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UNIVERSITY
OF
SAN FRANCISCO

**FROM CORPS TO CO-OPS: ARE CO-OPERATIVES A VIABLE REINTEGRATION
STRATEGY FOR EX-COMBATANTS?**

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE
IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

BY

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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 fairly 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 investigate the challenges faced by ex-military personnel, separating from the military on an individual basis, in their efforts to reintegrate back into civilian life. Through this effort, I aim 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 is to establish whether the co-operative model can help ex-combatants meet these challenges.

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 outright victory by one of the parties, these men, women, and unfortunately, children, had to be released back into civilian life.

Co-operatives are autonomous associations of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprises.

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 sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open time frame, primarily taking place in communities 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.

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

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACDF P & L	Assistant Chief of Defence Forces, Personnel and Logistics
CAK	Co-operative Alliance of Kenya
CCA	Canadian Co-operative Association
CCCM	Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité
CDF	Chief of Defence Forces
CECOP	European Confederation of cooperatives and worker-owned enterprises
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Col Pay	Colonel Pay
Col Pers	Colonel Personnel
CTP	Career Transition Partnership
CWCF	Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DEFOCA	Defence Forces Comrades Association
DFMIS	Defence Forces Medical Insurance Scheme
DHQ	Defence Headquarters
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GM	General Manager
ICA	International Co-operative Alliance
IDDRS	Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards
ILO	International Labour Organization
IRBPHS	Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

KA	Kenya Army
KA HQ	Kenya Army Headquarters
KAF	Kenya Air Force
KAF HQ	Kenya Air Force Headquarters
KAFOCA	Kenya Armed Forces Old Comrades Association
KCC	Kenya Co-operative Creameries
KDF	Kenya Defence Forces
KFA	Kenya Farmers Association
KN	Kenya Navy
KN HQ	Kenya Navy Headquarters
MAIS	Master of Arts in International Studies
MCC	Mondragon Cooperation Cooperativa
MD	Managing Director
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoIED	Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development
NACOs	National Associations of Co-operative Organizations
ONUCA	Observadores de las Naciones Unidas en Centroamerica
PALWECO	Programme for Agriculture & Livelihoods in Western Communities
PS	Principal Secretary
SACCOs	Savings and Credit Co-operative Societies
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SIDDR	Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
ST	Sudan Tribune

UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
URNG	National Revolutionary Union of Guatemala
US	United States
USF	University of San Francisco
VCDF	Vice Chief of Defence Forces

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I wish to acknowledge the support of my Fur brother Adeeb Abdelrahman Yousif, who introduced me as well as my work in Darfur to Professor Bartlett. I also thank my family for their support during the period that I undertook fieldwork for this study in Kenya. A big thank you to my best friend who has continuously played the role of “Devil’s Advocate” during the writing of this thesis and helped me to bring clarity to a number of my findings. Heartfelt thanks are also due to the people that I interviewed for this study for availing the time and sitting through the long interview sessions.

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Also, heartfelt thanks to my children Prisca Sanda Musibi and Apollo Ogambo Musibi for their enthusiastic support when I decided, at an advanced age, to return to class and to my MAIS'13 classmates who continuously encouraged and urged me on.

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To all of you I say *ahsanteni sana!*

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother Mrs. Prisca Sanda Chessa and to the memory of my late father Dr. Apollo Ogambo Ongoma.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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 has yet to produce any body 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 Definition of the Issue

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 little in 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 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The overall aim of this research is to advance the understanding of the challenges facing ex-military personnel 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.

Specifically, the objectives of this research were:

1. To identify the challenges that ex-military personnel separating from the military on an individual basis face in their reintegration into civilian life;
2. To explore the relationship, if any, between military characteristics and values and co-operative principles and values;
3. To explore historical and contemporary evidence of ex-combatants forming co-operatives to meet the challenges similar to those identified in the first objective;
4. To formulate recommendations on how the co-operative model could be implemented as a reintegration strategy for ex-combatants.

The first objective focuses on individual challenges, how the ex-military personnel are responding to those challenges, and the mediating institutions, if any, they are using in that response. The second and third objectives seek to make a link, if any, between military characteristics and values and co-operative principles and values as well as to explore historical and contemporary evidence of ex-combatants personnel forming co-operatives and will make a key contribution to the merit or demerit of incorporating the co-operative model as a strategy for reintegration of ex-combatants in both peacetime and post-conflict contexts. The fourth objective will attempt to proffer a framework within which the co-operative model could be employed in reintegration programmes. While making this distinction, it is important to point out that these research objectives are necessarily interlinked. The first objective – the challenges to successful reintegration – covers institutional, societal, and personal challenges, each of which will have a bearing on the planning of reintegration programs. The second and third objectives – on the relationship between military and co-operative principles and values as well as the historical and

contemporary evidence of ex-combatants forming co-operatives – are key to making the case for incorporating the co-operative model in reintegration programming and provide an opportunity to highlight the need for post-demobilization continued contact of ex-combatants, paying special attention to how this model could foster *Esprit de Corps*, that glue that contributes to making the military a cohesive institution (Ben-Shalom, Lehrer, & Ben-Ari, 2005). Finally, the fourth objective – formulating recommendations – will, as a result of both a review of literature and the collection and discussion of empirical data, make recommendations on how the co-operative model could be employed in the reintegration process. The objectives are not to be seen as independent of each other, but rather as all linked to issues surrounding reintegration of ex-combatants at an individual level.

This research seeks to answer three questions. First is the question of the challenges that ex-military personnel 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.

The next chapter – Literature Review – examines literature pertinent to the objectives of this research, beginning with an exploration of literature on reintegration.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 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), I argue 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). I further argue that having a good understanding of how military personnel 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. This position is supported by Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) who state that:

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-military personnel transitioning from military to civilian as individuals.

But 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 time-frame, 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. But, 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-military personnel. 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.

Numerous studies of the military as a social group as opposed to an organization have arrived at the conclusion that there exists a uniquely military identity (Woodward & Jenkins, 2011; Kirke, 2009;

Zirker, Danopoulos, & Simpson, 2008; Nesbitt & Reingold, 2011; Jackson, Thoemmes, Jonkmann, Lüdtke, & Trautwein, 2012; Black & Papile, 2010). 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. Members of a group have a specific affinity with one another because of their similar experience (or way of life), which prompts them to associate with one another more than those not identified with the 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 that “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 a country like Kenya, the constitution dictates that the composition of the military reflects the true “face of Kenya”. This means that all the

country's 42 ethnic groups are targeted during recruitment exercises. This diverse ethnic mix of recruits is then molded through training and induction into what could essentially be classified as a "43rd ethnic group". In a sense then, the military establishment is a social group with a strong identity and separation from it will necessarily entail a change in identity.

