Civil Society Organizations in Demobilization and Reintegration:
the Ties and Lives of Ex-combatants in Lebanon

By

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Abstract

The efforts of local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) often go unnoticed in the process of Disarmament, Demobilization and Registration (DDR). In theory and in practice, activities that local CSOs in DDR are tasked with are limited to dialogue sessions between ex-combatants, with community members in conflict and enhancing vocational skills of ex-combatants in preparation for the job market. Nevertheless, research conducted on CSOs as designers and implementers of DDR processes is limited. Namely, the scholarly work in this area lacks the conceptualization of the conditions and mechanisms that allow local CSOs to emerge as a significant actor in the design and implementation of activities that are sustainable in demobilizing and reintegrating ex-combatants. The central question this research posits is: what role do CSOs have in demobilizing fighters away from the battlefield and reintegrating them into larger society?

This research builds on a case study in the city of Tripoli where local CSOs were active in designing and implementing DDR programs during the violent clashes between the Sunni's and Alawittes' militant groups between 2011 and 2014. Utilizing Social Network Analysis (SNA) to unpack the relational ties that local CSOs foster in conflict contexts, I focus on the concept of brokerage as an essential component for effective DDR programs whereby CSOs forge ties between members of both fighting camps. To triangulate this work, I adopt life course analysis using biographical narrative interviews with the ex-combatants to follow the impacts that the activities conducted by the CSOs' networks had on their lives.

The findings of this research show that: first, as highlighted by the SNA, the local CSOs were successful in DDR by being the brokers between the two warring factions. Brokerage was highly effective in demobilizing and aiding ex-combatants in reintegration through slowly bridging ex-combatants from both communities. In turn, the CSOs' activities encouraged ex-combatants to work together for the city.

Second, the CSOs' bridging network activities were essential to put ex-combatants back on the civilian life path. The CSO's network and operations were a turning point in the lives of ex-combatants, moving them away from a militant life trajectory into a civilian life. The network's activities strengthened the network further, allowing for an even more robust nudge of ex-combatants towards peace.

Third, both analytical frameworks explain how the CSOs' network broke the ties of ex-combatants with their commanders, prohibiting the latter from maintaining the leverage to remobilize them in the future. The presence of the network allowed ex-combatants to rebuild their social capital with the CSOs, other ex-combatants and members of the community.

Finally, this research draws out a set of practical strategies for CSOs to be effective in DDR. These strategies do not necessarily apply to all contexts but form a solid base that CSOs can build on. Furthermore, this research contributes to developing a conceptual framework that would lead to more successful CSO-based DDR programs based on the CSOs' prioritization to bridging across fighting factions and creating spaces for ex-combatants to express themselves.

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1   Introduction

I used to wake up every morning thinking only about my weapons and how to kill someone from Jabal Mohsen, I hated them and that is all I wanted to do. Now, everything changed. I used to think of a machine gun and a pistol and now all I think of is paint and how to master my craft and improve my skills. – Sami

Sami was 20 years old when he became a fighter during the violent armed conflict between Jabal Mohsen and Bab el Tabbeneh in the city of Tripoli in Lebanon. He categorizes himself, and his friends, as victims of the war. He is now a 'painter' who draws murals and takes on projects for the municipalities and relishes the work on exterior designs of buildings in Tripoli. He learned these skills that now made him employable through the various workshops he attended with a local Lebanese NGO working in Tripoli. Sami also began to understand his old foes from Jabal Mohsen and that they were both victims of a war, loaded with unreasonable hatred and fueled by political warlords and the political elites of the city. He now has friends from the 'other side' and enjoys a great deal of connections that increases the number of painting projects he takes on. Sami's friends are now from both neighborhoods, not only form Bab el Tabbeneh where he was born and raised. Through the activities he attended at MARCH NGO, he met young men, just like him from Jabal Mohsen who he shares more with than he initially thought. The only difference is that he is Sunni, and they are Alawites.

At the first instance, while reading the above story, one would attribute this transformation to the Sami - primarily so and certainly true – but secondly to MARCH NGO, a local organization that worked with cases similar to that of Sami to ensure the demobilization and reintegration of combatants who fought on the front lines separating Jabal Mohsen and Bab el Tabbeneh neighborhoods.

As the war broke out in Syria in 2011, the questions about violent spillover to Lebanon were questions of when rather than how or if. Everyone feared that the next step would be the extension of the conflict to Lebanese soil. After all the political divisions in Syria were very similar to those in Lebanon. In fact, some scholars went so far as to consider the war in Syria as an extension from the political divisions that started in Lebanon (Gade, 2017). Research on violent spillover in civil war often emphasizes that the domino effect is highly likely for neighboring countries with similar cultural, social, and political formations (Kalyvas, 2006; Black, 2013). According to the same

literature, neighboring countries with relaxed border controls and similar ethnic and religious foundations are likely to witness an extension to the war (Stefanova, 1997). Large influxes of refugees from Syria and the political fragility of the host state, Lebanon, are additional factors that result in the spillover of the conflict (Young et al. 2014, Gade, 2017).

The intertwined political cleavage in Lebanon meant that the naturally pro-Syrian and pro- Iranian regime (in support of Alawites and Shiites) and the anti-Syrian anti-Iranian regime proponents in Lebanon will fight a proxy war (Darwich and Fakhoury, 2016). The logical outcome of the Lebanese political scene should be that Lebanon falls within the regional conflict that has been surging up, as it is another country that is nested within the Middle East North Africa's (MENA) wider conflict between geopolitical and international actors separated along the lines of a Sunni-Shiite divide (see Jenne, 2015). Kramer (2017) emphasis that by stating:

> The civil war in neighboring Syria is no longer a Syrian domestic affair but includes religious extremists declaring the aim of establishing an Islamic caliphate that includes the entire Levant. Arms and supplies are purchased by the emirates in the Arabian Gulf and channeled through Lebanon to factions opposing President Assad in Syria, which has led to Syrian incursions and divided much of Lebanon into supporters and opponents of Assad (2017, p.118).

As the war erupted in Syria, simultaneously in Lebanon in 2011, the strong Sunni Prime Minister Saad Harriri's government resigned with the resignation of one third of the cabinet who were part of a unity government. The 11 ministers were all either representatives of Hezbollah or representatives of their allied political parties, who were supporters of the Assad Syrian regime. The announcement of the resignation of the ministers came while Harriri was meeting President Obama in the Oval office. The timing of the resignation signified the show of strength of Hezbollah and its allies over the political scene in Lebanon, and, accordingly, to thwart any attempt by the anti-Hezbollah and anti-Assad opposition to benefit from the eruption of violence in Syria. Prime Minister Najib Mikati, a businessman from Tripoli who claims an independent political position but, back then, an avid opponent to Harriri, took up office as the new Prime Minister of Lebanon in 2011 until 2014. During PM Mikati's reign, the intensity of violence in Tripoli swelled significantly.

The armed violence in Tripoli is best described as intermittent. During the three years and 11 months, twenty rounds of armed violence flared up in a non-consecutive fashion. The timings of the rise in tension and violence were largely unclear. Similarly, the violence would end abruptly in other instances. At the same time, NGOs, including MARCH and Fighters for Peace (FFP)

galvanized their efforts to try and contain the violence despite clear indication that weapons were being distributed to myriad of men from both neighborhoods. In February 2014, at the end of the former President Michel Sleiman's term, the Lebanese political elite agreed on the formation of a new cabinet led by Prime Minister Tammam Salam, an honest figure who stood at an equidistance between all political factions. Soon after, a timid security plan was applied in the northern city of Tripoli to put an official end to "one of the episodes of a regional and sectarian proxy conflict" (Gade, 2017, p.189).

The end of violence was in fact the result of a political truce between sectarian political parties in Lebanon. There were no national disarmament or demobilization plans for the fighters in the city of Tripoli. If any, a few fighters who were visually Sunni radicalized were imprisoned for a short period of time, along with some of the Alawite fighters from Jabal Mohsen. The leader of the Alawite political party could flee to Syria, while the mid-level commanders from both sides were left to their own devices, supposedly without political support or financial backing. Like the aftermath of the Lebanese civil war in 1990 that saw no comprehensive Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) plans (Karame,2009), the smaller scale war of Tripoli also ended without DDR processes by the Lebanese government or any exogenous mediator. In fact, rifles and shotguns were left with the fighters and heavier artillery remained in the hands of the mid-level commanders. It was believed that the arms were purposefully kept signaling willingness to flare up violence in the future whenever needed. Sunni groups maintained a narrative for the importance of their arms so long as the Alawiite backed Hezbollah maintain their arms. Moreover, it was beneficial for political elites to maintain control, to a certain extent, over fighters who were ready to be mobilized again in the future for political gains if necessary (Lefevre, 2014).

The efforts of local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), meanwhile, started in 2012 and continued with activities on the demobilization and reintegration of fighters. Disarming them was a more challenging task for these local CSOs, but keeping the arms served as a guarantee for fighters who did not trust in a fair disarmament process. Weapons ensured that the groups from both sides did not feel weaker than the other. CSOs focused on ensuring that ex-fighters reintegrate in their own communities socially and economically. Efforts to bridge relationships between ex-fighters from both sides safeguarded a more reliable peace across the two neighborhoods.

Hence, the violent spillover to Lebanon was limited; geographically, to the city of Tripoli in North Lebanon and in its impact on the country. The eruption of violence was sporadic and included less than expected casualties. Moreover, many of the involved fighters were demobilized within a relatively short period of time. Work from local CSOs was immediate and they operated in an unsecure environment against all odds. The above makes Lebanon a least likely case that shows resilience against the influx of war from "next-door Syria" (Gade, 2017, p. 2). Moreover, provides and interesting outlook to the exceptional ability to demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants of a 4-year armed violence – although some argue that its roots go back to the 1980s. For the scope of this research the focus remains on the 4-year armed conflict between 2011 till 2015. Without an international or nationally designed DDR program, against all odds, the armed conflict did not proliferate across Lebanon, and the country remained remarkably stable (Gade, 2017). The intensity of the conflict reduced over the years and a considerable number of fighters were successfully reintegrated. They have gained new vocational skills and opportunities in the job market that would be able to support them and their families without having to resort to organized militant groups or crimes. This posits the question how much of an impact these CSOs had on the demobilization and reintegration of the fighters?

1.1 The Puzzle

There is a conceptual gap in the literature on DDR when it comes to investigating bottom-up initiatives. A large chunk of the work highlights the successes and failures of DDRprograms as post-conflict missions (Arjona and Kalyvas, 2012; Berdal, 1996; Carames, 2006, 2008; Colletta and Cullen, 2000; Cox, 1995; Barbara, 1999, 2004). Likewise, the literature has not delved in depth into the DDR programs that are formulated and implemented by local non- governmental actors. The understanding is that for disarmament to be successful a strong third-party intervention, stronger than local CSOs, is required (Paffenholz, 2006; Rouw & Willems, 2010; Waldorf, 2013;). The work on CSOs and local turns is thus limited to the wider literature on peacebuilding with conceptualization on how CSOs (some specify NGOs) can assist in small scaled social cohesion and activities that support larger peace agreements (Paffenholz and Spurk, 2006; Paffenholz,2014).

