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RESEARCH ARTICLE

DDR and the Internal Organization of Non-State Armed Groups

Brian McQuinn*

This paper argues that demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) trajectories of non-state armed groups are shaped by a group's internal organization. Extensive research by political scientists has demonstrated a correlation between internal features of armed groups and their behaviour (e.g. extent of violence used against local communities). I extend this analysis to DDR outcomes by illustrating how two features of an armed group's internal organization – command profile and financing architecture – influence post-conflict DDR trajectories. To substantiate the theory, four case studies from Colombia, Nepal and Libya are reviewed. The article concludes with the limitations and opportunities of this approach, including the potential of predicting DDR challenges.

Introduction

In 1989, the UN Security Council mandated the first disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme following Namibia's decade long civil war (Dzinesa 2004). This operation was narrowly mandated to support the peace process by monitoring the cease-fire, cantoning troops and supervising the withdrawal of South African military forces in Namibia (Dzinesa 2006). In the subsequent three decades, there have been more than 60 DDR operations, many with much broader mandates that included 'second generation programmes', which supported peacebuilding and human security objectives (Colletta and Muggah 2009).

In an effort to improve the outcome of these programmes, practitioners and researchers have studied factors influencing DDR trajectories.¹ This research led to a wealth of 'lessons learned' and a process of increased standardization, which is embodied in the 26 modules of the UN's Integrated DDR standards (United Nations 2009).² While the drive for standardization is laudable, a reoccurring conclusion of many DDR reviews is the necessity to account for the unique dynamics of each DDR context (Colletta and Muggah 2009; Munive 2013). These studies have identified numerous critical factors shaping the political and military contexts of DDR initiatives, including: a conflict's history, the political will of government and rebel leaders, and the government's administrative capacity (CIDDR 2009; Hanson 2007; Muggah 2005; Munive and Jakobsen 2012; Munive 2013). This research has advanced the analysis underpinning DDR planning. Nevertheless, these studies have largely ignored how differences in the internal organization³ of non-state armed groups⁴ might impact DDR trajectories. To address this shortcoming, I theorize how two specific features of a group's internal structure - command profile and financing architecture - impact DDR outcomes.

^{*} University of Oxford, GB

brian.mcquinn@anthro.ox.ac.uk

This article strives to make two contributions. First, it makes a case for why the internal structure of an armed group has a crucial, if underappreciated, influence on the outcome of DDR trajectories. Second, the analysis proposes a theory to explain how a group's internal organization influences post-conflict outcomes.

It should be noted that while I argue that a group's internal structure is a critical factor in shaping DDR outcomes, a range of complex and interrelated factors also influence the process.⁵ One such factor is the capacity of the government to provide security at the national and local level. As has been clearly seen in Libya and Afghanistan, for instance, the absence of government reach beyond the capital affords armed groups significantly more space to operate (Cole and McQuinn 2014; Sinno 2010). A second and related factor is the extent and nature of post-war violence. If the transition is characterized by a spike of inter-communal violence (as opposed to criminal violence, for instance), ex-combatants, as individual or groups, are often drawn upon to provide security for local communities, further entrenching their role (Dixon and Johns 2001; McQuinn 2013). Third, the type of actor leading the DDR process - whether national or international – also impacts DDR outcomes (Boada and Pascual 2009).

The purpose of this article is not to argue that the internal structure of armed groups is more critical vis-à-vis these alternative factors; but rather, to theorize (and then substantiate) how specific features of a group's internal organization result in corresponding capabilities or constraints for group leaders and rank-and-file members. The goal is to highlight why such studies are critical to the analysis or planning of DDR programmes.

Towards a Better Understanding of DDR and Armed Groups

The idea that internal structures of nonstate armed groups influence DDR trajectories is not without precedent. For instance, Stina Torjesen (2013:7) drew upon observations from DDR processes in Afghanistan to hypothesize that, '[the] basic and recurring features of a range of different groups are likely to play a part in the reintegration process'. Similarly, Jairo Munive and Stine Finne Jakobsen's (2012:372) review of Liberia's DDR transition concluded that 'war-based networks and command structures continued to play a role in the reintegration phase'. Meanwhile, in Burundi, Hugo de Vries and Nikkie Wiegink found that combatants belonging to groups that relied on ideological indoctrination to forge cohesion were more likely to remain together after demobilization (de Vries and Wiegink 2011). In each of these examples, the authors intuitively link specific features of a group's internal structure to DDR outcomes.

Despite many speculative links, the relationship between an armed group's internal structure and DDR trajectories has not yet been systematically theorized or tested. This article proceeds by first reviewing literature on civil war and non-state armed groups in order to explain why the subsequent analysis focuses on two features of a group's internal organization: command profile and financing architecture. The theory is then presented, followed by four case studies. Finally, the concluding remarks highlight the limitations and opportunities of this approach, including the possibility of predicting DDR challenges.

Research on Civil War and Non-State Armed Groups

Similar to research on DDR trajectories, studies of civil wars did not initially account for the heterogeneity of non-state armed groups (Kalyvas 2008a; Weinstein 2007). Interest in the study of civil wars was rekindled following civil strife in Bosnia and Rwanda in the early 1990s. These studies examined a range of factors and features of civil war, including: 1) frequency and severity (Collier and Hoeffler 1998; Fearon and Laitin 2003); 2) economic drivers (Collier 2000, 2006; Sambanis 2003, 2004); 3) onset (Fearon, Kasara, and Laitin 2007; Hegre 2004); 4) duration (Hegre 2004; Regan 2002); and 5) outcomes (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2009; Licklider 1995; de Rouen JR and Sobek 2004); and 6) peacemaking negotiations (Darby 2001).⁶

After a decade of macro-level research, however, scholars such as Jeremy Weinstein (2007), Stathis Kalyvas (2008b), Christopher Blattman and Edward Miguel (2010) questioned the merits of studying civil wars solely at the national (or aggregate) level. Their criticism brought to light unexamined assumptions in the earlier research, including the heterogeneity of armed group structures and conduct. Until then, for instance, quantitative studies of civil wars tended to omit variables for the armed groups involved, and focused almost exclusively on characteristics of the state or international influence (e.g. Fearon and Laitin 2003). Subsequent micro-level studies highlighted the shortcomings of macro-level analysis, leading to a new field of investigation: the microfoundations of civil war.