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 lies 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 members 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 dependent 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.

Within the Kenyan context, two mediating institutions exist to support ex-military personnel. These are the Defence Forces Comrades Association (DEFOCA) and the Defence Forces Medical Insurance Scheme (DFMIS). While I have not come across any scholarly literature on these two institutions, I have utilized online resources to highlight their roles.

DEFOCA is an offspring of the British Legion, African Section. The British Legion African Section was established in Kenya immediately after the end of the Second World War to cater for the welfare of the ex-servicemen of the First and Second World Wars. The British Legion African Section was disbanded on 30th September 1960. In its place a new body "The Kings African Rifles and East African Forces Old Comrades Association", sanctioned by the British Legion in London, came into existence on 1st January 1961. In order to accommodate the Kenya Air Force and Kenya Navy, this association was renamed the Kenya Armed Forces Old Comrades Association (KAFOCA). In order to comply with the provisions of the constitution promulgated in 2010 that renames the Kenya Armed Forces as the Kenya Defence Forces, and allow for membership by serving members, the association underwent another name change to become the Kenya Defence Forces Comrades Association (DEFOCA).

The main objective of DEFOCA is to promote the welfare of serving and retired members of the Kenya Defence Forces by raising funds through membership fees as well as soliciting and accepting gifts and donations, by investing the funds in income generating programmes, relieving distress, alleviating poverty and generally improving the welfare of members in need through financial assistance to ex-servicemen and benevolent fund to serving personnel, and playing the role of uniting ex-service personnel through membership and subscription.

Membership to DEFOCA is voluntary and open to all ex-military personnel including those who served with the British Forces during the Second World War¹.

DFMIS came into existence when the top leadership of the Kenyan Military realized that their retirees were becoming vulnerable to ill health once their entitlement to healthcare ceased upon separation from the military. This realization led to the introduction of DFMIS. The goal of this scheme was to give serving members the chance to contribute a small portion of their basic salary (3.1% of one's basic salary) towards the scheme. This amount would in turn accumulate over a period of time so as to enable them and their dependants access healthcare in their retirement, without further subscription.

Subscription to the scheme was voluntary for serving members of the Kenya Defence Forces who were in active service at its commencement up to 31st December 2001. From 1st January 2002, the scheme became mandatory for all persons joining the Kenya Defence Forces. Every person who subscribes to the scheme, in the case of serving members of Defence Forces, remains a member until he or she dies or retires. In the event of death whether he/she was a fully paid up member or not, his/her membership ceases without affecting the rights of the dependants who continue to receive benefits, in the case of spouse, for life and in case of children, up to the age of 21 with a possibility of extension to the age of 25 under special circumstances.

When a fully paid up member retires, he and his dependants are entitled to all the benefits provided by the scheme. Every contributor is required to nominate one spouse and a maximum of four dependants. A contributor is allowed to declare and nominate his/her dependants only once. Under normal circumstances, contributor and spouse enjoy the benefits of the scheme until death².

¹ www.mod.go.ke/?page_link=kafoca

² www.mod.go.ke/?page_link=medscheme

2.2 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.”³

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

³ Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General, during the launch of the International Year of Co-operatives

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 community⁴.

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

⁴ <http://ica.coop/en/what-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles>

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 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 Arizmendiarieta, 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 Summit⁵ 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 line up 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'⁶.

⁵ <http://cemea.economistconferences.com/event/spain-summit#.Uqd0sWQW030>

⁶ <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, a 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, I have 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.

2.3. 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 organisations 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. But 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.

2.4. 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. As a consequence, 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 Arizmendiarieta, 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 canonisation of Fr Jose María Arizmendiarieta, 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 is an anomaly that 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.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Introduction

As an introduction to this chapter, I would like to reiterate the goal of this study, its purpose and significance. I undertook this study to find out from ex-military personnel in Busia County, Republic of Kenya, 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.

In this chapter, I outline the methods I used to seek answers to the research questions, as articulated in the introduction, and repeated here:

1. What are the challenges faced by ex-military personnel 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?

3.2. 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 was not possible. Instead, I opted to interview ex-military personnel in Busia County, in the Republic of Kenya (see maps below).

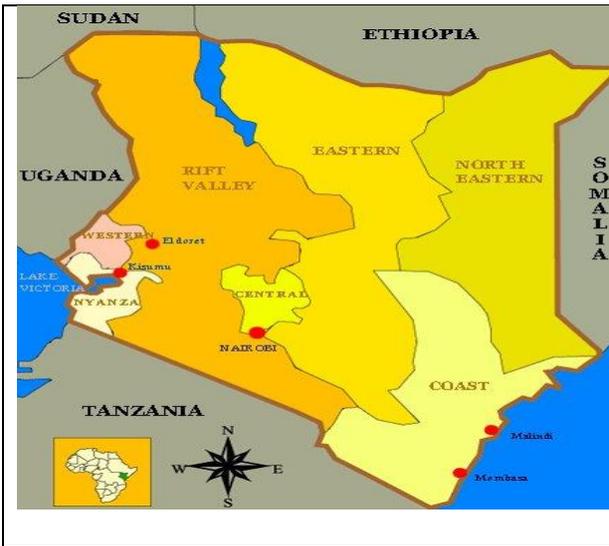


Plate 1 – Map of Kenya



Plate 2 – Map of Western Province

Province

On the left is the map of Kenya showing the location of Western Province. On the right is the map of Western Province showing the location of Busia County.

Busia County lies on the western part of the Republic of Kenya, bordering the neighboring Republic of Uganda. The county comprises seven districts namely: Busia, Bunyala, Butula, Nambale, Samia, Teso North, and Teso South. The 2009 Kenya Population Census put the county’s population at 736,300. The county covers a geographical area of 1,695 Square Kilometers. Among its population, an

estimated 117,800 (16.6%) live in urban areas. The county has a poverty prevalence of 65%, among the highest in the Republic. The population density for the county is currently 434 inhabitants per square kilometer. The main source of income is agriculture.