Moreover, the literature on DDR considers DDR processes as highly politicized ones because the capacity to demobilize large numbers of combatants is usually only possible through warlords' bargaining power (Carranza-Franco, 2019). This has driven scholarly research to focuses on the

analysis of international intervention in DDR. Baas (2012) and McMullin (2013) highlight the drawbacks of such analysis. They claim that the literature debate on DDR tends to focus on the role of multilateral organizations in the design and implementation of the DDR programs which are often not based on the perceived needs of the combatants. Thus, internationally led DDR programs have prioritized the security and economic agendas over the social and political realities that the communities faced (Ottaway,2002; Cramer, 2006; Muggah, 2010).

Torjesen (2013) suggests that research activities on DDR should focus more on the ex- combatant's experience. This is where the seminal work by Humphrey and Weinstein (2007) on individual micro-level analysis comes to address the reasons as to why some individuals pick up arms while others do not. This work, however, builds on these ideas and asks **what role, if any, do Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have in demobilizing fighters away from the battlefield and reintegrate them into the larger society?** In answering this question, I explore **if CSOs could design and implement demobilization and reintegration.**

1.2   Argument in brief

I argue that, in the city of Tripoli in Lebanon the local CSOs designed and implemented DDR programs through a conjunction of three factors that made this possible: (1) local CSOs positioned themselves as bridging actors across the two warring sects, (2) utilized the combatants' networks structures and built more non-violent objective ties to them rather than disbanding the command and control structure, and (2) provided vocational skills to pursue jobs that would sustain combatants' as opposed to monetary support. The above are further examined through adopting Social Network Analysis (SNA) and Life Course Analysis (LCA).

First, the positionality of CSOs as brokers between two groups of combatants from two different sects has been very effective in mitigating conflict using their hyper-local social capital to demobilize combatants. Brokers are individuals or organizations acting as individuals who "facilitate transactions between other actors lacking access to or trust in one another" (Marsden, 1982, p.207) and "between whom it would be valuable, but risky, to trust" (Burt, 2005, p.164). This research shows that the position of brokers that CSOs put themselves in contributed in two ways. First, it sets them as the 'people to-go-to' when the ex-combatants are in need, including social, economic, or even political mediation. The brokerage position vests power in CSOs to reinforce peaceful communication between warring factions and has shown individuals the

commonalities they have with the 'enemy' rather than the differences. Second, by being brokers, CSOs create networks that attract more combatants who initially may approach them to benefit from the resources that CSOs have collected. With time, those opportunistic combatants were nudged into becoming an active member of the network through engaging with the events and activities the network in sum performs.

Second, the newly produced networks by the CSOs build on the network ties of the paramilitaries, in most cases between the combatants and expands them to include commanders and combatants from the opponent factions into one bigger network. The same violence networks are then transformed into a new larger cross-communal network with components of the commanders and combatants from two warring factions with ties amongst themselves and with the CSOs. This goes to show that, contrary to the literature on DDR, the social networks of violence do not necessarily need to be disbanded. In fact, the social network structures can be used and be bridged as components within a larger socially integrated network because of the closeness of some of its members to other members who CSOs may not be able to reach. The assumption that the UN makes (UNDP, 2006) in the importance of breaking the social networks created by the military life because the loyalties of the combatants will move from allegiance to the warlords to institutions is, thus, refuted.

Third, the provision of sets of vocational skills to ex-combatants to pursue future jobs in the market was more effective than the common practice in DDR of providing economic support through financial resources and stipends. These skills could be put into action in different temporal and spatial occasions allowing combatants to pursue work opportunities without stigmatization and without questioning the steps after they spend the monetary support provided from the DDR program. Likewise, these set of skills ensured that the ex-combatants did not relapse into violence.

Fourth, the CSO networks intervened as turning points in the life trajectories of ex-combatants. As the war and its lords' recruitment strategies were a turning point that shifted their lives from a civilian one to a military one; CSOs networks and activities provided choices that were previously non-existent for the combatants. In that, the networks and activities became another turning point that would shift the ex-combatants to civilian life again.

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Finally, the case of Tripoli has shown that those networks can, in fact, remain intact because they have a higher potential to reach more individuals who can be demobilized. A significant number of ex-combatants in Tripoli were keen to move away from being foot soldiers. They viewed themselves as victims who would rather be able to provide the economic needs of their families without risking their lives. The stories from ex-combatants collected in Tripoli show that before CSOs' DDR programs ex-combatants believed that the only path outside their poverty was through picking up arms. When new pathways were presented, non-ideologically driven ex-combatants were willing to explore them despite initial reluctance. As the process was going on, it attracted attention from the ideologically consumed combatants through leading by example. As a result, there was an exponential growth of demobilization of ex-combatants. Since the violent conflict in Tripoli between 2011-2014 was based on sectarian lines, social reintegration was not a challenge as some of the combatants were viewed as defenders in the eyes of their own communities. However, reintegrating nationally, as in seeking to relocate or find work outside the city of Tripoli, remains challenging.

The success of the Lebanese CSOs in Tripoli regarding the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants is not due to any specific blueprint from government or plans by national political leaders, but rather the CSOs themselves. This was possible through the imaginative intervention of local CSOs who managed to secure external funding to support local initiatives that worked and "match[ed] the best of reintegration programs worldwide" (Rolston, 2007, p. 259) in community development.

One should, however, not draw an overly rosy image on the endless possibilities of CSOs in designing and implementing DDR programs. As mentioned earlier, these initiatives cannot and do not disarm combatants but work with the fact that they remain armed to guarantee their security. Moreover, the problems that are common in nationally and internationally designed DDR programs remained visible in the contexts where CSOs replaced them. For example, when the CSOs became overloaded with the influx of combatants, they were not able to cater to all combatants in terms of vocational training or establishing ties with opportunities in the private sector. As such, where support was promised and was not materialized, the conditions of the ex-combatants deteriorated and a sense of disappointment disincentivized them to return. Ultimately, without a plan from the national government or international institutions, CSOs are only able to achieve interim stabilization with little clarity on the long-term abilities to sustain DDR programs.

However, these problems are not exclusive to programs initiated by CSOs. As Colletta and Muggah (2009) point out, if interim stabilization arrangements are not tightly connected to overarching peace- and state- building frameworks then long-term successes are hinged on individual choices.

1.3   Research Design and Methods

While the project looks at a single case study, I apply a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods for a sub-national case at the micro-level to conclude a set of characteristics that allow former fighters to mobilize and demobilize, as well as to draw out a set of characteristics that allow CSOs to perform vitally in DDR. The quantitative method is quantitative aspects of Social Network Analysis (SNA), while the qualitative methods include the qualitative aspect of SNA and Life-course Analysis. Two rationales motivate my single-case study. First, as previously mentioned, the case of Lebanon represents a least likely case where existing conceptualization do not explain the complex realities of DDR in Tripoli (Levy, 2008; Gerring & Cojocaru, 2016; Gade, 2017). Additionally, Lebanon did not go through any official DDR programs after the end of the 1976-1990 civil war. It was believed that the presence of the Syrian Armed Forced (SAF) in Lebanon would be a guarantee for the non-relapse of violence. Hence, after the SAF withdrawal from Lebanon, it was expected that relapse to violence would prevail. Nevertheless, this reductive understanding is based on the fact that the Lebanese security sector has not been involved in designing and implementing DDR programs nor putting an end to armed violent skirmishes. Moreover, the Lebanese case presents a revelatory case. The fact that an embedded unit of analysis focuses on the life-story of former-combatants who were mobilized, demobilized, and reintegrated provides a novel opportunity that is usually difficult to access, even though the presence of former-fighters is not unique to Lebanon.

Hence, this research focuses on the slice of the combatants in Jabal Mohsen and Bab el Tabbeneh. The people who I interviewed do not represent all fighters who participated in the four-year war, nor do they represent the complex sectarian-political landscape across Lebanon. Nevertheless, they are a sample that is representative of Tripoli's political and sectarian cleavage because they have been combatants and members of the two militant groups in Tripoli. More importantly, the selected group of respondents represents the motivations and the different paths that have attracted individuals to and away from armed violent conflict. Thus, the selection of respondents had to

come from the pool of ex-combatants who underwent CSO DDR programs in order to collect insightful information on these processes in particular.

I explore to ways to measure the impact of CSOs. First, by using Social Network Analysis(SNA) I try to identify and measure how much CSOs played a bridging and brokerage role between the two sectarian communities. As such, if CSOs appear to have bridged two or more ex-combatants, then their roles would have facilitated social cohesion and demobilization. As the social and political reintegration requires creating new ties with the civil society and the community at large, social network analysis serves as an accurate tool to measure the success of the CSOs in these instances. Building on SNA theory and understandings of social capital and bridging, I map out the social networks established upon the interference of CSOs in the conflict geographies of Tripoli. Social network analysis unpacks the relational connections built between CSOs and ex-combatants as imperative to understand how relations can demobilize ex-combatants and maintain the demobilization through creating avenues of reintegration.

The second measure is the life paths of the ex-combatants. In that, I use life course analysis methodology through biographic narratives and oral history of the ex-combatants. In so doing, I trace the conjunctures in the lives of the ex-combatants that were influenced by CSOs. Life course analysis allows researchers to focus on multiple-factor explanations and conclude a combinational model with many variables, if necessary, when studying longitudinal timeframes. The concept allows for identifying historical events and sociological interactions outside the personal life as well as with the personal attachment to these events. Despite life stories constituting chronological and sequential trace of events, this approach, specially conducted through interviews, allows the participant to convey meanings and evaluations of these events on his life and his small community around him/her (Elliot, 2005). As Brannen (2013) puts it: "life stories provide holistic and processual accounts both through the concept of the life trajectory and the hermeneutic aspects of the life" (Brennan, 2013, p. 2). Therefore,many processes can be discovered through this approach and trace the flow of information that is usually more difficult to get through process tracing. For example, if after participating in CSOs events and activities, ex-combatants decided to drop their arms, or whether the influence of CSOs assisted in reintegrating the fighters into society, economically and socially; then we can single out their intervention as an important factor. Additionally, this method provides a voice to people who have not been heard and have been perhaps shamed or even prosecuted. Researchers who may have studied Lebanon may have

worked with them   as quantity rather, without personal considerations of their experiences, traumas, and emotions.