This research agenda pursued micro-level studies using armed groups (instead of the state) as the unit of analysis. Productive avenues of inquiry included: 1) recruit strategies (Andvig and Gates 2009; Gates 2002; Weinstein 2005); 2) rebel governance (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015; Mampilly 2011); 3) economic models for group formation (Berber and Blattman 2010; Garfinkel 2004; Sambanis 2004); 4) prevalence of child soldiers (Gates and Reich 2009; Murphy 2003; Wessells 2006); 5) the strategies behind violence against communities (Kalyvas 2006; Weinstein 2007); 5) fighting tactics (Kalyvas 2003; Kiszely 1996; Smith 2002); 6) pre-war social networks (Staniland 2014); 7) role of gender (Cohen 2013; Herrera and Porch 2008; Kunz and Sjöberg 2009; Prasain 2004; Yami 2006); and 8) the persistence of small and lightly-armed guerrilla groups (Fearon 2008).

Yet it was Jeremy Weinstein's study of the resources endowments that is credited as the first systematic study of how a group's internal organization shaped its behavior (Kalyvas 2007a).⁷ Weinstein (2007: 3) argued that rebel organizations tended to fall into one of two broad categories: 'resource-wealthy'

and 'resource-poor'. He posited that groups with financial endowments attracted opportunistic recruits who exhibited minimal discipline and who preved upon local communities with indiscriminate violence. In contrast, groups with little financing relied upon political or religious ideologies to recruit members. Weinstein concluded that this results in more committed recruits who maintain higher degrees of discipline and moderate use of violence against local communities. While there were shortcomings to Weinstein's analysis, most critically the proposition that a group's structure cannot fundamentally change over the course of its development, the role of financing in shaping a group's internal structure is used as one of the two core features studied in this article. In order to do so, however, it is necessary to further develop the observable features of the available resources and specific features of a group's internal organization that can be empirically observed.

Building on Weinstein's insights, Kyle Beardsley and Brian McQuinn (2009) extended his analysis by exploring how financing architecture requires groups to be organized in specific and predictable ways. The authors argued, for example, that the CPN-Maoists were an intensely ideological organization because this enabled the discipline and coordination necessary to exploit the group's primary source of revenue: donations and 'taxes' extracted from local communities and businesses across an impoverished country (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009). The researchers posited that this type of resource was only exploitable by a group capable of sufficient discipline to prevent internal corruption, and organization to centralize the revenue. The result was an organization with sophisticated hierarchies, a symbiotic relationship with communities and low-levels of militarization.

In contrast, during the civil war in Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) raised millions from alluvial diamonds (Global Witness 2003). Unlike community taxes, this revenue source was highly concentrated,

making it vulnerable to government attacks or internal corruption. Reliance on this resource resulted in predictable outcomes for the structure and nature of the RUF. For instance, exploiting alluvial diamonds required an organization that was highly militarized to defend against government encroachment, and only a few levels of hierarchy as leaders needed to closely monitor the diamond extraction. Moreover, local communities were only used as a source of forced labor, leading to an extremely predatory (and violent) relationship (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009). Drawing on the authors' analysis, the distinction between 'community-based' and 'resource-based' predation will be used in defining the continuum associated with a group's financing architecture (see theory section below for further details).

A group's command profile is another critical feature in its internal organization.8 The explanation of how specific command profiles emerge in a group draws upon Paul Staniland's (2010, 2012, 2014) claims that the initial structures of armed groups are determined by pre-war social networks.9 Staniland (2014: 5) reasoned that insurgent groups are comprised of 'central processes of decision making and institution building and local processes of recruitment and tactical combat'. According to him, centralized processes forge horizontal ties, linking leaders across 'geographic and social sites', while local processes result in 'horizontal ties', which are based on 'social relations between organizers and communities' (Staniland 2014: 21-2). The author identified four types of insurgent groups based on the extent to which each exerts central and local control: integrated. parochial, vanguard and fragmented.

Integrated groups benefit from both vertical and horizontal ties and are characterized by strong centralized leadership and high levels of compliance at both the central and local level. Parochial groups are cohesive at the local level but possess weak central institutions. In contrast, vanguard groups possess a 'tight leadership' at the central level but are plagued by a lack of local discipline and capacity (Staniland 2014: 9). Meanwhile, fragmented groups have neither centralized institutions nor local capacity.

Staniland presented a prodigious number of examples for each type of group. In this analysis, however, it becomes apparent that the fourth type – fragmented – is more akin to a stage in group disintegration as it 'is often the end point for groups that begin with a different structure' (Staniland 2014: 8). Staniland's model, unlike Weinstein's theory, fully accounts for the possibility that groups can fundamentally change over time and in response to external pressures or internal innovation. Staniland does not, however, provide a detailed theoretical account for how central and local processes of control interact to create the different patterns of vertical and horizontal cohesion he identifies. Nevertheless. critical to this discussion is the spectrum of command that ranges from centralized, with high levels of compliance, to decentralized, with low levels of respect for leadership authority.

Internal Organization: Two Crucial Features

Non-state armed groups are complex political-military systems operating under extreme pressure and in countries or regions where groups of comparable size and organizational capacity are often rare (Blattman and Miguel 2010). Consequently, there is a range of interrelated features constituting a group's internal structure. Given that the objective of this article is make a case for how an armed group's internal structure impacts DRR trajectories, I have chosen to theorize on two features identified by the literature review above as particularly crucial to a group's internal structure. These two features, while critical, are by no means the only internal features of an armed group that shape DDR transitions. If it can be demonstrated that these two characteristics have a demonstrable effect on DDR trajectories, however, then future researchers can expand this analysis and incorporate additional features of a group's internal organization. In this context, I theorize on two features of the internal structure of armed groups – command profile and financing architecture.