Physical infrastructure is in very poor condition and insufficient thus hampering access to markets and services. Local markets do not function. Land rights issues and awareness of rights of women to land continues to plague the county. Environmental degradation resulting in soil erosion and poor soil fertility affect crop yields. There is a lack of capacity to plan, finance and implement community as well as individual projects and investments. The communities' self-organization as well as their capacity to influence structures and processes that affect their livelihoods is weak. As a result, there is very limited access to basic services and resources. Many youths are unemployed or underemployed and this has led to a great number of them being idle and developing negative attitudes, resulting in conflicts with parents over land use and anti-social behaviour such as substance abuse and prostitution (PALWECO, 2012).

From this overview of Busia County, we can see that the county bears a stark resemblance to many post-conflict countries and thus serves as a suitable proxy site for the research. Investigating the challenges of reintegration in a peacetime context will help us to understand the comparative difficulties that we should be prepared to encounter in a post-conflict context.

3.3. Research Design

This research took a qualitative approach employing the survey strategy. A survey is a method of collecting data from a selected set of respondents either through interviews or administering a questionnaire (Orodho, 2009). This strategy was chosen because the research was investigating human

phenomena and the individual was the unit of analysis (Babbie, 2001; Bhattacharjee, 2012). The research was going to collect data about people, their preferences and behaviours (Kothari, 2003; Orodho, 2009; Bhattacharjee, 2012). Additionally, the study was to take place within a limited timeframe that did not lend itself to more rigorous strategies, for example, grounded theory, ethnography, or case study (Bhattacharjee, 2012). While the individual was the unit of analysis, three focus group discussions were undertaken, as well as key informant interviews.

The target population for the study was ex-military personnel (those who have served in the Kenya Army, Kenya Air Force, or Kenya Navy) living in Busia County. Because there is no central repository of data on ex-military personnel 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; Bhattacharjee, 2012).

3.4. 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. I 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. I also 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 were literate, the questionnaire was in English and contained both closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaire was pilot-tested on six respondents and then fine-tuned for clarity and

comprehensiveness. For key informants, a set of questions was sent to them in advance of the scheduled interview meetings.

I interviewed 35 ex-military personnel in Busia County, Kenya in order to gain from them an understanding of the challenges that they were facing since their separation from the military and what they are doing in order to cope. In addition, I conducted one focus group discussion with an all-ex-military membership self-help group. Though the questionnaire responses revealed membership in two other self-help groups, these were still informal and were undergoing the registration process to formalize them. Consequently, they were not able to respond to all the questions on the interview schedule.

Interviews with key informants within the mediating institutions for ex-military personnel 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-military personnel in Kenya, the Defence Forces Comrades Association (DEFOCA) and the Defence Forces Medical Insurance Scheme (DFMIS) were targeted. Within the co-operative movement in Kenya, the Co-operative Alliance of Kenya (CAK), and the Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development (MoIED) (responsible for co-operatives) were targeted. My intention was to gain a deeper understanding of the co-operative movement in Kenya as well as the efforts being made to promote co-operatives in line with the ICA's Blueprint on the Decade of Co-operatives.

3.5. Data Analysis

Once the data was collected, it was examined using the variable-oriented analysis (Babbie, 2001) to see if there were 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 required 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 I created notes of the profound points from interview responses. I edited and cleaned the field notes and then categorized these into themes in line with study objectives and the data were then analyzed. The results will be presented in narrative text form.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

Because the research was going to involve interviewing human subjects, I applied and got the approval of the USF Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) to conduct the research. On arrival in Kenya, before engaging in any data collection, I sought permission from relevant Kenyan authorities and from the respondents. I approached all respondents with a printed Informed Consent Form (Appendix 1), which I gave them to read and sign as having understood and consented to taking part in the research as a subject. To ensure that the respondents felt as comfortable about the interviews as possible, I explained to them the purpose of the study and assured them on the issue of confidentiality. All respondents were not required to enter their names on the questionnaire. However, one respondent agreed for his name to be used in order to put a human face to the study. Key informants are identified by their official titles as they were speaking on behalf of their institutions and not in their personal capacities.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I revisit the research questions and present 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-military personnel in their efforts to reintegrate back into civilian life in Busia County, Kenya. The second section reports on the focus group discussion held with ex-military members of Shabaa self-help group. 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 Kenya.

This study set out to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the challenges faced by ex-military personnel 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?

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 Five.

4.2. Questionnaire Results

I interviewed 35 ex-military personnel in Busia County of the Republic of Kenya using a questionnaire. Part I of the questionnaire collected demographic data. The ages of the respondents ranged from 43 for the youngest and 69 for the oldest. Two of the respondents were in their 40s, 22 in their 50s while 11 were in their 60s. Three of the respondents were commissioned officers (one Lieutenant Colonel and two Majors) while 32 were enlisted person ranging in rank from Private (the lowest) to Warrant Officer Class I (the highest). All the three services of the Kenya Defence Forces were represented. The army was represented by 21 respondents, the air force by 12 respondents, and the navy by two respondents. In terms of length of service, eight respondents fell in one to five years range, one in the six to ten years, one in the 11 to 20 years, ten in the 21 to 30 years and 15 had served for over 30 years.

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 35 respondents, six characterized their transition experience as very easy, six as easy, 12 as difficult and 11 as very difficult. From these responses, we find that 34% of the respondents found it very easy or easy to make the transition into civilian life while 66% 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. In response, 21 respondents (60%) said they had made a successful transition while 14 respondents (40%) said had not made a successful transition. On factors contributing to successful transition, of the 21 respondents saying they had made a successful transition 21 cited adequate and sustainable source of income, 21 cited good health, 19 cited friendship with fellow ex-military personnel, 16 cited good family relationships, and 13 cited planning ahead. The next question was whether the respondents had attended a pre-separation seminar prior to their release from the military. Eight respondents said they had attended such a seminar while 27 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 (22) said they did not have a clear idea. Of the eight respondents who had undergone a pre-separation seminar, six also stated that they had a clear idea of what they were going to do in civilian life. On the other hand, of the 27 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.

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. Three of the respondents were in full-time employment, with one of them also being a pensioner. 25 were pensioners with pensions ranging from the equivalent of US Dollars 25 to 500 per month, while 27 were engaged in small businesses. All 35 respondents reported being engaged in small-scale farming to supplement their income. The 27 who responded as being engaged in small businesses reported that the businesses were not related to the jobs they were doing in the military.