1.4   Data collection and Positionality

By using grounded-theory research, I formulate a testable central research question that directs my research and helps explain some action, interaction, or processes by deriving inductively from the data that is collected. Hence, the conceptual framework would be grounded in the data collected. Substantive theories tend to explain more specific, everyday situations than do more formal, all-encompassing theories. It is imperative for any sound research to triangulate the findings and analysis. In this research, evidence was obtained from interviews, observations, research logs and documentation. The data was accumulated by different methods but all bearing the same question as a part of a more articulate triangulation. The convergence of my data increases my confidence in getting the true picture.

Primary data was collected over the course of a two intermittent fieldwork trips in a three-year research period (2017-2020). In each trip, I spent 3 months in the field in the city of Tripoli in Lebanon. Being Lebanese myself, it was easier to communicate in my mother language and find my way around the city that I have visited several times before the beginning of my research. The data was collected through interviews following two main avenues. One essential avenue was to interview CSOs that operated DDR activities in Tripoli, and the second was interviewing ex-combatants whose life-course indicate their mobilization and demobilization. Both set of respondents is necessary for measuring the role of CSOs in the lives of the ex-fighters. Thus, I primarily initiated contact with the active CSOs in the city who have been active during and after the outbreak of armed conflict. The organizations were identified from a list mapped during my desk research on CSOs who initiated DDR related activities between the Jabal Mohsen and Bab El Tabbeneh neighborhoods. Arranging semi-structured interviews with the managers and executive directors of the CSOs was an important first step to (1) contextualize the operations of the organizations and their goals; (2) identify the activities that included the utilization of social capital for bridging combatants across the two warring groups and activities that included the demobilization and reintegration of the combatants, and, lastly, (3) through CSO managers and directors reach out to a sample size of ex-combatants who I conducted biographic interviews with.

The challenge in interviewing ex-combatants stemmed from their ability to trust me as a researcher. These individuals are in constant fear that speaking about the past is in a way collecting information to possible future indictments. As such, I approached the CSOs who the ex-combatant's trust. Additionally, as a researcher I spent some time with the ex-combatants to get them to know me as a researcher. The CSOs vouched for my credibility and integrity. I also needed to set certain protocols in place that would address the combatants' fears. For example, I never learned the real full names of the combatants myself. I ensured them that I would use pseudonyms in this work and, as a result, I would not require their names for the interview process. Consent forms were collected through identifying ID numbers I created for each of the combatants.

Another key requirement to ensure that I gain the ex-combatants' trust was through spending time with them outside the research work. In other words, I needed to be a participant in the community during my fieldwork and to spend my time in the same places they do, in the same coffee shops and talk about topics outside my research. This included watching football games or just simply working and preparing my teaching assistantships in the coffee shops. With the days, the ex-combatants grew to trust me and consequently opened more on their experiences during the conflict. However, I also identified a tautological problem that would rise from relying solely on the ex-combatants who were snow sampled from the CSOs themselves. Hence, being a participant observant also allowed me to foster connections with ex-combatants directly, who would also recommend me their fellow friends who might not have been active members in the CSOs that I study but have participated in selected activities or received some of their services. From interviews with such individuals, I could control for any bias that my participants actively working with the CSOs during my research period could have.

The interviews themselves were also divided into two sets of protocols. The first focused on questions that are useful for drawing out relational information the combatants have with the CSOs, fellow combatants from the same sectarian warring faction and ties they have built with combatants from the opposing warring party. These questions were short and simple, but significant to draw the maps of the social networks of the ex-combatants and where the CSOs fall in them. In turn, this allowed me to conduct the SNA and generate the quantitative results that gave insight into the broader social networks that formed through the DDR processes. The other part of the interviews was biographic. In essence, the combatants were asked to orally narrate their stories. The biographical-narrative method with ex-combatants allowed the respondents to tell the

story of their whole life without interruptions and setting their own chronological structure that they deemed suitable, contrary to a pre-devised list of questions (Baumann et. al, 2021). As such, how they tell their life story (narrative) while understanding the social interpretations (interpretive) behind it was key to contextualize and ensure non tautological data collection. Only after phase one of the interviews were done, whereby ex-fighters notified me about their social ties, I asked the interviewees if they would allow a second phase in which I could ask more specific questions on events they underwent and tells me more about their life story. This latter approach allowed the interviewees to shed light on significant social experiences and put in context the role that CSOs played in their lives.

Additionally, semi-structured interviews were used while interviewing the managers and directors of CSOs. This approach was applied to understand the choice of activities established and programs initiated by the management, sources of funding and their own monitoring and evaluation for their success and failures. The data collection from these interviews were key in identifying the exact activities that encouraged combatants to move away from armed conflict. It also provided me with information on the challenges that the CSOs faced in convincing the ex-combatants to demobilize and how the CSOs managed to break the ex-combatants' ties with their warlords. The interviews with CSO leaders also informed me about the process by which they secured funding while discussing in depth instances when the international donors were reluctant to support them.

1.5   Roadmap of the Dissertation

The dissertation constitutes seven chapters that are structured as follows. Chapter 1 provides a succinct introduction to the research. Chapter 2 provides a historical background on the conflict in the city of Tripoli in Lebanon including its root causes, progress over time and the different instigating variables. The chapter also highlights the connection between the armed conflict in Tripoli and the broader regional conflicts between Sunni/Shiite and Sunni/Alawiite signaling the immense challenge the CSOs had in front of them as well as the significance of the conflict to the broader regional politics. In chapter 3, I outline the DDR literature gaps and discuss the relevance of this research in contributing to new understandings and possible approaches to DDR programs. Chapter 4 provides a theoretical literature and I explore the concepts of social capital, trust, and brokerage, which set the stage to discuss the additions that social networks

analysis and the concepts of social capital of the DDR program initiator brings to the DDR programs. Likewise, the chapter highlights the importance of local actors who know the community and its members in being part of DDR processes. Moreover, perceptions of behaviors and benefits of social capital and brokerage in DDR programs inform the level of success that DDR program initiators have towards stability and violence reduction.

Chapter 5 highlights in detail the measurements and concepts of social network analysis and their quantitative computation. The data collection and methodology of SNA is put out in details and the data is analyzed by the results that were generated using Python programing language as an essential network analysis tool that generates accurate results. In this chapter, calculations of constraint and effective size measurements demonstrate the positionality of the CSOs as brokers in the network, bridging the combatants from both warring factions allowing for a more stable demobilization and violence reduction. This chapter sets out a novel approach to evaluate and assess DDR programs, regardless of who the implementer is.

Chapter 6 provides an analysis of the impact of the DDR programs by CSOs on the paths and life trajectories of the ex-combatants. In this chapter, personal stories of the ex-combatants are narrated highlighting that the intervention of CSOs in nudging them away from the battlefields. Coupled with SNA, life course analysis wraps up the novel approach in assessing DDR by following the lives of the ex-combatants beyond the reintegration activities. Lastly, Chapter 7 discusses more general theoretical and policy-relevant insights that can be deduced from the analysis of the city of Tripoli DDR process, especially in the opportunities and limitations of hyper-local DDR practices by CSOs.

2 Tripoli: A Historical Divide Between Sunnis and Alawiites

Only when we moved to Tripoli was the hatred instilled in my parents and cousins.
– Shadi from Jabal Mohsen

I was around 15 years old when Rafiq El Harriri was assassinated and the demands for the expulsion of the Syrian troops started to become serious. I remember my father was worried that we would become very vulnerable as a neighborhood, and I only understood why in 2007-2008 when the first rounds of conflicts between Jabal Mohsen and Bab el Tabbeneh started. -Hadi from Bab el Tabbeneh

Lebanon's politics has generated a lot of interest in the peace and conflict studies literature. The literature varies with myriad studies ranging from (Kaufman, 2001, 2002, 2004) its history during the French mandate (see Rondot,1966; Salibi,1976; Khalaf, 2002), the Lebanese civil war (see Hanf, 1993; O'Ballance, 1998; Haugbolle, 2005; Hirst, 2010), the Israeli invasion (Zeev and Ya'ari, 1984), post-war agreements and consociationalism systems (see Ljiphart, 1969, 1977; Weinberger, 1986; Jabbra and Jabbra, 2001; Firro, 2003; Zahar, 2005; Fakhoury-Muehlbacher, 2009) and today's more contemporary issues pertaining to the Lebanese Syrian relations (see; Kassir, 2004, Young, 2010 Rabil, 2011). Evidently, the academic interest has been skewed towards Lebanon's regional and international affairs or its complicated political system. In this research, I focus on a subnational case where spatial contexts are further unpacked. For specificity, I focus on the contemporary conflict in Lebanon, in the divided city of Tripoli (2011-14) that has roots in the historical conflicts and tensions.

This chapter uses a narrative historical approach to introduce the reader to the longstanding history of conflict and armed violence in Lebanon. I highlight the various root causes for conflict and the different approaches that Lebanon witnessed for peace. What differentiates this historical genealogy is not the novel information of stories and facts that are already much cited, but rather the focus on the micro-level conflict that is specific to the city of Tripoli. The purpose of this is to demonstrate that approaching war and peace at a national level almost always assumes a uniformity in the root causes of conflict. While this might be partially true, certain geographies have multiple variables for protracted conflict embedded within cities' and towns' own violent antiquities (Mac Ginty 2014; Varshney 2001).

Therefore, I employ a focused narrative in describing the history of Tripoli and its internal political dynamics. In that, I provide the reader with the more national and general facts and events during the Lebanese civil war. Afterwards, the structural approach followed zooms in on particular key stories from the war the city of Tripoli that are usually overlooked in the literature. In doing so, I situate the impact that these incidents have on the micro-level peace, peace-tools processes, and the understanding of the conundrum of violence. More narrowly, I look at the relapsed conflict in Tripoli between 2011-2014, as a direct spillover from the Syrian civil war. In this chapter, I argue that the conflict in Tripoli was a consequence of the war in Syria and provide evidence to how strongly ethnic and social ruptures are intertwined between the two countries. As such, despite the micro view that this research adopts, the individuals who underwent demobilization and reintegration are nested in a more complicated regional conflict.

The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section broadly introduces the Lebanese civil war between 1975 and 1990. In so doing, I map out the most important protagonists and regional and international actors who intervened. In the second section, I zoom in to Syria's role in Tripoli during that time. The third section adds to that, by focusing on the historical period that followed the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik El Harriri and the withdrawal of the Syrian army from Lebanon. The penultimate section discusses in detail the conflict in Tripoli between 2011 and 2014 and provides the evidence on the complexity of the armed violence and its connections to the war in Syria. Lastly, I outline the puzzle that this research addresses and the alternative explanations. However, in so doing, I demonstrate how the existing explanations forgo the roles of local actors in conducting demobilization and reintegration of local fighters.