Command Profile

It is a relatively straightforward supposition that armed groups which exercise highly regimented, rule-based control over their rank-and-file fighters are more likely to sustain this type of control during a DDR transition. The nature of a group's command and control systems is a function of at least two features: command authority and the capacity to enforce it (Alberts and Hayes 2003; Bangerter 2013). As will be illustrated in more detail in the case studies, groups tend to fall between two extremes: formal systems, made up of an elaborate code of conduct and quasi-judicial enforcement mechanisms, and informal practices based on ad hoc (and often fluctuating) group norms enforced by fellow group members, and occasionally by a group's leaders.

Formal command and control systems reduce the unpredictability of internal sanctions by establishing a code of conduct that is regularly reviewed with members. Violations of the code are administered by quasi-judicial mechanisms overseen by commanders.¹⁰ This reinforces the authority of the leaders' and the group's doctrine, which in these types of groups determines almost every aspect of members' daily experience.¹¹ This is not to suggest, however, that these groups are less brutal, as there are many examples of group members executed for violating the code of conduct (HRW 2003). The argument here is that the punishment is more predictable as

it is based on an explicit code of conduct. The case study of the Communist Party of Nepal – Maoists (CPN-Maoists) illustrates how reviewing the group's code of conduct is integral to daily political indoctrination (Eck 2007).

In contrast, informal systems of command are based on unspoken rules or group norms determined by commanders. Given that local commanders are usually the sole arbiters of these rules, they can change without warning. This unpredictable code of conduct intensifies the uncertainty experienced by rank-andfile members as it is not always clear what is a violation or likely punishment. In some cases, the same violation can be punished in two very different manners depending on the mood of the commander (HRW 2003). As the example of the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) illustrates (see full case study below), members could be (and often were) executed at the whim of a local commander for very minor infractions. The combination of a fluid code of conduct and a group norm that privileges brutality results in a culture of fear that serves as an effective means of control (Bangerter 2013). The theory predicts. however, that this type of control requires fighters to be in close proximity to commanders; when, for example rank-and-file members are separated from their commanders, control diminishes rapidly (if not consistently) across a group's membership.

Placed along a continuum, the character of command profile ranges from groups with highly regimented command structures to those that are ad hoc and informal (see **Figure 1** below). As discussed, formal command and control profiles are associated

Character of command profile					
Informal and decentralized command and control	Formalized and centralized command and control				
Higher level of uncertainty	Lower level of uncertainty				

Figure 1: Character of command profiles and corresponding levels of uncertainty.

with higher levels of predictability while informal systems foster uncertainty (and usually higher levels of fear).

The argument put forward by this article is that groups with formalized command and control systems - constituted by explicit and elaborate codes of conduct combined with quasi-judicial mechanisms - are more likely to maintain control over its members throughout a DDR trajectory. This leads to more predictable and uniform DDR trajectories, as group leaders are capable of exerting more uniform influence on members and at all levels of the organization. It should be noted that this tight control does not come without its drawbacks; for example, if group leaders decide to return to war they are also more likely to compel rank-and-file members to follow (see the recent case of Mozambique, for example) (Wiegink 2015).

In armed groups with informal command systems, authority and control reside solely within a group's sub-commanders. As a consequence, DDR trajectories will be less uniform as each sub-commander's leadership ability varies. The link is even clearer when control is exerted through brutality and extreme levels of violence. In these transitions, high-level leaders exert less control over the process, leading to DDR transitions with trajectories that are highly atomized as smaller groups (e.g. platoon or battalions) serve as the likely unit of transition.

Determining the formality of a group's command profile is not straightforward (Kalyvas 2007b). Not only is there usually a lack of information on a group's inner workings, but some of this data can be misleading. For example, many of the larger revolutionary battalions in Libya with more than a thousand fighters appeared from the outside to function within a defined hierarchy. In practice, however, the group functioned as an alliance of semi-autonomous groups (McQuinn 2014). Recent research has identified specific features or proxies to determine a group's command profile, including the extent to which a group's code of conduct is formalized, and the nature of its induction process (Bangerter 2013: McQuinn 2012a). For example, both authors of this research hypothesized that in order to indoctrinate new members into a formalized command structure, the process would, like in a state army, require months of structured and repetitive political and military training. This indoctrination process establishes the codes of conduct and the broader doctrine underpinning the ideological and rule-following practices of the group. In contrast, groups with informal codes of conduct rely upon much shorter 'rites of terror' or similarly intense initiation rituals to forge bonds among its members (Whitehouse and McQuinn 2012). For the purpose of this study, these two group features will serve as proxies for how formalized a group's command and control system functions (See Table 1). These two factors were, however, studied in isolation. In order to contextualize these two features, the research also examined the presence (or absence) of uniforms, daily political training, established system of rank and regimented physical training (Kenny 2010a; McQuinn 2015; Siebold 2007).

Financing Architecture

Financial resources are critical to building and sustaining the fighting capacity of any military organization (Keegan 2004).¹²

	Informal Command	Formal Command
1. Code of conduct	Informal code of conduct	Elaborated code of conduct and quasi- judicial enforcement mechanisms
2. Indoctrination process	Intense 'rites of terror'	2–3 months of political and military indoctrination

Table 1: Indicators of the formality of the command and control systems.

Unlike state militaries, however, acquiring these resources for non-state armed groups requires substantial organizational investment: planning, personnel, equipment and strategy. Few groups rely upon only one source of funding, as this would jeopardize the organization's capacity to sustain itself should this revenue be interrupted. Consequently, groups diversify revenue using a range of strategies, thus reducing the probability of income disruption (Shapiro 2013). It is therefore expected that rebel leaders invest in strategies with the highest return and lowest risk (Beardsley and McQuinn 2009). This portfolio of income sources and the group's organizational structure to exploit them is defined as an armed group's financial architecture.

