Disarmament, Demobilisation & Reintegration (DDR) programmes are a crucial aspect of peacebuilding.

By eradicating weapons, disbanding armed groups and reintegrating ex-combatants into civilian life, DDR seeks to secure durable peace.

Mainstreaming gender concerns into DDR has potential to achieve positive change. Recognising women as agents not victims of war can help build a gender-just peace.

Yet women are often excluded from, or marginalised by, DDR programmes that neglect their interests, rights and needs.

Funded by the British Academy, this study will examine the gender impact of DDR in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) through qualitative analysis of policy documents and interviews with implementers and beneficiaries.

The lived experiences of female (ex-) combatants/women associated with fighting forces (WAAFs) will be central to critique dominant discourses on security.

The research aims to:

1. Explore the experiences of women associated with fighting forces/female combatants in wartime and the long-term consequences of their participation in conflict;

2. Examine the gendered impact of DDR via analysis of key policies and programmes implemented in BiH;

3. Examine the complexities of reintegration, women’s experiences of DDR, and the other mechanisms women deployed to aid reintegration;

4. Explore links between DDR and the promotion of gender-justice and equality.

The study will produce new empirical insights into this under-studied area and develop a novel theoretical framework for understanding gendered agency in war and peace.

The project will collaborate with international and civil society organisations in BiH, and with both implementers and beneficiaries of DDR policies and programmes.

The study is highly relevant given women's expanding participation in recent wars and peace processes.

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