2.1 The Lebanese civil war (1975-1990)

On April 13, 1975, Lebanon's civil war erupted. The civil war was a result of rising tensions between Christians and Muslims. After Lebanon gained independence from the French in 1943, the Lebanese constitution had clear expressions that favored Christians over Muslims. The Lebanese president belonged to the Maronite Christian sect with much vested powers. Ultimately, this increased the sense of marginalization for Muslims after they felt that government policies were run in favor of Christians, albeit there were many indications for that to be more than a mere impression. In addition, Muslims felt underrepresented as a population in governmental structures that were not circumvented by the representation of Muslim seats. This had to do with the

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allocation of more influential seats in the government to Christians, while Muslim seats had less potency.

As the Cold War was becoming more intense, in 1958 the republic's President Camille Chamoun signed the Baghdad Pact[1], which aimed at preventing communist incursions in the Middle East (Gade, 2017). The signing of such a pact did not bode well with the Muslim community and left-wing political parties who saw the need to stand against the Western-supported Israeli state in Palestine (Baroudi 2006; Frankel 1976). Moreover, the influx of Palestinian refugees after1948 tipped the populations' religious balance in the favor of Muslims over Christians. Fearing a demographic shift, the Christian political parties raced to arms as they were apprehensive that the armed Palestinian refugees (under the pretext of fighting Israel from Lebanon) will be naturalized, pushing the balances of power towards a new governmental restructuring that reflects a more equal representation of the Muslims, if not shifting the balance entirely in favor of Muslims. The Palestinian refugees' decision to pursue resisting Israel on Lebanese soil and the expulsion of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) from Jordan[2] to Lebanon, coupled with the Cairo agreement of 1969[3], were the tipping point that turned political tension into armed conflict (Brynen, 1989).

To solely frame the war as one fought on religious division between Christians against Muslims is reductive, as the reality of the conflict is more complex. This is partially incorrect, as Zahar (2005) points out, as it is more accurate to describe the war as pro- and anti-status quo. Overlapping with the sectarian divide, with Christian political parties preferring the status-quo, the anti- status quo groups included Muslim political parties, leftists, and Palestinian guerrillas (also known as the Lebanese National Movement). In 1976, as the conflict started to get out of control, President

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[1]The Baghdad Pact was a defensive organization for promoting shared political, military, and economic goals founded in 1955 by Turkey, Iraq, Great Britain, Pakistan, and Iran. Similar to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, the main purpose of the Baghdad Pact was to prevent communist incursions and foster peace in the Middle East. It was renamed the Central Treaty Organization, or CENTO, in 1959 after Iraq pulled out of the Pact (The US Department of State, Accessible at: https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/lw/98683.htm)

[2] Black September was a conflict fought in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan between the Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF), under the leadership of King Hussein, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), under the leadership of Yasser Arafat, primarily between 16 and 27 September 1970 (Salibi, K., 1998).

[3] Under the agreement the 16 official UNRWA camps in Lebanon - home to 300,000 Palestinian refugees - were removed from the stern jurisdiction of the Lebanese army's Deuxième Bureau and placed under the authority of the Palestinian Armed Struggle Command. Although the camps remained under Lebanese sovereignty the new arrangements meant that, after 1969, they became a key popular base for the guerrilla movement (Cobban, H., 1984).

Frangieh and the Lebanese Front (a group of Christian conservative parties) asked for the deployment of the Syrian Forces in Lebanon to prevent a victory of the Lebanese National Movement. This became official after the regional conference in Riyadh for Lebanon established the Arab Deterrent Force for Lebanon (ADF) (Weinberger, 1986).

The ADF intervention was not enough to stop the violence in Lebanon. The ADF which was constituted mostly of the Syrian army meddled further into the Lebanese conflict. They proceeded by trying to repress militias, which did not yield the immediate results needed. The Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982 complicated the peaceful attempts further. Israel needed to make sure that Lebanon did not completely fall in the hands of the Syrian regime in order to maintain a deterrent buffer zone (Gade, 2017).

2.1.1   Syria's role in the Lebanese civil war: a hands-on approach in Tripoli

Syria's involvement in the Lebanese civil war started in 1976, when the then President Frangieh asked for the intervention, hoping the Syrian regime would support the Christian militias against the expanded Palestinian-backed Muslim parties (Naor, 2013). In 1978, in order restrain the Syrian troops' expansion in Lebanon and to avoid having them as the sole mediator for the Lebanese war, the Arab League voted to send ADF to Lebanon (El Husseini, 2012). Nevertheless, this further legitimized the Syrian presence in Lebanon because Syria was willing to contribute the most forces constituting "more than 80 percent of the proposed ADF force" (El Husseini, 2012, p.16). In 1982, after the Israeli invasion of Beirut, the Arab League met in Morocco and signed a resolution ending the ADF mandate. Again, Hafez Assad's political bandwagon policies allowed him to shape a clause in the resolution that stipulates that the withdrawal of the Syrian troops "would be contingent on negotiations between the Lebanese and Syrian governments" (El Husseini, 2012, p.16). In 1985 Syria worked on brokering a Tripartite Agreement between [the AMAL movement representing the Shiite lead by Nabih Berri, the Lebanese Forces representing the Maronites lead by Elie Hobeika and the Progressive Socialist Party, representing the Druze lead by Junblatt]. The Tripartite agreement failed because of the ousting of Hobeika from the Lebanese Forces. While appearing to the Arab and the International world as a mediating force to the Lebanese war, the Syrian inquisitive approach in Lebanese politics exacerbated some of the already tense conflicts.

In 1986, the Syrian regime sought to fuel a divide in the city of Tripoli in North Lebanon. Given the strong ties between the seaside city and the cities of Homs and Aleppo through trade and marital relations (Rougier, 2011), the Syrian regime believed that the city of Tripoli could be a strategic fortress to progress its regional influence (Rougier, 2011). Moreover, the presence of a strong Alawite community that has historically traveled from Syria to Jabal Mohsen (a small neighborhood in Northeast of Tripoli) postulated strong identity ties between the Syrian regime and the Alawites in Tripoli. Consequently, as the regime's policies in Syria was to protect the Alawites minority and repress the Sunni majority, a replication of that was applied to the city of Tripoli where the Syrian Army's policies targeted the loyal Shiites parties and negotiated with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) for the Sunni representation

After the change of leadership in the Christian militia of Lebanese forces - ousting Elie Hobeika - the new leadership, spearheaded by Samir Geagea, opted for the withdrawal of the Lebanese forces from the Tripartite agreement of 1985. In response to that, the Syrians asked the leader of a Sunni military group in Tripoli, Al Tawhid's Khalil Akkawi, to take their side initiating an attack against the Christian Lebanese Forces and work on assassinating Geagea. Using the Islamic group to be the first line of attack rather than the Syrian forces and framing the conflict between an Islamic group versus a Christian one. Under the pretense that, when Geagea incurs losses, he would come back again to sign the tripartite agreement. Akkawi refused, and, on February 9, 1986, he was assassinated in the Abu Samra Neighborhood of Tripoli. Several followers of Akkawi thus formed the February 9 Movement and relocated to Donniyeh mountains (just outside the Bab el Tabbeneh and Jabal Mohsen neighborhoods in Tripoli) in the hopes of attacking Syrian troops and re-seize control of the Sunni neighborhood of Bab el Tabbeneh in Tripoli. As a result, in due time, the February 9 movement launched a series of attacks from the Sunni populated neighborhood Bal el Tabbeneh and the Alawiite condensed neighborhood Jabal Mohsen. The two neighborhoods are of a very close proximity, only separated by one not-so-wide boulevard (refer to the map in Figure 2.1). After two days of clashes between the February 9 movement and the Syrian army fighting in Bab el Tabbeneh, the attempt to surprise the Syrian troops through an attack from Donniyeh Mountains was the straw that broke the back of the camel. Consequently, the Syrian troops were committed to end any insurgencies from Bab el Tabbeneh at any cost:

On December 19, 1986, Syrian soldiers, and several of their auxiliaries from Ahmad Fakhr al-Din's Tripoli Resistance Group and Ali Eid's Arab Democratic Party took revenge against residents of the neighborhood [of Bab el Tabbeneh], reportedly indiscriminately killing at least 250 people. The "massacre of Bab al-Tabbeneh" (Majzarat Bab al-Tabbane) as it became known in Local Tripolitan memory, was the height of a campaign to "root out the weeds," in the words of the chief Syrian intelligence in Lebanon [Ghazi Kanaan]. Two sieges (1983 and 1985) and one massacre (1986) explain why… Tripoli residents developed a special hatred of Syrian Ba'athist and Syrian-aligned groups… Syrian intelligence monitored the city scrupulously, using blackmail to acquire local informants, and Sunnis felt threatened by Alawite immigration" (Harris, 1996 in Rougier, 2011).

From this date forward, the Syrian strategical approach became even more aggressive towards the groups who opposed its presence in Lebanon. They sought revenge through military means against all their opposition parties in Lebanon including the Lebanese Forces and Michel Aoun, who, as Army General and acting Prime Minister back then, fled to France with the help of the French Embassy in Lebanon after being sieged by the Syrian Armed Forces (SAF) in the Presidential Palace.

2.2 The Ta'if Agreement: An end to the Lebanese civil war

Power-sharing agreements in Lebanon are historic and go way back before the Ta'if. Marie-Joelle Zahar has noted that Lebanon's experiment with power sharing goes back to 1861 and that "power sharing has brought long periods of peace, but this has depended on external protectors "(2005, p. 219). In the nineteenth century, the protector of the peace in Mount Lebanon between the Christians and the Druze was the Ottoman Empire. Through the early twentieth century, a similar role was played by France mediating between the Christians and the Muslims (Bogaards, 2019). El Hussein (2012) views the presence of the Syrian regime after 1990 as a continuation to the tradition of international actor sponsorship for peace and stability.

After the Israeli invasion in 1982, Syria wanted to ensure that its gains in Lebanon are not lost. There was a pivotal military and political shift: the SAF began supporting the Lebanese National Movement and Palestinian organizations against Christian milieu. After the intense military escalation between Christians and SAF, the Arab leaders met in Casablanca in May 1989 and formed a Tripartite Committee that formulated the peace agreement that would be signed on 29th August in the city of Ta'if in Saudi Arabia (Zahar, 2005).

The Ta'if agreement is viewed as one of the most typical consociationalism agreements. The political power was redistributed among the three sects Christians, Sunnis, and Shiite. The

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president, with curtailed power, is to be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister, with much increase power over the council of ministers (see Article 65 of the Lebanese Constitution), to be a Sunni, and a variety of veto power tools for the legislative House Speaker, designated to be a Shiite. The Ta'if also included the distribution of parliamentary seats as 6 for 6, contrary to the pre-war formula of 5 Muslims of every 6 Christians (see Article 24 of the Lebanese Constitution). This 6:6 formula was extended to include the assignments of highest positions in the government as well. For example, ministry's General Directors follow this rule when being assigned, most times at the expense of more qualified individuals.