Examining the range of investment strategies available to groups, Beardsley and McQuinn (2009) concluded that high-return resources were primarily associated with resource-related strategies while low-return resources were linked to community-based predation (see literature review for further details). Drawing upon their conclusion, this article places a group's financing architecture, which is the underlying structure necessary to exploit each type of resource, along the spectrum between revenue sources related to community and natural resources (see **Figure 2**). This study used the following two indicators to determine a group's financing architecture: a) primary source(s) of funding (e.g. diamonds, timber or community extortion) and b) the operational concentration of the funding sources (concentrated in specific geographic areas or decentralized across a wider area) (see **Table 2**). Drawing on the above examples, the CPN-Maoists community taxation involved a broad geographic area (as it encompassed much of Nepal) and a lowreturn income source; in comparison to the RUF, which relied upon a lucrative resource concentrated in a few mining areas of Sierra Leone.

Towards a Theory of Internal Structure and DDR Trajectories

I have posited that two features of an armed group's internal organization shape its postconflict transition. If the range of values for a group's command profile (informal to formal) and financing architecture (community-based to resource-based) are cross-cut, a matrix results with four categories of armed groups: National Challengers, Community Champions, Mercenary Armies, and War Entrepreneurs (see **Figure 3**). If the argument of this paper has explanatory value, we should observe that groups with comparable internal organizations experience

Financial Architectures					
Community-based predation	Resource-based Predation				
Higher level of organization	Lower level of organization				

Figure	2:	Financial	architecture	spectrum	that	ranges	between	community-based	and
resource-based revenue strategies.									

	Community-based predation	Resource-based predation
1. Primary source of funding	Community taxation	'Lootable' resources
2. Operational concentration	Decentralized across a large geographic area	Concentrated in specific geographic areas

Table 2: Indicators for type of financial architecture strategies of groups.

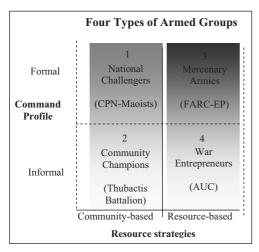


Figure 3: Four categories of armed groups and their respective case study.

similar challenges while groups with markedly contrasting internal structures should exhibit divergent DDR trajectories. While the possibility of comparing groups within each quadrant is beyond the scope of this paper, the following case study analysis examines differences between the four types of groups.

The empirical underpinning of the proposed theory is provided by the analysis of the DDR challenges and outcomes of four case studies: CPN-Maoist (Nepal), Thubactis Battalion (Libya), Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias De Colombia - Ejército Del Pueblo (FARC-EP) (Colombia), and Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) (Colombia). Only groups that have been established for more than five years or were party to a civil war were selected as a case study.13 The intensity of violence represented by a civil war serves as a criterion for the establishment of a robust organization capable of sustained and substantial organized military engagement. The criterion of five years was selected based on Roy Licklider's (1995) seminal study of post-conflict transitions. If five years serves as the standard for peace, it is argued here, that the reverse is also true.

A large number of armed groups were examined in order to identify case studies

that illustrated the two features discussed.¹⁴ In this analysis it became apparent that groups with a formal command profile were more likely to rely upon a communitybased financing architecture (or vice versa). Similarly, groups with informal command profiles tended to rely on resource-based financing (again, or vice versa). This result suggests a positive correlation between command profile and financing architecture. Although this may be a result of the small sample size, it provides suggestive evidence that the two features are mutually reinforcing.¹⁵

Table 3 summarizes the case study evidence for each indicator related to command profile and financing architecture. The strength of evidence for each indicator was determined by both the quality and quantity of observations made by academic, policy and media sources. The quality of a source was determined by the detail of the account and source of the information (e.g. academic study, NGO report or journalistic account). For example, the evidence that the CPN-Maoists had a formal system of command was designated as 'substantial' because almost all analysis of the group mentioned this feature (for 15 examples see footnote below).¹⁶ The majority of the research was conducted in 2011 as part of a larger study of the internal features of five non-state armed groups (Whitehouse and McQuinn 2012).¹⁷ A more detailed discussion of the evidence is presented below.

Group Morphology and DDR Trajectories

In the following section the ideal type associated with each quadrant in Figure 3 is described based on the two features identified in this paper: command profile and financial architecture. The theory is then illustrated with a discussion of the corresponding case studies. Analysis of DDR trajectory pays particular attention to the following DDR outcomes: the degree of control that armed group leaders maintained during the

Group feature	CPN-Maoists	Thubactis Battalion	FARC-EP	AUC
Command Profile				
1. Code of conduct (Informal/formal)				
Formal systems of command	\checkmark	×	\checkmark	£3
Informal systems of command	×	\checkmark	53	\checkmark
2. Initiation process				
Intense initiation rituals	×	Ś	53	\checkmark
Extended political indoctrination	\checkmark	×	\checkmark	×
Resource strategies				
1. Primary income source				
Resource-based	×	×	A	\checkmark
Community-based	\checkmark	Ś	53	53
2. Revenue concentration				
Concentrated	×	દર	\checkmark	\checkmark
Diffuse	\checkmark	Ś	e3-	×

Table 3: Summary of each proxy for the command profile and degree of militarization.

Legend: ✓ Significant evidence for; ✓ Some evidence for; × Significant evidence against; Some evidence against.

process, whether combatants demobilized as individuals or small groups, the extent to which groups morphed into organized criminal networks, and the level of acceptance returning combatants found from communities. The purpose of each case study is to illustrate how these four distinct types of organizational structures influence DDR processes. The goal, consequently, is not to suggest that each type of group can only undergo one type of transition, but rather to highlight how the constraints and capabilities associated with each type of group influence the choices and options available to group leaders and rank-and-file members. Although preliminary evidence suggests that there are distinctions between the different types of armed groups, the small number of cases are insufficient to determine whether there are broader patterns.

