co-operatives of ex-combatants?

4. How many cooperatives of ex-combatants do you have?

5. What are the challenges faced by ex-combatants separating from the military on an individual basis in their reintegration efforts?

6. What relationship, if any, exists between military characteristics and values and co-operative principles and values?

7. Is there historical and/or contemporary evidence of ex-combatants forming co-operatives to meet the challenges similar to those identified in the sixth question?

Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA)

1. What is the history of the co-operative movement in Rwanda?

2. What is the structure of the co-operative movement in Rwanda?

3. What is the status of the co-operative movement in Rwanda?

4. What is the role of the government in the co-operative movement in Rwanda?

Ex- combatants and cooperatives

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