The Ta'if agreement was dubious towards the territorial control of the Lebanese state. It requests the disarming of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese (Palestinian) militias within six months of the beginning of the implementation. The accord had no specification for the demobilization of fighters and only superficially requested the reintegration of the militiamen into Internal Security Forces. The agreement also legalized the regional intervention of Syria to enforce the implementation of the agreement's principles within two years of its signing. What was to be two years ended up being a 15-year presence with an extremely strong political influence in day-to-day Lebanese politics. Any political decision, from that point forward, be it national elections, electing a President and forming a government, a Syrian approval was needed. More importantly, this led to the complete consolidation of Lebanon's foreign policy, with US and European leaders acknowledging that, issues related to Lebanon need to also be discussed with the Syrian regime.

2.2.1   The assassination of Rafik El Harriri and the Syrian withdrawal

On February 14, 2005, the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, and the Sunni Leader Rafik El Harriri were assassinated. This followed after a growing opposition against the SAF beginning to form since 2000. Back then, a small number of political parties, mostly Christian, formed an alliance that was called Kornet Chehwan, in reference to the town they first met. They demanded the withdrawal of the SAF and the complete sovereignty of the Lebanese state on all its territory. By 2004, they were joined by the Progressive Socialist Party, a political party representing the Druze. Simultaneously, the Lebanese lobbying group in France and the USA pushed the security council to adopt Resolution 1559 on Lebanon. It was voted for on September 2, 2004, calling for Lebanon to establish its sovereignty over all of its land and call upon "foreign forces", Syria, to withdraw from Lebanon and to cease meddling in the internal politics of Lebanon. Moreover, the resolution also mandated that all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias to be disarmed. Namely, the

Palestinian groups in Palestinian refugee camps and, most importantly, the Iranian-backed Lebanese political party, Hezbollah.

The Syrian regime's reaction to the resolution was to crack down more in Lebanon and push through their own politics. The resolution nudged more Lebanese political parties to join the opposition against the Syrian presence in Lebanon. In terms of sects, a majority of Christian parties including the two major ones: the Free Patriotic Movement and the Lebanese Forces, were joined by the Majority of Druze, the Progressive Socialist Party. The then Prime Minister, Rafik El Harriri, resigned as a Prime Minister after extensive Syrian pressure in October 2004. The Syrian regime no longer trusted Harriri to protect their interest in Lebanon. They believed his allegiance to Saudi Arabia and his good relations with France and the USA would be a liability. El Harriri's resignation demonstrated that he was willing to join the opposition. El Harriri was assassinated on February 14, 2005.

Harriri's disagreements with the Syrian regime could be traced back to four main reasons. Primarily, Harriri was beginning to sympathize with the anti-Syrian groups in Lebanon and sensing the international community's stances towards their role in the country. Moreover, Harriri openly declared his refusal of President Lahoud's re-election, an act rarely accepted by the Syrians. Adding to that, Lahoud and Hezbollah were keen on marginalizing Harriri and his policies through their close connection to the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad (Baroudi and Salameh, 2011). Accordingly, "Lahoud sought to extend his presidential term and to govern without Hariri, while Hezbollah was determined to preserve its freedom for military action and was equally concerned about Hariri's good rapport with other Arab states and Western capitals, especially Washington and Paris." (Baroudi and Salameh, 2011, p.407). Lastly, Harriri's good relations with the Syrians was through Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam and Defense Minister Mustafa Tlass, who were both removed from office upon the succession of Bashar al-Assad to his father Hafiz.

The assassination shocked Lebanon and sparked mass protests against the Syrian army and the regime, accusing the Syrian regime of the assassination and calling for the withdrawal of the SAF from Lebanon. A series of organized demonstrations and political movements against the Syrian influence of Lebanon began at the martyrs' square in the Downtown Beirut. Accordingly, the two names of the two opposing coalitions were established: March 8, with reference to the big demonstration from the pro-Syrian parties in Lebanon on that date (2005), and, likewise, March

14 (2005) with reference to the big demonstration from the anti-Syrian protesters in the one-month memorial of the late PM Rafik Harriri assassination, organized on that date as well.

Internationally, after the Harriri assassination, the United States pulled its ambassador from Damascus on February 16, 2005 (Baroudi and Salameh, 2011). President Chirac and President Bush met at Brussels a week after the assassination, with the French President stating that they both agreed and shared the same approach regarding the situation in Lebanon, more than ever after the assassination of Rafik Harriri (who was also a personal friend to President Chirac), and who according to them "ensured the ideals of democracy, independence, and liberty of Lebanon" (The Washington Times, February 22, 2005, p. A01). Therefore, the division looked as follows: March 14 consisted of the Future Movement (Sunni representation), the Lebanese Forces (Christian representation), and the Progressive Socialist Party (Druze representation). On the other hand, the March 8 coalition consisted of Hezbollah (Shiite representation), the Amal Movement (Shii'te representation), the Free Patriotic Movement (Christian representation), with less influential parties such as the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party (SSNP), Al-Marada, the Lebanese Democratic Party, the Ba'ath Party (same party ruling Syria), and Tashnaq (see Table 2.1).

Movement of March 8 (Pro-Assad)	Movement of March 14 (Anti-Assad)
Hezbollah (Shiite representation)	The Future Movement (Sunni representation, led by Saad El Harriri, the son of Rafik)
AMAL (Shiite representation	The Lebanese Forces (Christian Representation)
Free Patriotic Movement, *formerly in March 14 until 2006 return of Aoun from exile* (Christian representation)	The Progressive Socialist Party (PSP, representing the Druze)
Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party (SSNP)	
Al Marada	
Lebanese Democratic Party	
Ba'ath Party	

Table 2.1. Political cleavage in Lebanon (2004-2011)

The aftermath of the new division affected regional and local politics. With the regional and international pressure escalating, the Syrian regime finally succumbed to the demands of March 14 and withdrew its troops at the end of April 2005. Moreover, the American and French administrations pushed for the establishment of an International Independent Investigation Commission (later becoming the Special Tribunal for Lebanon) into the assassination of Rafik Harriri. Moreover, March 14 achieved a sweeping victory in the parliamentary elections that were held in May 2005 (Kurtulus, 2009).

2.2.2 Tripoli after Harriri's assassination

Tripoli's response to the aftermath of Harriri's assassination reflected the movements in Beirut, with large demonstrations held in the city's main squares. During the Syrian presence, Tripoli's politics was mainly consolidated by the Syrian regimes (El Husseini, 2012). After the military 'cleansing' of Sunni groups in Tripoli in 1986, post-war years saw the continuous exertion on the daily lives of the Sunnis by the mere presence of the SAF alongside the Alawiite community of Jabal Mohsen. This led to an invincible feeling for the Alawiites allowing them to reap economic benefits by being favored in establishing their own shops in the markets. Distribution of resources, job opportunities and economic development was mainly delivered to the pro-Syrian supporters and to the coast of Tripoli by the pro-Syrian allied political elites. Thus, the assassination of Harriri and the national movement against the Syrian regime's military presence in Lebanon (March 14) subsequently sparked the solidarity of the Sunni community in Tripoli for the same cause. They believed that they had suffered much from the Syrian troops and recognized the events as an indispensable opportunity to emancipate themselves from years of ethnic repression (Knio, 2005).

The dominant Sunni political party, Future Movement, founded by Harriri, identified the need to show the importance of Tripoli in their political popularity since the city is largely populated with Sunnis. Aimed at spreading their political popularity there, Nader el-Harriri, the cousin of Saad el-Harriri [son of Rafik], oversaw the process of political and financial dispersion in Tripoli among Sunni communities and instrumentalized Harriri's memory in order to consolidate and launch the party's career in Tripoli (Rougier, 2011). During the spring of 2005, while the pro-Syrian allies were still trying to make sense of the new political shifts, the new Interior Security Forces' director Ashraf Rifi, who was from Tripoli, and his deputy, Colonel Wissam al-Hassan (who was the former head of Rafik El-Harriri's personal security apparatus), sought to clear out pro-Syrian security officers and "purged the ISF of pro-Syrian officers" (Rougier, 2011, p.61). Together, they started implementing the plan to remodify the Sunni's relationship with the security forces and regain the allegiance of the groups and individuals who had suffered from oppression and incarceration by the Syrian dominance, with a particular focus on Tripoli.

The Future Movement's focus on Tripoli was not limited to opening offices and recruiting supporters. A security dilemma began to arise. The Sunni base in Tripoli (but also in Beirut and Saida) was demanding military preparation against pro-Syrian militias, such as the Alawite militia of Rif'at Eid (the Democratic Arab Party) - in the Tripoli neighborhood of Jabal Mohsen - and

Hezbollah's supporters, who were yet to be disarmed. This call was due to the Sunni fear of being military dominated by Hezbollah and their allies when political need to use violence arises.

> Once again, possession of weapons turned out to be the decisive criterion by which to evaluate various Lebanese communities 'respective degrees of vulnerability: Look at [the inhabitants of] Zghorta, did they lose their weapons? In Ba'al Mohsen, did they lose their weapons? Walid Jumblatt, did he lose his weapons? the only ones who lost their weapons are the Sunnis. Which is precisely the opposite of what happened to the Shiite community, whose weapons stock has increased, and which has taken all of Lebanon's weapons for its own use. the only ones whose weapons were confiscated are the Sunnis, no one else! We are the only ones who need arms, because they were taken from us. Hafez al Assad said: "In Tripoli, do not even let the Sunnis have a kitchen knife or a hunting rifle" (Rougier, 2011, p.70).

However, the Future Movement based its political rhetoric on Hezbollah's disarmament or the integration of military capacities of Lebanon with the Army. The paradox extended through the Future Movement ranks, "if they [the Future Movement] retreated the legalist position [of not arming], the Future Movement would automatically lose an essential part of its internal legitimacy. But at the same time, the pressure from a political base to obtain weapons might well feed a vicious rivalry between different groups over the distribution of weapons" (Rougier, 2011, p. 66). The party finally decided to set up lightly armed security forces called the "regiment of Tripoli" (Afwaj Trablos). These forces were supported by the Secure Plus security firm and were trained in a town further north of Tripoli in Akkar. In total, the capacity of regiments of Tripoli were about 4,800 men distributed between Bab El Tabbeneh, Qoubbeh, al-Mina and Abu Samra neighborhoods (see map in figure 2.1). The regiments of Tripoli were headed by a retired Lebanese army general (a Sunni), and later in 2008, they were entrusted to a colonel on extended leave from the Lebanese army (Anonymous interview, 19 July 2019). They recruited retired Sunni army and security men through the connections of the retired army general and ISF security forces, as well as local Sunni leaders. Moreover, they acquired the services of former members of the Palestinian Fatah's anti-Syrian networks (Rougier, 2011) who were disenfranchised by the pro-Assad position of Fatah.