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 (25), functioning

in a non-structured environment (24), and the perceived lack of support from the military once they had separated (20). 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. Of the 35 respondents in this study only eight are members of DEFOCA while 27 are not. The same goes for DFMS where eight are members and 27 are not. These eight are not the same people though we have some, especially those separating recently, who are members of both institutions. Most of the respondents cited the dormancy or non-existence of the former in rural areas and the non-existence of the latter during the time they were in active service. When asked if they were members of any self-help group, 25 respondents said they were members while 10 responded that they were not. The reasons for non-membership were two. Seven of respondents stated that they had not found a suitable group to join while three respondents said they were not interested. The 25 respondents who stated that they were members of a self-help group belong to three different groups. The first group is composed of exclusively ex-military personnel with their spouses. The second group is composed of almost half ex-military and half civilian. The third group only has two ex-military personnel, the rest being civilians.

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 35 respondents, 28 said that they had been members of a co-operative while seven had not. When asked whether they were currently members of a co-operative, all the 35 respondents replied that they were currently not members of a co-operative. The 28 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 also required to cease membership of the co-operative to which most military personnel belong. 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 35 respondents answered that they would join such a cooperative.

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-military members of the three self-help groups mentioned in the questionnaire responses. However, it turned out that only one was fully registered and operational. The other two were still informal as they were yet to complete the registration process and could thus not respond fully to the interview questions. However, I will touch on them at the end of this section. The detailed results in this section are in respect of the one registered and operational self-help group – Shabaa Self-Help Group. 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.

Shabaa Self-Help Group is based in Nambale District of Busia County. It is a non-political socio-economic group that, according to its constitution, was formed to promote the unity, improve the socio-economic status of its members, create income-generating projects, encourage togetherness, solve members' disputes and promote respect among the community. Membership is voluntary and open to ex-military personnel on a pension (to ensure that one has a steady income for monthly subscriptions) and of good conduct. On joining the group, a new member pays a one-time membership fee and a monthly subscription. It currently has a membership of 15 ex-military personnel with their spouses. The group holds monthly meetings to discuss, plan for and execute their activities as well as one annual

social gathering at Christmas. I was privileged to attend the monthly meeting held on July 4th, 2013 where I carried out focus group discussions with ten members of this group.

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 pension one receives on separation from the military is not adequate to sustain one and the family.”⁷

“The pension is not reviewed in accordance with the cost of living. For example, I retired in 1996 with a monthly pension of Kenya Shillings 2,000. With the high cost of living, this amount cannot sustain my family for one week, let alone one month!”⁸

“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 group within which to socialize.”⁹

“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

⁷ Exmil008, July 4th 2013, Kisoko, Busia County

⁸ Exmil015, July 4th 2013, Kisoko, Busia County

⁹ Exmil014, July 4th 2013, Kisoko, Busia County

their level. The only way to avoid such is by coming together as retired military personnel to help each other with ideas that can build us.”¹⁰

The group is currently involved in various activities of both an economic and social nature. From an economic perspective, the activities include: a share savings scheme, leasing of land and planting sugarcane for sale to local sugar manufacturing companies, and a merry-go-round through which each member contributes approximately US Dollars 25.00 and give to the couple hosting their monthly meetings. This means that the hosts get on average US Dollars 375.00, which is a good amount in local currency. From a social perspective, the activities include: monthly meetings where members socialize as they transact the month’s business, an annual Christmas gathering, and a funeral expenses contributory scheme (to assist in meeting the funeral expenses of any member who passes on).

When asked why the funeral expenses contributory scheme was started, their responses were quite interesting. Some are quoted below:

“Even in death, a soldier must die and be buried in dignity. Since the military forgets us once we have retired, we have to come together to make sure that we will be there to ensure that any colleague who passes on is accorded a burial befitting one who sacrificed for his country.”¹¹

“We don’t want to die in obscurity. We want people to know that the person lying in that coffin was a person of honour. We are even right now working on a formal dress in which a fallen colleague will be buried – a black suit, a white shirt, and a black tie. We will be the poll bearers and we will be dressed in black suits, black shirts, and red ties to pay our last respects. After we

¹⁰ Exmil010, July 4th 2013, Kisoko, Busia County

¹¹ Exmil003, July 4th 2013, Kisoko, Busia County

have lowered our colleague into the grave, we will each take turns to stand at the head of the grave and smartly bow to bid our fallen colleague farewell.”¹²

As for the future, the group intends to venture into a loaning scheme, dairy farming as well as fish farming.

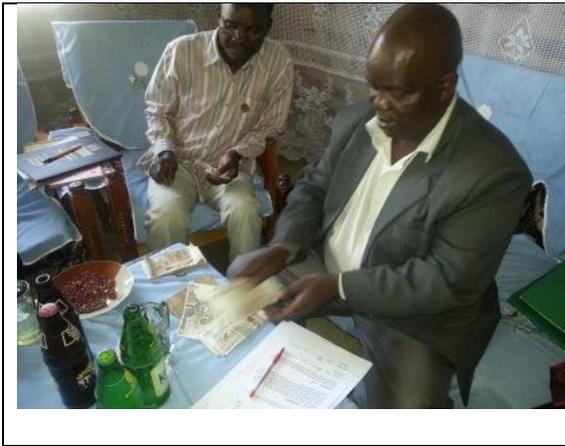


Plate 3 – Lt. Col (Rtd) Owino & a group member



Plate 4 – Lt. Col (Rtd) Owino & spouse of the host

In the picture on the left, Lt. Col. Owino counts and records the monthly merry-go-round contributions. In the picture on the right, Lt. Col. Owino hands over the merry-go-round funds to the spouse of the host of the July 2013 meeting.

The meetings of this group start on time. Any late arrival by a member draws an immediate fine of approximately six US Dollars, and so does abstention without advance notice to any of the group’s officials. Those absent from the monthly meetings remit their monthly contribution via the M-Pesa mobile money platform. One of the items on the agenda of the meeting of 4th July 2013 was the

¹² Exmil016, July 4th 2013, Kisoko, Busia County

purchase of ceremonial dress to be worn by members when acting as poll-bearers for any fallen colleague – dark suits, black shirts and red ties.

The other two groups, namely Retirees Comrades Self-Help Group of Maliki Village and Mundika Retirees Self-Help Group of Mundika Market have not advanced their groups to the level of sophistication of Shabaa Self-Help Group. Of those two, the Retirees Comrades, also have monthly meetings. I was privileged to attend the monthly meeting for July, which was held on 7th July 2013. The meeting was not well attended. I was told that this was because it was a Sunday and the members worship in different churches and the worship services end at different times.