1. National Challengers (Formal Command Profile and Community-Based Architecture)

Armed groups who derive the majority of their support from community 'taxation' (voluntary or otherwise) and a formalized command profile are most likely to end in a favourable outcome for the rebels – outright victory or a power-sharing agreement.18 These groups are broadly modelled on popular uprisings from the early 20th century. These include the revolutions in China and Russia in which Tse-tung Mao (2000) and Vladimir Lenin (1965) documented their guerrilla strategies, establishing blueprints for future revolts that remain influential today. In part emulating these models, groups in this category tend to be highly doctrinal, drawing upon a combination of revolutionary ideologies. As the Nepal case

study illustrates, the CPN-Maoists espouse a doctrine self-described (without irony) as 'Marxism-Leninism-Maoism-Prachanda Path' (MR Admin 2005: 1–2) (see below for a short summary of the group).

These doctrines provide moral, economic and social justifications for challenging state authority. In practice, however, regularly proselytizing these complex doctrines requires a cadre of specialists - political ideologues - who become integral to establishing the highly regulated and rule-following culture. One result is a suite of mutually reinforcing organizational characteristics that include an elaborate code of conduct, quasi-judicial enforcement mechanisms, group orthodoxy, and regular political training (McQuinn 2015). These various practices, codes and structures, when combined, exert substantial and pervasive control on group members' daily lives and ways of thinking (Kertzer 1988). This is one argument which demonstrates why this type of arms group often successfully transitions from war to politics (Dudouet 2006; 2007).

Example of National Challenger: CPN-Maoists (Nepal)

Following two centuries of absolute rule, a popular uprising in 1990 forced King Birendra to promulgate a democratic constitution and legalize political parties (Gellner 2003; Pyakurel 2007; Sharma 2006). However, subsequent political infighting saw eleven successive governments in eleven years. Rampant corruption exacerbated economic stagnation, relegating Nepal to the rank of tenth poorest nation in the world (Pettigrew 2004). In 1996, the leftist CPN-Maoists broke from the mainstream political process and presented the government with a 40-point demand for democratic and economic reform. With no response from the government, the CPN-Maoists launched attacks in four western districts on 13 February, 1996 (Hachhethu 2004). Over the next decade, until the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2006, over 13,000 people died as a result of the war (Whitfield 2008). As part of the agreement, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was disarmed and cantoned in United Nationsmonitored military camps. Resistance by the Nepali Army to the integration of PLA combatants, leadership squabbles amongst the political parties and significant delays in negotiating the new constitution continued to threaten the fragile peace (ICG 2012).

The example of CPN-Maoists illustrates how a group that exercised highly regulated and rule-based authority during a conflict was able to sustain this control in a postconflict setting (Gautam 2009). Not only did the leaders convince its sub-commanders and rank-and-file fighters to stop fighting, they were able to prevent a resumption of the war despite demobilisation efforts being stalled for almost six years (Bhandari 2015; ICG 2012).

During the conflict, the CPN-Maoists maintained a disciplined and coordinated financing infrastructure, which funnelled small amounts of money collected across the country into central coffers. Critically, this resulted (or required) in a less predatory relationship with local communities, many of which were marginalized ethnic and caste minorities (Nepal, Bohara, and Gawande 2007). The absence of easily 'lootable' resources in Nepal also hindered the transformation of the CPN-Maoists into a purely criminal enterprise. This is in stark contrast to groups like the AUC in Colombia (see case study below) which relied upon a resource-based income in which armed groups would sustain their financing operations for purely private ends after demobilization.

Finally, as suggested above, National Challengers are more likely to experience highly successful DDR transitions. The CPN-Maoists are indicative of this trend, as they unexpectedly won a majority of seats in the 2008 elections for the Constitutional Assembly (ICG 2012). This article argues that this is a result of two features inherent to the internal organization of these types of groups. First, the formal command and control results in a group with substantial organizational capacity throughout the country, something few other political actors can maintain following a protracted civil war. Moreover, the group's symbiotic relationship with communities - in part a result of community-based financial architecture - often results, as it did in the case of Nepal, with a positive perception of the CPN-Maoists as 'champions' of underrepresented communities. Other examples of groups in this quadrant that experienced initial political success after a protracted conflict include the Free Aceh Movement in Indonesia, the African National Congress in South Africa, and the National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy in Burundi.¹⁹

2. Community Champions (Informal Command Profile and Community-Based Architecture)

Community Champions are localized groups that derive the majority of their funding from nearby communities. While they might have thousands of fighters and appear to function as an integrated group, they are usually organized as loose coalitions, with networking subgroups of less than 200 fighters (McQuinn 2015). The cohesion of these smaller groups is quite intense, and is built upon both the reputation of the commander and the bonding experience of participating in war together (Whitehouse et al. 2014).

A byproduct of this cohesion structure is the unique identity and parochial trust restricted to each subgroup (Whitehouse and McQuinn 2012). The decentralized nature of such a group makes it difficult to defeat militarily as no one sub-group is critical to the group's functioning. Nevertheless, a by-product of this structure is that in the post-conflict environment, each sub-group follows a unique trajectory based on its individual leader and the specific character of the group. This leads to more diversity and unpredictability in the DDR process.

Similar to the category of 'National Challengers' above, the less lucrative funding associated with community-based taxation and the corresponding financial architecture necessary to collect it reduces the likelihood of groups transitioning into purely criminal enterprises in the postwar period. Moreover, the group's reliance on local communities for financial and logistical support reduces the level of violence towards civilians. The relationship with communities makes reintegration after the DDR process more likely when compared to the category of 'War Entrepreneurs', which are more violent localized groups relying on resource-based funding (see the AUC case study below).

Among the 15 conflicts considered for this paper, there were very few examples of groups with these two internal features. It is likely that this is due to the mutually reinforcing dynamics associated with a group's command profile and financing architecture. Preliminary evidence suggests that category 1 or 4 are the most stable over time (Whitehouse and McQuinn 2012). It is likely that this category, along with the category of Mercenary Armies (quadrant 4), are transitional in nature. This is clearly the case with the Thubactis Battalion presented below.