2.3 The conflict in Tripoli

As I have established in the previous sections, the division in Lebanon since 2005 has been on the basis of an anti-Syrian regime and a pro-Syrian regime. Political alliances were built accordingly and there was a sense among March 14 that the Syrian regime with its allies in Lebanon will seek to re-control Lebanon through internal means (Kalyvas, 2006). This cleavage led to a thirty-month long deadlock after the resignation of the Shiite ministers and Aoun's Free

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Patriotic Movement (FPM). The different postures of the main political parties turned into "successive street fighting between the supporters of each camp in May 2008, which was called the equilibrium breakdown" as approximately " 80 civilians were dead and over 200 injured" (Kota, 2012, p.110) making it the worst armed conflict since the end of the civil war. This was also the first time Hezbollah used its military might internally for political reasons. The clashes that were strongly dominated by Hezbollah's experienced fighters and arms supply consequently requiring a regional intervention to end it.

The clashes were halted through the Doha Accord. An agreement mediated by Qatar and under the auspice of Saudi Arabia and the US from on one side and Iran and Syria on the other. Eleven of the major Lebanese political parties held a National Dialogue meeting in Doha between May 16 and 21, 2008. This accord allowed for the election of a new President for the Republic of Lebanon, the back then Army commander-in-chief Michel Suleiman, the formation of a new national unity government granting the opposition (March 8) one-third of the cabinet, which is the essential voting threshold needed to veto governmental decisions. Primarily, this was demanded by Hezbollah to ensure that no government policy targeting its arms and parallel communication grid is adopted. The political scene in Lebanon until 2011 could be best described as low intensity confrontations, with a superficial attempt to overcome the differences between the two political camps. the PSP (Druze dominated party) began to pivot after May 2008 clashes in order to ensure that Hezbollah did not attack the Druze minority in Lebanon (Kota, 2012), on the premise that minorities suffer the most in wars with majorities (Gerlach, 2017). Junblatt famously commented that " I am avoiding war…because I do not want the Druze to be 'cleansed' from the Chouf" (WikiLeaks Cables, 13 May 2008).

After the 2011 Syrian uprising that turned into a civil war, the intertwined political cleavage between Syria and Lebanon, coupled with the influx of refugees meant that the naturally pro-Syrian regime and anti-Syrian regime proponents in Lebanon would fight a proxy war, specially that the sectarian tensions are now clearly demarcated by an Alawiite/Shiite groups and political supporting the Syrian regime and a Sunni majority supporting the toppling of the regime (Darwich and Fakhoury, 2016). The logical outcome of the Lebanese political scene would be that Lebanon falls within the regional conflict that has been up surging, as it is another country that is nested within the MENA conflict (see Jenne, 2015). As Kramer (2017) puts it:

The civil war in neighboring Syria is no longer a Syrian domestic affair, but includes religious extremists declaring the aim of establishing an Islamic caliphate that includes the entire Levant. Arms and supplies are purchased by the emirates in the Arabian Gulf and channeled through Lebanon to factions opposing President Assad in Syria, which has led to Syrian incursions and divided much of Lebanon into supporters and opponents of Assad (2017, p. 118).
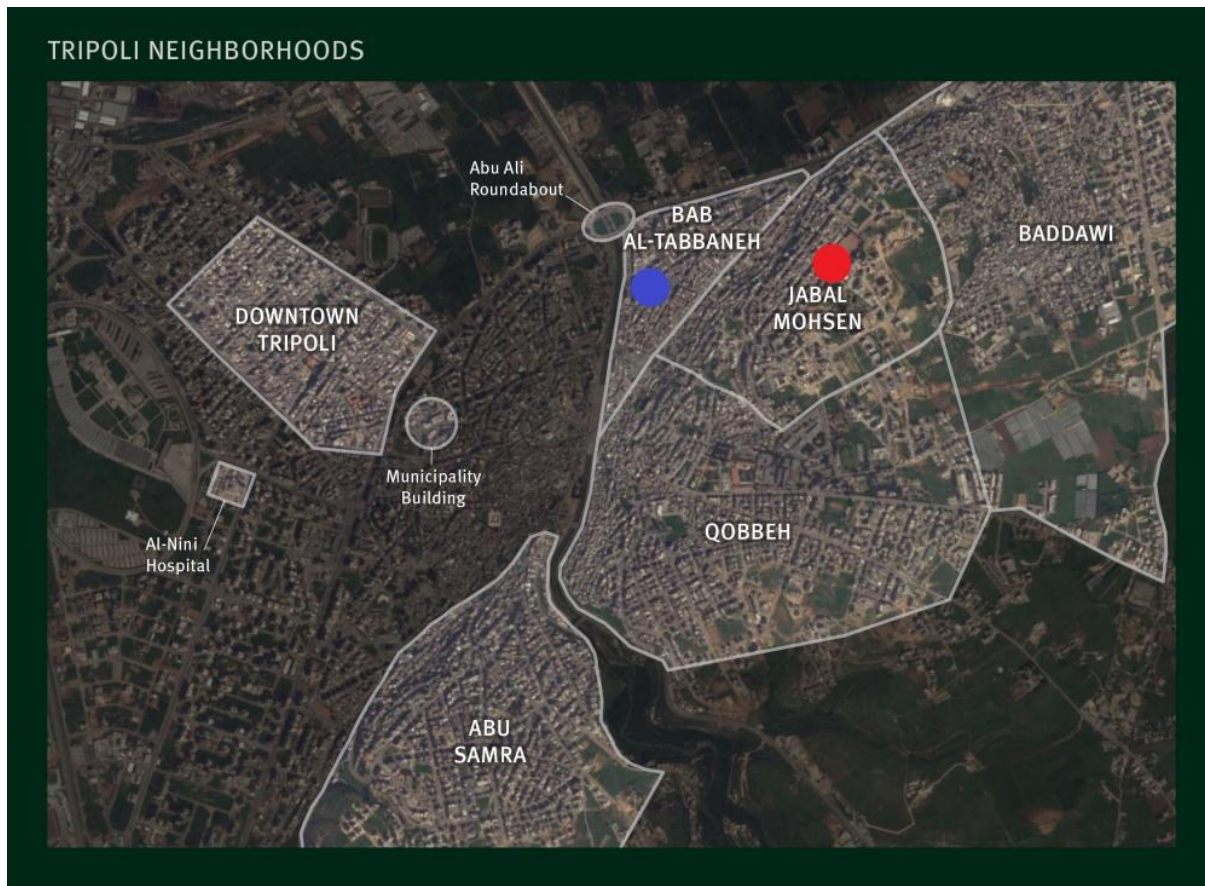
Figure 2-1. The map of Tripoli showing the two opposing neighborhoods, dots added by Author (Source: HRW, Dec 19, 2013)

Consequently, 20 rounds of armed violence in Tripoli in the North Lebanon erupted between the Alawiite (supporters of Assad/traditionally supported March 8) and Sunnis (opponents of Assad/who have been vocal in rejecting the Assad regime) where the two communities are neighboring each other in Beb El Tabbeneh and Jabal Mohsen districts (Human Rights Watch, 2013). The historical atrocities against the Sunnis of Bab el Tabbeneh, with the massacre of 1986 still in the memory, instigated vengeance, and ethnic identity politics. the Syrian civil war, the political and geographic proximity to Syria, the presence of 1.5 million refugees and occasional outbursts of violence, Lebanon has managed to avoid large-scale spill-over from the Syrian conflict (Gade, 2017). Making Lebanon, and Tripoli in particular, an interesting least-likely case

whereby all variables indicate for a breakout of violence, yet the armed violence in the city of Tripoli did not continue beyond March 2014.

2.4   The Puzzle and alternative explanations

Why did the several episodes of armed violence between Bab el Tabbeneh and Jabal Mohsen not go on for a longer time? Why did this conflict remain local and not spread nationally? Why and how were the combatants demobilized? Have the combatants been reintegrated into civilian life? To answer these questions, several general arguments have been put forth by scholars and analysists. I refer to them as alternative explanations. These explanations are well grounded in the regional and internal politics of the time, yet none of them fully explain why the fighters were demobilized and why the violent conflict in Tripoli did not last longer.

Lastly, all alternative explanations refer to macro-level political variables that could explain the end of the several rounds of conflict. As these explanations do hold truth in them, there is yet a study that can explain the micro-level events taking place during the violent conflict in Tripoli. The analysis of the different actors on field is essential to understand the realities of area-based conflict and peace. The section below looks at each alternative explanation and highlights their loopholes. The gaps in explaining the complexity of the case, sets the stage for looking at the local efforts that contributed to ending armed violence.

Alternative explanation I: ***The political and military presence of the Syrian army in Lebanon contained the episodes of violence in Lebanon that erupted since the end of the civil war***. This claim has its roots in understanding violent skirmishes since the Ta'if agreement. Many claim that the Syrian regime and Syrian troops' presence in Lebanon after the Ta'if agreement was integral in repressing any attempts of armed conflict to rise (see Weinberger, 1988; Avi-Ran and Maisel, 1991; Hinnebusch, 1998). The intervention of a strong army overpowering the smaller armed groups would put an end to any attempt to propagate the armed violence. Although one cannot attest to that fact prior to 2005, evidence shows that the violence in 2008 and again between 2012-2014 understudied was contained despite the withdrawal of the Syrian army from Lebanon.

In 2008, three years after the official withdrawal of the Syrian army in April 2005, and even with the strong arms of Hezbollah, who was a main fighting partisan, war-like violence only lasted for several days. The events of May 7, 2008, shows that a more regional intervention was needed and subsequently the Lebanese political elite met in Doha to sign the Doha accord. Discussing this

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intervention, its reasons and outcomes is beyond the scope of this research, however, it is important to notice the political environment surrounding this accord. The actual arms balance between the military groups was obviously tilting towards Hezbollah and their allies through their mighty arsenal (Daher, 2019). The Lebanese army did not intervene in the clashes, cautious about the internal divisions that might occur in the army as a result of some soldiers siding with their own sects. The internal strategy in the military and security institutions of Lebanon since the end of the civil war has been that intervention in armed political clashes need to be calculated against the cost it could have on the internal cohesion of the forces. In other words, the security institutions avoided entangling with militant groups fearing that their security personnel will break out and side with the militant groups rather than the security unit they are employed at. This ultimately made the security sector only effective against external threats (wars with Israel or against terrorist attacks) (Barak, 2009). Therefore, logistically, there was nothing that the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) could do to face Hezbollah, but Hezbollah still did not go for a complete coup. Moreover, during the time of the clashes of 2008, the upheavals in Syria were not yet existent, meaning that the Syrian regime was still strong enough to support Hezbollah if Hezbollah had the intentions to keep going in the conflict. This explanation does not account for the fact that the Lebanese political sects managed to overcome several instances of armed conflict in Lebanon after the Syrian withdrawal without the intervention from the LAF nor the SAF. However, this could suggest a more regionally nested role similar to what that happened in 2008 where the intervention was diplomatic rather than military. This could be the same reason as to why the armed conflict erupting in 2012 did not go on beyond 2014 and did not become national. This notion will be discussed in the second alternative elucidation.