When I asked about their motivation for starting or joining the self-help group, the two answers provided reflected the socio-economic nature of the group. The first reason was the need for comradeship and an opportunity for socialization among the retirees. The second reason was the need to supplement the pension that they receive from the government which was seen as inadequate to meet the needs of a retiree's family. The group has started some income generating activities. Currently, they have plastic tables and plastic chairs, which they hire out to people from within a radius of 10 kilometres who have functions. They plan to buy tents to complement the plastic tables and chairs so that they can provide a total sitting solution to people with functions. Mundika Retirees Self-Help Group is currently in a formative stage. They also hold monthly meetings. I was privileged to attend their July meeting, which was held on 5th July 2013. Their reasons for forming or joining the group were also of a socio-economic nature. However, taking into account the fact that they are still in a formative stage, they have not embarked on any income generating activities.

4.4. Key Informant Interviews Results

Key informant interviews were carried with two mediating institutions that are meant to support ex-military personnel in their reintegration efforts - the Defence Forces Comrades Association (DEFOCA) and the Defence Forces Medical Insurance Scheme (DFMIS). Additionally, in order to gain a deep understanding of the co-operative movement in Kenya, key informant interviews were also undertaken with key players in the co-operative movement in Kenya.

4.4.1. Defence Forces Comrades Association

The researcher contacted the General Manager of Defence Forces Comrades Association (DEFOCA) requesting for an interview with him or his representative. The request was granted and the interview was scheduled for 24th July 2013. On the appointed day, the researcher availed himself at the offices of DEFOCA and had an introductory conversation with the General Manager before he was handed over to the administrative officer for an in-depth interview. The researcher had sent a list of questions to DEFOCA in advance and these questions guided the interview.

The key informant¹³ was asked to define the organization and state its objectives. In response, he stated that DEFOCA is an acronym for Defence Forces Comrades Association. It is a state-sponsored welfare organization registered under the Societies Act, Cap 108 of the Laws of Kenya. It operates under the Ministry of Defence with the main objective of improving the welfare of both serving and retired members of the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF).

¹³ DEFOCA Admin. Officer, July 24th 2013, Nyayo House, Nairobi

Next, the key informant was asked about DEFOCA's organizational structure from the national to the grassroots level. In response, he stated that in order to show the government's commitment to the welfare of serving and retired members of the KDF, His Excellency the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces of the Republic of Kenya is the patron of DEFOCA. The Trustees of DEFOCA are the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) the Vice Chief of Defence Forces (VCDF) the Principal Secretary (PS) of the Ministry of Defence, the Commander Kenya Army (KA), the Commander Kenya Air Force (KAF), and the Commander Kenya Navy (KN). The governing body of the association is the National Council and is composed of the Trustees with the addition of the Chairman, Board of Management (this position is occupied by the incumbent of the office of the Assistant Chief of Defence Forces, Personnel and Logistics (ACDF P&L)), the Treasurer (this position is occupied by the incumbent of the office of Colonel Pay, Defence Headquarters (Col Pay DHQ)), two branch representatives on a rotational basis, and the Secretary (this position is occupied by the incumbent of the office of Chief of Legal). The Board of Management comprises the ACDF P & L as the Chairman, Col Pay DHQ as the Treasurer, and members – Colonel Personnel, Defence Headquarters (Col Pers DHQ), General Manager, DEFOCA, Col Pers (KA HQ), Col Pers (KAF HQ), Col Pers (KN HQ), three branch representatives on a yearly rotational basis, and the Secretary (who is the Administrative Officer, DEFOCA). The General Manager (GM) is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DEFOCA and together with his staff, has responsibility of day-to-day management of the Association. At the grassroots level are the County Branches of which there are 47, one for each of the 47 counties in which the country is divided. Each branch has an elected leadership comprising a chairman, secretary and treasurer.

In the next question on the interview schedule, the key informant was asked how DEFOCA recruits members. In response, he stated that membership to the association was initially voluntary.

However, in 2010, it became compulsory as a matter of policy for new entrants into the KDF. Following this change in policy, serving members of KDF were given a window of opportunity to join the Association. The window has since closed.

The next question on the interview schedule was whether DEFOCA has ever commissioned or been involved in any study to establish the socio-economic status of retired military personnel. In response, the key informant stated that to the best of his knowledge, no such a study has ever been undertaken. However, he pointed out that DEFOCA has introduced a number of socio-economic and environmental activities within its branches countrywide, which are assessed and awarded annually. While these were still at the pilot stage, they could set a stage for a study in the future.

The next question on the interview schedule was whether DEFOCA maintain records of all retired military personnel and where they are. In response, the key informant stated that since not all retired military personnel are members, DEFOCA maintains records of all its contributors, both serving and retired members, and their counties. Through DEFOCA's county officials, they are able to monitor their members, including their status in the community.

The last question on the interview was on the sort of assets that DEFOCA has and how these assets benefited members. In response, the key informant stated that DEFOCA has a number of properties across the country, which are mainly in the form of real estate. Some of these properties have been developed in the form of hotels, clubs, residential hostels and halls. All developed properties attract monthly rents. A portion of the proceeds from the properties flow back to maintain them while the other portion is invested in fixed deposit accounts to accrue interest. This revenue stream is then used to assist members. Additionally, DEFOCA offers non-repayable financial assistance to members in need on a case-by-case basis. In the future, with improved financial capacity, DEFOCA plans to start paying dividends to its members.

4.4.2. Defence Forces Medical Insurance Scheme

I requested an interview with the Managing Director of the Defence Forces Medical Insurance Scheme (DFMIS). The request was granted and the interview scheduled for 24th July 2013. To guide this interview, I had formulated five questions.

In the first question, the key informant¹⁴ was asked to define the organization and state its objectives. In response, he stated that DFMIS is a medical insurance scheme operating under the Ministry of Defence with the objective of providing healthcare to retired military personnel, their spouses, and their children aged up to 21 years. Under special circumstances, this ceiling can be raised to 25 years. The scheme was in response to the realization by the Kenyan Military senior leadership that their retirees were becoming vulnerable to ill health. DFMIS is registered as a Trust under the Trustees (Perpetual Succession) Act Cap 164 and all other enabling provisions of the Laws of Kenya. The main objective of the scheme is to give a chance to serving members of KDF to plan for healthcare upon retirement by setting aside a small portion of one's basic salary, which would build up over time that would then be used to provide members and their families with healthcare services after retirement, without further subscription.