Example of Community Champions:

Thubactis Battalion (Libya)

Libya's 2011 armed uprising against Mu'ammar al-Qahdafi (Qahdafi) was decentralized, leading to the inception of hundreds of armed groups (Cole and McQuinn 2014). In Misrata, Libya's third-largest city, as many as 236 distinct fighting groups emerged by the end of the war (McQuinn 2012a). The Thubactis Battalion was the largest group, which had almost two thousand members organized into ten autonomous subgroups (McQuinn 2015). Six of the groups were street-fighting contingents that emerged in the first few months of the war, while the remaining four subgroups were artillery units founded only after government forces were repelled from the city (McQuinn 2014). The leader of the Thubactis Battalion, Salem Jawha, explained in interviews that each of the ten sub-commanders was responsible for organizing his own non-military supplies and that there was little communication between the groups, except for coordination

during military operations (McQuinn 2015). He described the nature of the reporting relationship with his sub-commanders:

'[t]hey would come back to me for ammunition, money or military supplies. Every night we would meet, sometimes as a group, sometimes individually and they would explain what they needed. But each group functioned as their own fighting group.'²⁰

The ten subgroups of the Thubactis Battalion underwent quite different DDR processes, as predicted by the theory. Some of the groups became integrated into the state security forces while others either demobilized or became local protection militias. The members of each distinct subgroup tended to decide as a group which DDR path they would follow. This is in part a result of the consensus-based decision-making characteristic of the fighting groups during the 2011 uprising (McQuinn 2012b).

In Misrata, as in many cities across Libya, the local community provided funds to the group to purchase weapons, pick-up trucks and heavy artillery. Moreover, the community supplied the group with food on a daily basis throughout the war. The result was a group closely aligned with community interests. The sustainability of this arrangement remains an open question, as the war was over in less than a year. After the war many of the armed groups in Misrata became quasi-state institutions as the Ministry of Defense and/or the Interior funded them to provide security (Lacher and Cole 2014). This source of income reduced the incentive for groups to diversify into other forms of revenue generation. Some groups in Misrata have diversified into criminal activity, but this remains a small percentage of the revolutionary battalions (in comparison to the number of smuggling networks in the south that predated the war and resumed their operation after the war) (Lacher 2012; McQuinn 2012a).

The localized and decentralized nature of this type of group reduces the group's capacity to translate local community support into national political gain. In Libya's first election, the Thubactis Battalion did not put forward a candidate or back a specific political party. Although only one example, it was indicative of the broader trend during the election campaign (Martin 2014).

3. Mercenary Armies (Formal Command Profile and Resource-Based Financing)

Armed groups with both a formal command system and resource-based financing architecture are highly capable military organizations. The formal command profile results in sophisticated hierarchies and high levels of discipline. This in turn augments the group's capacity for coordinating attacks and economies of scale. Moreover, lucrative resourcebased financing permits the group to concentrate on resource mobilization, avoiding the transaction costs associated with the complex system of extraction associated with local communities. Examples of these types of groups, like Community Champions, are less common. As a consequence, FARC-EP was chosen despite the absence of a negotiated peace accord. Nevertheless, the analysis is based on the Colombian government's DDR programme which has demobilized five thousand FARC-EP members (Derks, Rouw, and Briscoe 2011).

Example of Mercenary Armies: FARC-EP (Colombia)

Histories of contemporary guerrilla groups in Colombia usually begin with the period of political violence known as *la violencia* (1948–1957) (Bouvier 2009).²¹ This low-grade civil war between the two traditional political parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives, resulted in the death of approximately 200,000 Colombians (Palacios and Stoller 2006). Local self-defence groups emerged during this period as a way to protect local communities from political violence (Chernick 2009). In 1964, the Colombian Army was instructed to re-establish control over these autonomous regions. In one attack, 48 combatants survived the initial military assault, including two mid-level commanders, Jacobo Arenas and Manuel Marulanda, who later organized the survivors and founded the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) (FARC-EP 1999).²²

In the 1960s and early 1970s, the organization was weakened by counter-insurgency measures, development programmes improving rural conditions, and declining international support (Shifter 1999). At the same time, illicit drug production in Colombia began to expand. The weakened movement and the nascent drug cartels struck a symbiotic accord, perpetuating FARC-EP and conflict in Colombia (Offstien 2003). The isolated areas controlled by FARC-EP served as opportune areas for drug producers to operate beyond government control (Pecaut 1999). The group reached the height of its power in 2000 with more than 18.000 members (Simons 2004) and controlled an estimated 40 per cent of the country (ICG 2009).

In 2001, a \$2 billon U.S. government military support programme dubbed 'Plan Colombia' began combating cocaine production and groups like FARC-EP (Sweig 2002). The military push has seen two of FARC-EP's five top leaders killed, mid-level cadres captured and the dramatic rescue of high-profile hostages. A DDR programme was established to reintegrate thousands of FARC combatants. Despite the government's military success, however, FARC-EP continues to represent a military threat. Talks to end the civil war began in Cuba in 2012 (Milne 2014).

The ideological nature of these type of organizations, combined with their efficient funding sources, reduces the incentive to negotiate an end to war. This leaves military victory or defeat as the most likely way to terminate a war unless the group's revenues or military capacity can be significantly degraded. Another example of a 'mercenary army' is the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The LTTE fought a thirtyyear civil war in Sri Lanka and was seen as one of the most formidable armed groups in the world until its decisive military defeat in 2009 (ICG 2010). Similarly, the military campaign against FARC-EP, supported by the US government's 'Plan Colombia', upset the balance in the war and weakened the organization. Progress is currently being made in the negotiations; this is the fourth attempt to negotiate peace with FARC-EP, with three prior attempts in 1982–86, 1990–91, and 1998–2002 (Chernick 2009).