Alternative explanation II: ***The Syrian conflict was nested within regional and international conflicts, the war and peace situation in Lebanon was a result of regional decision making, thus, the violence in Lebanon only ends when a regional agreement is reached on the war in Syria.*** This argument suggests that there was an international agreement on Lebanon or a side agreement on Syria for this conflict did not go on. The premise of this argument stems from the understanding that the local Lebanese political parties, as agents, would be strongly reliant on the regional actors within a wider structure (Jenne, 2015). For example, Hezbollah's decisions being clearly administered by Iran, while the Sunni groups are supported (financially and military) by Saudi Arabia/ US and Europe. There are two notable shortcomings in this explanation. The first is that,

evidently there is no account for the regional intervention because there was no regional agreement in 2014 that one could point to. In 1990, the Tai'f agreement can point to interventions and mediations that ended the civil war; in 2008, the Doha accord suggests points to the intervention to end the 2008 violent clashes. However, in 2014 there was no such agreement and yet we saw D&R processes yield positive results on a local level. Equally, there has not been a regional agreement either for the Syrian conflict. The conflict between the regional and international factions was still ongoing in Syria.

Second, mediated agreements usually redraw political power distributions. In 1990, the constitution was modified to redistribute the executive powers between the President and the Prime Minister. In 2008, the Doha accord instilled a new precedent - after a political deadlock in parliamentary voting - and granted the opposition a one-third share in the cabinet of ministers for veto powers (Dakhlallah, 2012). The absence of such an agreement in 2014 also meant an absence of a ripeness to the conflict whereby political gain for any of the fighting groups is materialized (Zartman, 2001). If there were any political gains, they should have manifested in the Presidential election immediately in 2014 (not in 2016) and government reformations similar to those in 2008. Ultimately, the lack of a new political truce between the Lebanese political parties resembles more of a challenge to the demobilization of fighters because the fighting groups did not witness the political gains intended from the violence. Under such circumstances, without a clear indication to a political gain, fighters are likely to continue pursuing the conflict rather than end it. This continues to posit the question as to why and how the fighters were demobilized.

Alternative explanation III: **The Army's intervention in spring 2014 stopped the on-going conflict since 2011**. A formation of a new government in Lebanon, headed by Tammam Salam, mandated the LAF to issue a comprehensive security plan for Tripoli. Almost 2,000 army soldiers were deployed for the crackdown (Knudsen, 2017). The army raided the warring neighborhoods and began arresting the wanted leaders, fighters, and sponsors, as well as confiscating arms. Many of both neighborhoods turned themselves in, while the Alawiite leaders Ali and Rif'at Eid fled to Syria. Those who turned themselves in are suspected to have benefited from "behind the scenes deal of being released without charges later" (Knudsen, 2017, p. 89). The plan, seemingly, halted violent conflict, however, in late October 2014, the conflict broke out again for a three-day battle that was the most severe since 2011 causing extensive damage to the Old City and shops around the proximity of the two neighborhoods. The most severe relapse happened in January 2015 when

a suicide attack targeted Alawites, killed 9 and injured 30 in a crowded Jabal Mohsen café. Evidently, the clampdown of the army just slowed down the rising tensions between the neighborhoods: "the army's military intervention during spring 2014 broke the conflict cycle, but not solve the conflict" (Knudsen, 2017, p.91). Like the other alternative explanations, this explanation remains partial. the role of the army decreased violent attacks that only demonstrate efforts of negative peace. The relapse of violence is further evidence that the army's security plan was not coherent and inclusive of disarmament, demobilization nor was it supported with strategies for economic and social reintegration. Understanding the phenomenon of the demobilization and reintegration of the fighters in Tripoli, and the gradual return to social cohesion needs to take into consideration factors beyond the army's crackdown and proclaimed security plan.

Alternative explanation IV: **The battlefield in Syria gave room and opportunity for fighters to continue their fight in Syria rather than in Lebanon.** Indeed, the geographic proximity of Syria to Lebanon could suggest that the reason why armed violence stopped in Lebanon is because fighters were remobilized to Syria, where fighting was more intense and the fighters in Lebanon were needed. In such a case, Lebanese local fighters would become foreign fighters in Syria. However, data shows that the number of foreign fighters recruited from Lebanon was among the lowest in the region, with only 18 recruits to ISIS (International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence, 2015). Certainly, this does not include the number of Hezbollah fighters sent from Lebanon to Syria to support the Syrian regime (Slim, 2014). This, however, does not undermine the argument on the spill-over effect of the Lebanese violence to Syria. Hezbollah, as an Iranian proxy (El Husseini, 2010), was mobilized to support the Assad regime during the times the regime would be facing military losses. Suppose for the sake of the argument that the fighters in Jabal Mohsen in Tripoli were mostly supported by Hezbollah and thus have been remobilized to Syria - why then did the Sunni fighters not mobilize to fight alongside Sunni rebel factions or ISIS against the Syrian regime? Thus, one can conclude that the spill-out explanation for why the armed violence was put to an end in Lebanon does not capture the whole truth either. Additionally, distinction needs to be made between the enrolled soldiers in Hezbollah who joined the organizations to fight for its causes and the members of the Arab Democratic Party who live in Jabal Mohsen. Although they might be political aligned and support each other at several instances, they are not part of the same organization.

2.5 The Civil Society Organizations' variable

All of the above explanations unpack macro political environmental factors, or regional and international ones. Rejecting alternative one whereby the implications of the Syrian troops as a protector against violence in Lebanon ceased to make sense after the bloody events of May 2008; I also reject alternative two since there was no regional peace agreement towards the war in Syria. The other proposed explanations can highlight a partial truth, they strictly look at the dichotomy of armed violence versus non-armed violence. However, none of the approaches look at, perhaps smaller claims, but sufficient to unpack the means by which demobilization and reintegration of fighters occurred. Additionally, they also do not look at the role the local actors, beyond the LAF, contributed to ending the conflict in Tripoli. Scholarly work has showed that the LAF did not provide the protection needed. As Kortam (2017) puts it: "Militias connected to local patrons or public leaders and civil defense units protect their neighborhood from attacks. This has come about because the state's security state apparatus – the Internal Security Forces and the LAF – has proven incapable of providing protection" (p.117). Brokerage, bridging social capital and SNA literature can conceptualize a more nuanced understanding as to why the civil violence did not last longer, nor proliferated further particularly with the absent analysis on roles beyond the traditional actors.

The evidence provided in this research elucidates the role that local civil society organizations (CSOs) participation in ending the conflict in Tripoli has gone unnoticed in the literature tackling the phenomenon. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the local CSOs conducted demobilization and reintegration activities in the city of Tripoli in Lebanon. Exploring micro-level DDR initiatives during conflict and security dilemma spirals in micro-level dynamics that are embedded in larger regional conflicts provides a novel micro-level turn in the study of DDR processes. I show that Tripoli's civil society repeatedly rallied for peace, as with the 'Hand-in-Hand' campaign, as well as I show that staging peaceful demonstration with banners calling for civil peace. Other initiatives included the Coalition of Civil Action Against Violence in Tripoli, comprising several NGOs, and various efforts of local organizations to restore damaged property (Knudsen, 2017). As such, the scope of this study presents missing pieces in the puzzle that, once put together, a more coherent understanding on why the violent conflict ended.

As this research will demonstrate through the utilization of social network analysis that, CSOs can position themselves as bridging actors, and, through brokerage design and implement short and

long-term demobilization and reintegration programs. CSOs, overlook the disarmament phase, not only because they do not have enough capacity to administer hard-security functions such as disarmament, but because they also understand that the disarmament of local warring parties in cases where they believe that other para-militias have regional support will be neither effective nor constructive. Through avoiding disarmament, CSOs avoided the resulting security dilemma that may have otherwise arisen due to perceiving the others' arms as a threat to them. Focusing on the demobilization and reintegration of fighters has demonstrated the ability of warring groups to 'lay aside' their arms rather than lay them down.

3   A Theoretical Framework: Social Capital, Brokerage and Turning Points

Against the backdrop of Harriri's assassination and the Syrian civil war, the deep divides between the Sunnis and the Alawiite communities in the city of Tripoli in Lebanon is brought to the forefront. The divide that manifested in several rounds of armed violent conflict between 2011 and 2014 with more than 200 casualties and 1100 injured (compiled by author from media sources). Moreover, I presented a variety of explanations that do not fully capture the unexpected end to the conflict. In that, I argue in further chapters that to explain the reality more comprehensively, looking at the involvement of local CSOs is integral. In the upcoming chapter, I conceptualize social capital brokerage and life trajectory turning points as tools to understand the impacts that CSOs have had on the transformation from violence to peace.

The study of social capital in peacebuilding has gained some major prominence in recent decades. Particularly, with the belief that enhanced social ties between warring factions is a major factor that can close the gap between conflicting parties. There has been illuminating studies connecting the analysis of associations in peacebuilding to social capital. Measuring social capital has been an obstacle for a comprehensive analysis on the impact that social capital can have on peacebuilding. First, the claim that social capital can generate peace is rather broad. Any relapse of violence could yield to the quick destructions of social capital. Moreover, negative peace (Galtung, 1996) – defined as the absence of violence but without trickled down reconciliations - does not mean that there is socialization amongst opposing factions. Second, the studies on social capital in peacebuilding have not yet taken a social network analysis approach, which could tell us about the positionalities of certain actors in informal networks who can generate and disrupt social capital. This approach goes beyond the analysis of social capital in terms of relations, takes as step into structural understanding of network in times of war and peace. The broadness of the literature should guide us into applying social capital in peacebuilding tools, such as DDR, rather than conflict management as a process writ large.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section introduces social capital conceptually with its associated challenges offering the quantitative and metric solutions that researchers and policy makers can adopt in assessing DDR. In so doing, I introduce social network analysis as one way to measure social capital demonstrating that social capital is an essential core component in

the study of DDR. The second section explains life course analysis as a novel approach to analyze historical and biographical data collected from demobilized ex-combatants. Lastly, the third section discusses how the research has been designed by outlining the type and rationale behind the data collected.