The next question on the interview schedule was on the management of the Trust. In response, the key informant stated that the overall management of the Trust is vested in a Board of Trustees, which is the highest policy and decision-making organ of the Trust. It comprises the Cabinet Secretary for Defence (Chairman), the Chief of Defence Forces (member), Principal Secretary, Ministry of Defence (member), Commander KA (member), Commander KAF (member), Commander KN (member), retirees representative (member) ACDF P & L (Secretary), and the Managing Director (MD)

¹⁴ Managing Director, DFMIS, July 24th 2013, Nyayo House, Nairobi

DFMIS (ex-officio member). The day-to-day management of the Trust is vested the Managing Director assisted by six professionals staff.

On the question of membership of the Trust, the key informant stated that initially, membership was voluntary for all serving members of the Kenya Defence Forces who were in service at the commencement of the scheme. From 1st January 2002, membership became compulsory for all new entrants into the KDF. Former members of the Kenya Defence Forces who had retired honourably with a service gratuity and or a pension during the period of ten years immediately preceding the commencement date of the scheme were eligible to become members of the Trust upon payment of an assessed amount of money.

The next question on the interview schedule was about the benefits of DFMIS. In response, the key informant stated that members of the DFMIS, upon retirement can access healthcare at selected health facilities across the country. For in-patient healthcare, the scheme shall pay 100% of legitimate bills incurred by a member or dependant during his or her hospitalization except for specialized cases, which are handled on a case-by-case basis. For outpatient healthcare, the scheme shall pay 75% of the legitimate bills incurred by a member or dependant except for specialized cases to be handled on a case-by-case basis. The member shall be responsible for 25% of the total bill. For a member who joins the Trust after his or her retirement, the benefits take effect on the date when he or she pays the required premium as laid down in the rules and regulations of the Trust. These benefits are available and obtainable only in the Republic of Kenya except in specialized cases, which will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

The last question on the interview schedule was whether a retiring member could withdraw from the scheme. In response, the key informant stated that a retiring member could opt for a refund without

interest although this is not encouraged, as it defeats the whole purpose of setting up the scheme in the first place.

4.4.3. The Co-operative Movement in Kenya

To gain a deeper understanding of the current state of the co-operative movement in Kenya, key informants from two institutions were interviewed. The first was a senior government official in the Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development while the second was a programme officer with the Co-operative Alliance of Kenya, the umbrella or apex body of the co-operative movement in Kenya. These interviews took place between July 17th and August 9th 2013.

In my interview with the Senior Assistant Commissioner of Co-operative Development in the Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development (MoIED), I wanted to understand the government's policy on co-operatives, especially as it concerned military and ex-military personnel. The interview was guided by four questions.

The first question was the role of the government in the co-operative movement. In his response, the key informant¹⁵ stated that the main role was to provide the legal framework within which the co-operatives operate. Through the Co-operative Societies Act Cap 490 of the Laws of Kenya, the department of co-operative development 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 Act, and providing an enabling environment for the growth of the co-operative movement.

¹⁵ Senior Assistant Commissioner of Co-operative Development, July 17th 2013, NSSF Building, Nairobi

The second question was on the involvement of the military in co-operatives. In his response, the key informant stated that the military is fully involved in co-operatives through the savings and credit co-operative societies (SACCOs). The Harambee Savings and Credit Co-operative Society, whose membership includes the bulk of military personnel in the country is one of the most vibrant SACCOs.

The third question was on the government policy on co-operatives for ex-military personnel. The researcher stated that the reason for this question was that his field research had revealed that all the ex-military personnel interviewed for the study were not members of a co-operative even though a majority had been members of a co-operative prior to their separation from the military. The reason provided by the respondents was that they were required to clear with their co-operative society before they were released from the military. In response, the key informant stated that there was no specific policy on ex-military personnel and co-operatives. He posited that the reason why the ex-military personnel ceased to be members of their co-operatives upon separation from the military could be that since most SACCOs operation on the basis of “common bond”, as opposed to “common interest”, the bond between the member and his or her co-operative is active service. Once out of service, that bond is broken. Though the government does not currently have a policy on SACCOs for non-formal workers, nor on worker co-operatives, he did not see any reason why ex-military personnel could not come together and form a co-operative. He gave as an example the Lokichoggio Multi-purpose Co-operative Society, which was a labour co-operative (a form of worker co-operative) that was formed by unemployed youth in the northern Kenya town of Lokichoggio, to provide labour to the United Nations Operation Lifeline Sudan, which operated a large humanitarian logistical base in the town.

The fourth question was on the government’s strategy for promoting co-operatives in line with the Decade of Co-operatives. In response, the key informant pointed out that the placing of the co-operatives department in the Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development was the

government's acknowledgement of the critical role that the co-operative movement can play in the economy and especially in the industrialization of the country. He pointed out that the government has invited Mondragon University from the Basque region of Spain to partner with the Co-operative University College of Kenya to revamp the latter's curriculum to support this endeavor. He also pointed out the initiative to draw Kenyans in the diaspora into the co-operative movement at home through the establishment of Diaspora SACCOs. Two of these SACCOs namely the Kenya-US Sacco and the Kenya-UK Sacco are already operational. Four others covering Kenyans in the Middle East, Australia, Central Europe, and South Africa are in the pipeline. Lastly, plans are in the offing for the establishment of an ethics commission for co-operatives.

The next key informant¹⁶ to be interviewed in the co-operative movement was a programme officer with the Co-operative Alliance of Kenya (CAK). The interview was guided by three questions.

The first question was on the history of the co-operative movement in Kenya. The key informant was asked to provide a brief history of the co-operative movement in Kenya. In her response, she stated that co-operatives were first introduced in Kenya in 1908. They were introduced by colonial settlers in the fertile Rift Valley region. The first co-operative was the Kenya Farmers Association, which started its life as Lumbwa Co-operative Society in 1908. In 1923, it changed its name to Kenya Farmers Association (KFA). Its main objective was to purchase farm inputs for its members. A dairy co-operative, the Kenya Co-operative Creameries (KCC), followed it. KCC was established informally in 1925 when Mr. Hugh Cholmondeley Delamere, later Lord Delamere, the founder and its most active member, teamed up with other settlers to import grade cows for milk production. It was officially registered in 1935. These two co-operatives are still in existence today.