The DDR programme in Colombia is designed to integrate individual deserters. While some predictions can't be evaluated against this case because a peace accord has yet to be signed, the example of the demobilization of the AUC in Colombia (see next case study) suggests the likelihood that many of FARC-EP's subgroups will morph into criminal networks. Moreover, the shift in funding revenue strategies, from one based on community predation in the 1970s and early 1980s to one based on taxing the lucrative drug trade in the late 1980s, has caused a significant divergence from the formal command profile of the FARC-EP (Cooper 2014; Jonsson 2014). It is hypothesized, consequently, that the subgroups of FARC primarily financed by drug-related revenue would transition into organized crime during the DDR process (should a peace accord be negotiated). This dynamic will also influence the size of the average group that is demobilized. It is expected that subgroups transitioning to either organized crime or full demobilization will do so in larger groups, as was seen with the CPN-Maoists.

The high levels of violence used against local communities in the last decade makes reintegration into communities less likely. This has been borne out by the trend of ex-FARC members to resettle in urban areas. This trend is likely to continue during a full-scale demobilization, increasing the prospects that urban criminal networks will recruit ex-combatants because of their military skills and experience. Art. 2, page 14 of 24

4. War Entrepreneurs (Informal Command Profile and Resource-Based Architecture) War Entrepreneurs, like Community Champions, are decentralized structures which appear to outsiders as one organization but are better understood as a loose coalition of autonomous subgroups. Unlike Community Champions, however, cohesion among War Entrepreneurs is usually based on high levels of coercion. This culture of fear is usually created by terrifying initiation ordeals which include coerced acts of dismemberment, torture, or murder (HRW 2003).²³ This type of informal command profile is especially brittle, and requires local commanders and rank-and-file soldiers to remain in close proximity. A concomitant feature of this group is a relatively flat hierarchy with less than four levels (in contrast to formal command profiles which can have as many as a dozen distinct ranks²⁴). Similar to Mercenary Armies, this type of group derives the majority of its support from resources that are geographically concentrated and have high returns on a group's investment. The reliance on resourcebased revenue disengages the group from local communities and removes any incentive to dampen violence (Weinstein 2007). These dynamics, when combined with the high levels of violence inherent in this group's internal culture of terror, leads to high levels of violence towards communities.

Example of War Entrepreneurs: Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) (Colombia)

The AUC entered the Colombian civil war in April 1997. Carlos Castaño, who eventually became the AUC's leader, brought together leaders from more than a dozen regional counter-insurgency paramilitaries with the goal of developing a national umbrella organization (ICG 2003). While some paramilitary leaders chose not to join, analysts suggest that the AUC umbrella controlled 80 per cent of the paramilitary forces in Colombia. In total, 37 different paramilitary groups belonged to the AUC prior to its demobilization between 2003 and 2006 (HRW 2010; Sanin 2008). The structures, funding sources, and origins of these 37 organizations were varied, a result of the specific political, social, and military contexts from which each emerged (Sanín 2008). The groups were often the private armies of wealthy rural landowners and cattle ranchers, and later became deeply implicated in drug production and trafficking. From 1997 to 2002, the AUC and its paramilitary subsidiaries committed the majority of human rights abuses in the country (Arnson 2005; HRW 2008).

In response to the increasing reports of human rights abuses and the indictment of the AUC leaders on drug-related charges by the US government, Castaño declared a unilateral cease-fire in December 2002 (Torres and Giha 2009). A peace agreement was signed in July 2003 and the Colombian government implemented a three year DDR programme that demobilized 31,671 paramilitaries (HRW 2008; Theidon 2007).

As posited by this theory, human rights observers documented the systematic use of torture in the initiation process of AUC concluding that 'execution [was] being [used as] a significant part of the paramilitary training process' (HRW 2003: 46). Targeting in-group members also ratcheted up the socially forbidden nature of the experience, creating a 'culture of terror' (Maclure 2006). Other documented practices in the AUC included giving new recruits a human body part to be carried by a new recruit until it had rotted away (Botero 2002).

I argue that the continued availability of resources, which the AUC's financing architecture was built to exploit, resulted in the transition of the group into organized crime. Evidence from Colombia's human rights advocates suggest that the AUC's affiliates have remained intact or have even expanded in some regions (ICG 2011). Analysts have come to describe these successor groups as 'emerging criminal gangs at the service of drug trafficking' (*Bandas Criminales Emergentes* or BACRIM) (ICG 2007). Evidence suggests that the transformation to criminal networks was not uniform among the 37 AUC affiliates. This illustrates the idiosyncratic nature of DDR trajectories with groups exhibiting informal command profiles (which includes Community Champions).

The informal command profile also reduced the AUC's capacity to convert itself into a national political movement after demobilization. As suggested by the theory, its use of violence combined with its decentralized structure undermined its organizational capacity and political image. Nevertheless, at the local level, many of the AUC subgroups have become embroiled in local politics as local politicians draw upon their violent capacity for election intimidation and extortion (ICG 2011).

Conclusion

This article argues that the internal organization of non-state armed groups have a critical, if underappreciated, influence on the outcome of DDR trajectories. Many authors had acknowledged this link, but the relationship had yet to be systematically theorized or substantiated. To this end, my proposed theory draws upon two features of an armed group's internal organization: command profile and financing architecture. Cross-cutting these two features I proposed a typology by categorizing non-state armed groups into four ideal types. Case studies were then presented to demonstrate how each group's unique organizational structure impacted its DDR transition.

The evidence presented in the case studies, while preliminary, suggest that a group's internal organization result in specific and predictable constraints and capabilities for group leaders and rank-and-file members. While comparison between group types is exploratory because of the limited case studies, contrasting patterns between the two sets of groups associated with each group feature highlight some patterns. For instance, the informal and decentralized command profiles of the AUC and Thubactis Battalion dramatically limited their capacity to play a national role in the post-conflict environment. Moreover, the absence of centralized authority also resulted in more divergent DDR trajectories as each group's sub-units underwent quite different transitions based on its unique identity and circumstances. Similarly, the two groups reliant on financing architectures built around community-based predation - CPN-Maoists and Thubactis Battalion - did not morph whole-scale into organized crime in comparison to the AUC, which relied upon resource-based strategies that could be exploited after demobilization. Another preliminary finding is the control exerted over rank-and-file members during the transition. FARC-EP has yet to be demobilized as a group (as opposed to individuals). Should the theory hold explanatory value, it would predict, similarly to the CPN-Maoists, that its leaders will exert control over its members and the combatants will remain integrated in their larger units during and after the transition

The limited number of case studies leaves the analysis vulnerable to the charge of cherry-picking: that is, drawing upon examples and evidence which confirm the proposed theory. Nevertheless, the primary purpose of this article is not to demonstrate the validity of the typology but to systematically theorize how an armed group's internal organization influences DDR trajectories. To this end, the evidence from the case studies substantiates how specific features of a group's internal structure shape its members' post-conflict transition. This suggests that the internal structure of an armed group is a critical consideration in the analysis and design of DDR programmes. Moreover, while evidence for the article's suppositions are only preliminary, the theory holds the potential to predict the DDR challenges likely to be faced by national governments or international agencies leading DDR programmes.

Competing Interests

The author declares that they have no competing interests.

Notes

- ¹ Stina Torjesen (2013: 4) defines DDR trajectories as the movement of combatants, whether as individuals or as a group, from their role in an armed group to civil life. DDR trajectories are not necessarily linked to a formal DDR programme. DDR trajectories are also not unidirectional; individuals or groups can oscillate between disengaging and reengaging with civil life or an armed group.
- ² For additional information on the UN's Integrated DDR Standards, see: www. unddr.org/iddrs.aspx
- ³ For the sake of readability, an armed group's 'internal organization' and 'internal structure' are used interchangeably to reduce repetition of either term. For this article, these terms include the range of informal and formal practices and rules related to group norms, decisionmaking, lines of authority, performance measurement, reward and punishment. communication, rights of members and the duties of the group to its members. For additional background on organizational theory in general see: Bolton and Dewatripont 2012; Jones 2010. For an intriguing approach to structural integrity and cohesion in armed groups, see Kenny 2010b.
- ⁴ Ulrich Schneckener (2009: 8) defines non-state armed groups as any group: '(i) willing and capable to use violence for pursuing their objectives and (ii) not integrated into formalised state institutions such as regular armies, presidential guards, police or special forces. They, therefore, (iii) possess a certain degree of autonomy with regard to politics, military operations, resources and infrastructure. [...] (iv) are shaped through an organisational relationship or structure that exists over a specific period of time (e.g. spontaneous riots would not qualify).' The analysis in this article focuses on armed groups party to civil wars, but the theory is applicable to other types of non-state armed groups. Please note:

the term non-state armed groups and armed groups are used interchangeably to reduce repetition of either term.

- ⁵ For an excellent analysis on the myriad of political, sociological and military factors affecting DDR trajectories, see CIDDR (2009), Muggah (2008) and Boada and Pascual (2009).
- ⁶ For a more thorough review of these factors, see Blattman and Miguel 2010 or Staniland 2014.
- ⁷ For a review of the literature on the broader question of the causal link between natural resources and the onset and duration of civil wars, see Hegre and Sambanis 2005; Humphreys 2005; Ross 2004.
- ⁸ For research on command in military studies, see (King 2006; Marshall 1947; Siebold 2007); in non-state armed groups see: (Horgan and Taylor 1997; Ranstorp 1994)
- ⁹ For related research on the impact of social network structures on armed groups and conflict see Metternich et al. (2013).
- ¹⁰ For examples of quasi-judicial processes in armed groups, see Eck (2007), Brittain (2010) and HRW (2003).
- ¹¹ For examples of the extent and intensity of control exerted by armed groups see: Pandita (2011), Hedlund (2014) and HRW (2003).
- ¹² This includes not only supplies of weapons and ammunition, but also the range of supplies cadres require on a daily basis including food and medical supplies.
- ¹³ Civil wars are defined as intra-state conflicts resulting in more than 1,000 battle-related deaths in one year (Themnér and Wallensteen 2014). For a discussion of a lower standard and its value for studying armed group inception, see Lewis (2013).
- ¹⁴ The starting point of the evaluation began with DDR programmes compiled by Boada and Pascual (2009).
- ¹⁵ For a more detailed discussion of this possibility see McQuinn (2015).
- ¹⁶ For 15 examples see: Raj 2004; Pettigrew 2004; ICG 2005; Ogura 2004; Hachhethu

2004; Sharma 2004; Ramirez 2004; Lecomte-Tilouine 2006; Prasain 2004; Onesto 2005; Eck 2007; Murshed and Gates 2005; Ogura 2008; Thapa and Sijapati 2003; Upreti 2006.

- ¹⁷ The case study of the Thubactis Battalion was added to the study in 2012. For a more detailed discussion of the methodology, see Whitehouse and McQuinn 2012.
- ¹⁸ For a more detailed discussion of civil war termination, see: Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, and Joyce 2008; Hegre 2004; Regan, Frank, and Aydin 2009.
- ¹⁹ For additional background on each group see: Schulze (2004) on GAM; Maharaj (2008) on the African National Congress and Nindorera (2012) regarding the Defense of Democracy–Forces for the Defense of Democracy in Burundi.
- ²⁰ McQuinn interview with Salem Jawha, Misrata, 17 November 2011.
- ²¹ This was not, however, Colombia's first civil war; no less than four civil wars preceded *la violencia*, although these are rarely mentioned (1876–7, 1885–6, 1895, and 1899–1902) (Simons 2004).
- ²² The leaders first established the 'Bloq Sur' (Southern Block) and only a few months later made a declaration from Moscow announcing itself as FARC. In May 1982, following the Seventh Guerrilla Conference, FARC added the initials EP to its name – Ejército del Pueblo (the People's Army). See Brittain (2010) for further background.
- ²³ For example of groups of this nature and the associated rites of terror, see Whitehouse and McQuinn (2012).
- ²⁴ FARC-EP, for instance, has an elaborated hierarchy and rank system for its members; see Brittain (2010).

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