¹⁶ Programme Officer, Co-operative Alliance of Kenya, July 31st 2013, CAK Offices, Co-operative University College of Kenya, Karen, Nairobi

At Kenya's independence there were 1,300 cooperatives with a membership of 300,000. The new government quickly recognized the role that co-operatives could play in eradicating extreme poverty. In 1965 the government developed a policy paper promoting co-operatives and providing support to the co-operative sector. However, the advent of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) negatively affected agricultural co-operatives. Under economic liberalization pushed by the Bretton Woods Institutions, the government was compelled to scrap the Ministry of Co-operative Development in 1997. This situation prevailed until 2003 when the newly elected government revived the ministry and in 2004 enacted the Co-operatives Act.

The second question was on the structure of the co-operative movement in Kenya. The key informant stated that there are various categories of co-operatives in Kenya. The first category includes what are referred to as primary societies. These are mainly producer and savings and credit co-operatives. The second category has those referred to as secondary societies, which are mainly marketing co-operatives. Next, we have National Associations of Co-operative Organizations (NACOs), which are formed as umbrella organizations for the primary and secondary societies. At the apex of the movement is the Co-operative Alliance of Kenya.

The third question was on the current status of the co-operative movement in Kenya. In response, the key informant stated that there are now 14,000 co-operatives in Kenya compared to 3,000 at independence in 1963. 38% are agricultural co-operatives, 45% are SACCOs, while 17% are miscellaneous (housing, youth, artisan, sand harvesting, handicrafts, investment, Diaspora, multipurpose, etc.) The current membership stands at over 10 million, compared with 300,000 at independence. The co-operative sector employs 555,000 people. Savings and Credit Co-operative Societies are introducing new products in the market such as back office and front office services. With 30% of savings, the sector controls Kenya Shillings 230 billion (approximately US Dollars 271 million)

in savings. With this performance, the movement is rated as the leader on the African continent and rated seventh in the world.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the results of the study of ex-military personnel in Busia County, Republic of Kenya 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-military personnel 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 two fifths (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 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 dependent 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 factor identified as contributing to a successful transition is good health. While in the Black and Papile (2010) study mental health was emphasized, in the Kenyan context, the emphasis was on physical health. This may be due to the fact that the Kenyan military has not been engaged in major combat operations. However, this is likely to change with Kenya's current involvement in combat operations in neighboring Somalia. It is therefore important to start looking into issues of mental health in reintegration programmes. Military personnel will 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 such effects. The move by the senior leadership of the Kenyan military to establish the DFMS to ensure quality and adequate healthcare for its retirees is thus commendable. However, as seen from the responses of the respondents in this study on membership of the scheme, only eight (23%) indicated as being members. There appears to be a disconnect between the scheme's objectives on the one hand and the perception of the target beneficiaries of the scheme on the other. Even if this disconnect could be addressed, with DFMS having closed the window of opportunity for ex-military personnel to join the scheme, it is no longer an option for those already separated and who are not members. A co-operative could provide its members with the financial resources needed to access quality healthcare. In the future, a healthcare co-operative could be a suitable alternative through which to provide healthcare for them.

The third success factor is friendship with ex-military 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 military personnel develop strong connections with one another, connections quite unlike those found in civilian life. It is therefore natural for ex-soldiers 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-military personnel 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-military people. However, since integration takes place in communities, ex-military personnel 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 Busia County and its similarity with post-conflict countries.

The fourth 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 three self-help groups (Shabaa and Retiree Comrades) interviewed for this study where we have spouses actively involved in the activities of the self-help groups. 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 fifth and 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.

Kenya has recently introduced pre-retirement seminars for personnel scheduled for retirement from the Kenya Defence Forces. During the interviews, the eight respondents who went through these seminars found them useful, however one of them lamented that the seminar had come too late after he had spent most of his resources in *laissez-faire* living during his military service. In addition, the Military Veterans Bill, 2013, which is currently being debated in the Kenyan Parliament, is aimed at ensuring a smooth and seamless transition for military veterans from active military service to civilian life. If enacted into law, it will provide benefits to military personnel being honourably discharged from the Kenya Defence Forces. The benefits will include: dedicated counselling and treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder or related conditions; education, training and skills development; facilitation of employment placement; facilitation of or advice on business opportunities; pension; access to health care; and housing.

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”¹⁷ 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. However, there is a group that all the three programs are not addressing, those ex-military personnel who are dishonourably discharged and therefore do not qualify for these benefits. This is an issue I will return to when making the case for a co-operative approach to reintegration.

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

¹⁷ <http://www.army.mil/soldierforlife>

information and assistance as possible before entering the reintegration phase which takes place in the community. This information and assistance should be aimed at 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 & Jenkins, 2011; Kirke, 2009; Zirker, Danopoulos, & Simpson, 2008; Nesbitt & Reingold, 2008; Jackson, Thoemmes, Jonkmann, Lüdtkke, & 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. A military person leaving this kind of regimented and structured life into civilian life is likely to have a very hard time readjusting.

Even in death, ex-military personnel still expect to be recognized as such. As it became evident from my discussions with members of Shabaa Self-Help Group, they want to ensure that departed colleagues are given decent and honourable burials and the surviving colleagues will be present in uniform, albeit civilian, to ensure this. From my key informant interview with DEFOCA, I was told that this was not unique to Shabaa but was common with military retirees across the nation. He showed me a picture in DEFOCA's Newsletter for 2012 where military retirees, who are DEFOCA members from Kakamega, a county that borders Busia, were rehearsing for a burial parade for their late chairman. Instead of using the G-3 rifle, as would be case were the deceased a serving member, they were using sticks. The picture is reproduced below, even it is not very clear.



Plate 5 – “Present Arms!”

Members of DEFOCA, Kakamega County, rehearsing for the burial of their departed chairman. Notice the “present arms” using sticks as opposed to rifles.

The perceived lack of support by military authorities once one retires was another challenge cited by a majority of the respondents. The respondents citing this challenge felt that once they had cleared with the military, it was like the military “washed off its hands” and did not want anything to do with the retirees. This finding is perplexing to the researcher. There are two mediating institutions in place to help ease the transition from military to civilian life. These are DEFOCA and DFMIS. With the noble objectives and elaborate services offered by these two state-sponsored institutions, one would expect almost universal subscription. Unfortunately, the reality tells a very different story. Of the 35 respondents on this study, only eight (23%) indicated membership of each of the institutions. The 77% that were non-members of DEFOCA stated that it was dormant and therefore of no use to them. The reason given for non-membership of DFMIS was that the scheme was not in place by the time they were separating from the military.

During the researcher’s interviews with the two institutions, they stated that a window of opportunity was given for non-members to join after membership had been made compulsory at the point of entry into the defence forces. On the part of DEFOCA, it was stated that it was the officials and members who made their branches vibrant and therefore if a branch was dormant, branch officials and members were to blame. On its part, DFMIS stated that ample time was provided for those who were already out of the military at the scheme’s inception to join and if they had not, it was because they did not want to. One would like to question how the information on the window of opportunity was conveyed to the military retirees but that would not be helpful. But as we have also seen, the Military Veterans’ Bill, 2013 currently before the Kenyan Parliament will address these concerns. The Bill defines a military veteran as any Kenyan citizen who: (a) has rendered military service to the Kenya Defence Forces; (b) served in the King's African Rifles before 1963; or (c) became a member of the Kenya Armed Forces after 1963; and (d) has completed his service in the Kenya Defence Forces and has

not been dishonourably discharged. This broad definition will cover all the respondents who served to their retirement ages and were honourably discharged.

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-military personnel, 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-military personnel 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-military person 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-military personnel face in their efforts to reintegrate into civilian life, they have a number of limitations and to these, we now turn.

5.3. 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 35 respondents in one county out of the 47 counties in which Kenya 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 Busia County. 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-military personnel 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.

5.4. 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-military personnel 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-military personnel in Busia County, Kenya independently identified several shared needs and decided to organize themselves into self-help groups in order to work towards meeting those needs. These self-help groups could easily be transformed into co-operatives.

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-military personnel 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. In Kenya, one of the consequences of SAPs, as we saw earlier, was the abolition in 1997 of the Ministry of Co-operative Development. According to Gregory et. al. (2009):

“It is sometimes noted that the 1991 World Development Report (shaped by former US Secretary of the Treasury Lawrence Summers) marked a neo-liberal watershed in its refiguring of the role of the state. But it was AFRICA (not LATIN AMERICA or eastern Europe) that proved to be the first testing ground of neo-liberalism’s assault on the over-extended public sector, on physical capital formation and on the proliferation of market distortions by government” (p.64).

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.

5.5. 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 the

Kenyan context, once the Military Veterans Bill, 2013 is enacted into law, and the establishment of the department of veterans' affairs called for in the Bill, a study covering the whole country should be undertaken in order to assist the department to understand the challenges facing military veterans so as to formulate responses that are relevant to the situation.

For the post-conflict context prevailing in South Sudan, I recommended 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.

5.6. Conclusion

This study provides information on the subjectively reported experiences of ex-military personnel in Busia County in the Republic of Kenya 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 SAN FRANCISCO

CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH SUBJECT

Purpose and Background: Patrick M. Musibi, a graduate student in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of San Francisco is doing a study on reintegration of ex-military personnel who have separated from the military on an individual basis in Busia County, Kenya. Current research on reintegration in the global South 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-military personnel 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-military person resident in Busia County, Kenya. 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-military personnel 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-military personnel separating from the military on an individual basis.

Costs/Financial Considerations

There will be no financial costs to me as a result of taking part in this study.

Payment/Reimbursement

I may receive a small token for my participation in this study. If I receive the token, it will be immediately after I have completed the questionnaire, survey, and interview. If I decide to withdraw from the study before I have completed participating or the researchers decide to terminate my study participation, I may still receive the token.

Questions

I have talked to Major (Rtd) Musibi 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. If for some reason I do not wish to do this, I may contact the IRBPHS, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. I may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message, by e-mailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the IRBPHS, Counseling Psychology Department, Education Building, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1071. Consent I have been given a copy of the “Research Subject’s Bill of Rights” and I have been given a copy of this consent form to keep. 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 as a student or employee at USF. 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 San Francisco

MA in International Studies

QUESTIONNAIRE

(for Ex-Military Personnel)

RESEARCH TOPIC: From Corps to Co-ops: Are Co-operatives a Viable Reintegration Strategy for Ex-Combatants?

RESEARCHER

Patrick M Musibi, Graduate Student, MA in International Studies

University of San Francisco, San Francisco, California, USA

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-military personnel 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-military personnel 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. DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

Age:

Gender:

Marital Status:

Service: Kenya Army; Kenya Air Force; Kenya Navy

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-military 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 DEFOCA? YES/NO, Why?

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

16. Are you a member of the Defence Forces Medical Insurance Scheme? YES/NO, Why?

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

18. Have you been a member of a co-operative? YES/NO

19. Why did you leave your former co-operative?

20. If a co-operative was formed that accepts ex-military personnel 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 group?
2. What are the group's objectives?
3. What activities is the group currently engaged in?
4. What is the future direction of the group?

Appendix 4

Key Informant Interview Schedule – Mediating Institutions

DEFENCE FORCES COMRADES ASSOCIATION (DEFOCA)

1. Could you please define the organization and state its objectives?
2. What is DEFOCA's organizational structure from the national to the grassroots level?
3. How does DEFOCA recruit its members?
4. Has DEFOCA ever commissioned or been involved in any study to establish the socio-economic status of retired military personnel?
5. Does DEFOCA maintain records of all retired military personnel and where they are?
6. What sort of assets does DEFOCA have and how do these assets benefit members?

DEFENCE FORCES MEDICAL INSURANCE SCHEME (DFMIS)

1. Could you please define the organization and state its objectives?
2. What is DFMIS' management structure?
3. How does DFMIS recruit its members?
4. What are the benefits of DFMIS to its members?
5. Can a retiring member withdraw from the scheme?

Appendix 5

Key Informant Interview Schedule – Co-operative Movement

MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIALIZATION AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT (MOIED)

1. What is the role of the government in the co-operative movement in Kenya?
2. What is the involvement of the military in co-operatives in Kenya?
3. What is the government's policy on co-operatives for ex-military personnel?
4. What is the government's strategy for promoting co-operatives in line with the Decade of Co-operatives?

CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE OF KENYA (CAK)

1. What is the history of the co-operative movement in Kenya?
2. What is the structure of the co-operative movement in Kenya?
3. What is the current status of the co-operative movement in Kenya?