3.1 Social Capital and Social Networks

When it comes to conflict and peacebuilding, network science in general and social network analysis in particular has been an exciting endeavor for the conceptualization of social capital through relational analysis. In DDR literature, however, little has been said about social capital and its potential to demobilize and reintegrate. Social capital, over decades, has had a nuanced definition. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) define social capital as an outcome of a social structure (1992). Coleman defines social capital as a function within a social structure that can produce advantages (Coleman, 1990). Putnam (1995) understands social capital as "features of social organizations, such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate action and cooperation of mutual benefit…working together is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital" (Putnam, 1993, p.35). In his book, *Bowling Alone,* Putnam takes the United States as an object of analysis and describes the declination of participation in groups. Here, Putnam studies the ties existing within a group. In other words, Putnam focuses on relations of individuals inside their own community and groups of belongings. While less was studied on how American's relationships with individuals in other countries play out, he did discuss "getting ahead" by bridging social capital. Thus, as both types of relationships may indeed produce social capital, there is slight differentiation between community social capital, **bonding** social capital, and **bridging** social capital.

Bridging social capital occurs between different social groups; it could be organizations, countries, social classes, religions, or other important sociodemographic characteristics. Bonding social capital refers to intra-relationships that are formed within a group. Given the varying types of social capital, nevertheless, there is a general agreement that social capital is either produced or given by the social structure that and individual or groups have, which in turn creates a competitive advantage for these individuals and groups (Burt, 2001).

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Fukuyama (1995) argues that trust within a society is a primary factor for a society to thrive and development. In his view, social capital is measured by the trust because it is accumulated after several iterations. In turn, trust creates norms of reciprocity and societal values (Fukuyama 1995 in Colletta and Cullen, 2000). Uphoff (2000) defines social capital as "an accumulation of various types of social, psychological, cognitive, institutional, and related assets that increase the amount of probability of mutually beneficial cooperative" (Uphoff, 2000, p.216). Uphoff (2000) goes on to differentiate between cognitive social capital and structural social capital. Structural social capital is a result of relationships, networks and associations that link members within. While the former, is the visible manifestations of social capital, such as, charity work, trust, and active engagement.

These distinctions have led to pivotal work in network theory, particularly the concepts of *weak ties* (Granovetter, 1973), structural holes (Burt, 1995; Coleman, 1990), *embeddedness* (Gilsing et. al, 2008), and *network closure*. The following sections discuss weak ties and structural holes in particular as concepts that are tools to understand conflict and reconsolidation efforts. It is important to note here that *network closure* – the members of a group all have ties to each other – demonstrates the strongest bonding nature of a network. *Structural holes* demonstrate the space (hole) between different actors resulting from a non or a conflicting relationship that a potential actor could bridge one to the other. This is not to say that structural holes may not exists within the same group or organization. The table 3.1, summarizes the distinctive characteristic between *bonding* and *bridging capital*. In war and peace contexts, one can hypothesize that warring parties possess bonding social capital amongst the commanders and the combatants, while bridging social capital between commanders and combatants from opposing groups is absent. Consequently, mediators and peacemakers strive to position themselves as brokers who can the bridging connection between the two.

Bonding social capital	Bridging social capital
Within group ties	Between group ties
Exclusive connections	Inclusive connections
Inward Looking approaches by individuals	Outward looking approaches by individuals
"Getting by" – socially and economically	"Getting ahead" – socially and economically
Strong ties within a selected group	Weak ties with other similar individuals
High trust in each other	Thin trust in each other
Network Closure	Structural holes

Table 3.1. Source: What is the difference between bonding and bridging social capital? Social Capital Research and Training (https://www.socialcapitalresearch.com)

3.2 Social Network Analysis

Social Network Analysis (SNA) has gained much traction in the recent years. This growth has been complemented by a significant amount of user-friendly easily accessible technological tools for analyzing measures and visualizing SNA data. SNA was firstly developed by social anthropologists who wanted to understand patterns of relations conceptually and methodologically within human societies (Knoke and Yang, 2008). In sociology, these relational links help in understanding values, norms, and social structures. More broadly, in social sciences, studying relationships is sought after in order to explore and predict flow of information, services, knowledge, money etc. The links between various players can also indicate kinships, friendship, and memberships. Certainly, individual networks may overlap, as some individuals might be in multiple networks (Wellman, 2007; Knoke and Yang, 2008).

Diani and Mische (2015) argue that networks are a long-term ongoing relationship that possibly determine the strategic decisions, actions, relations between members of the networks and the network as a whole with external actors (groups or networks beyond the unitary collective network). As Gade (2019) puts it: In this perspective, the nature of networks can evolve slowly over time due to the evolution of social relations and repertoires, or it can change suddenly in the face of dramatic social and political events that transform societal interactions (Volpi and Clark, 2019, p.2).

SNA has been a multidisciplinary approach. In political science, significant strides were made in studies on organizational (private and governmental) change, electoral funding, terrorism, and social movement. Thus, SNA has been heavily adopted in the field of political science and international relations, but not in all its sub-fields, remaining mostly prominent in social movements and military and terrorism research. Mac Ginty (2010) offers a deep analysis on the drawbacks of studying social capital through SNA when addressing "dark networks" – i.e., terrorist networks – but highlights the positivity of SNA in studying realities that help "communities, INGOs, and bilateral donors identify networks through which development and reconstruction assistance can have the most impact" (p. 223). This research explores SNA for purposes of reconstructing communities that have been victims of decades of fragmenting social fabric. Concepts of SNA have been used before, but merely theoretically and not as an analytical and research method.

Modern social network analysis was first brought forth by Moreno and Jennings (1938), who proposed the use of network theory to study interpersonal relationships. They later set the foundations of sociometry. A social network is a composition of set of actors (referred to as *nodes*) and a their respective one or more relations (referred to as ties, links, or *edges*). The links depict the interconnections between different individuals, actors, or players (Wellman and Berkowitz, 1988). Certainly, this does not stipulate that all actors must be in direct links to all other actors – dyadic or triadic relations can exist in some or few interactions. Social network analysis, in fact, takes into consideration the presence and absence of ties in its analysis. Moreover, network analysis looks at the strength of the ties and here the strength of the ties is usually referred to as the *weight* of the ties.

Ties come in two types: *directed* and *undirected*. Directed ties provide information that is asymmetric, as in non-reciprocal (Barabasi, 2016). For example, one individual i may seek advice from individual j, but not vice-versa for j. An undirected tie, in contrast, implies reciprocity between i and j suggesting a two- way relationship (Barabasi, 2016). If the links are of certain intensity or strength, then this is quantitatively determined by the researcher, and thus a tie (whether directed or not) will have a numerical weight associated to it.

With advances in software technologies, the methodology of SNA has contributed to the formulation of quantitative measure of many qualitative concepts that have been vague due to the gap between the conceptual analysis and measures (Adhikari, 1960). Social network theories and SNA have also been useful in studying social cohesion in conflicting situations, steep asymmetry, and fragmentations in society. Additionally, SNA has been a significant approach in studying changes in social structure in groups or flows (trade, traffic etc.).

SNA can explain the impacts of structural relations of a community. Knoke and Kuklinski (1982) describe networks as "the structure of relations among actors and the location of individual actors in the network have important behavioral, perceptual, and attitudinal consequences for the units and the system as a whole" (p. 13). In my research, I investigate how these structures impact the social capital of individuals and organizations within peace-oriented networks. Studying social networks in DDR goes along the lines of shifting away from 'dark network' and this necessitates to looking at social capital as a core element in the concept of DDR.

A task facing many deeply divided societies is fostering a transition from bonding social capital to bridging social capital. For many deeply divided societies, the inter-communal division are so great that it is difficult to conceive of substantial bridging social capital…this might require… exposure of the communities to each other in non-threatening environments, and inter-group cooperation on functional issues. Such activities require the existence of social capital, firstly, at the intra-group level and, secondly, at the inter-group level (Mac Ginty, 2010, p.223).

The use of SNA in exploring points of highly positive social capital in conflict and post-conflict environments should not only be limited to hard security. A positive implication of SNA can contribute to the sustainability of a peace accord and post-war social reconstruction. Multiple social network concepts help us understand bridging social capital. In the section below, I expand on some of these concepts.

3.2.1   Structural holes and Brokerage

Ronald Burt (1998) understands social capital "as the value of an individual's social relationships… that one's relationships with others are a source of material, information and emotional aid" (in Borgatti et al, 1998). Burt (2001) emphasizes using a metaphor that "social capital is the contextual complement to human capital. The social capital metaphor is that the people who do better are somehow better connected" (Burt, 2001, p.202). Burt's notion of social capital has stemmed from his novel concept of structural holes.

Structural holes, as concept, is based on the works of Granovetter (1973) on the strength of weak ties, Freeman (1977) on betweenness centrality, Cook and Emerson (1978) and Burt (1980) on the autonomy in complex networks. Granovetter (1973), in his notable work on the strength of weak ties, argues that the traditional perception that; the stronger the tie between dyadic actors the more important is the relationship is not entirely accurate. It may well be that the stronger the tie the stronger the relationship; however weak ties that exist between an individual to another with whom you may not know very well or share very much, can actually produce more efficient and effective information transmission (job seeking, knowledge transfer etc.…). Even though one enjoys a strong relationship with are eager to provide with information and help, they roughly know what one knows already because of how close they are to each another. However, knowing someone from a different group, even if the link is not as strong, may actually expose you to new information that will give you a competitive advantage (Easley and Kleinber, 2010). Figure X below depicts the strength of weak ties. The weak tie that exists between the individual in the left-hand side group

to the individual on the right-hand side group is the actual access for all individuals to different connections to the other individuals in their respective groups.
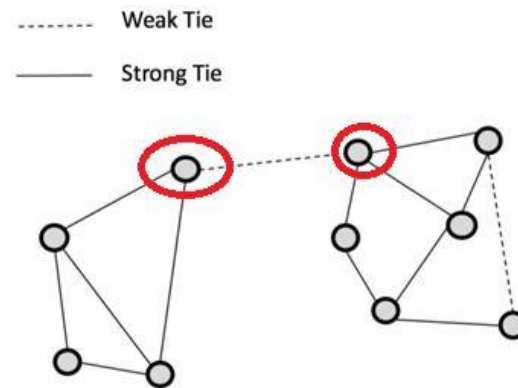
Figure 3-1. A social network with strong and weak ties (Ghaffar, 2017): Accessible: http://www.develop-project.eu/news/strength-of-social-ties-at-workplace

The concept of structural holes by Burt builds on figure 3.1 above demonstrating that the weak connections – or the absence of connection – between other members of each group actually results in a hole in the social structure (that is the geometrical space on the graph between the two groups). Burt (1992) argues that those structural holes create a competitive advantage for an individual whose network spans the holes. In other words, the two individuals at the top (red circle) have the ability to close down the gap. Burt (2001) states that, "people on either side of a structural hole circulate in different flows of information. Structural holes are an opportunity to broker the flow of information between people and control the projects that bring together people from opposite sides of the hole" (p. 208). Thus, the two individuals in the red circles on top, actually have a brokerage power that allows the control of information and activities between the two groups, acting as a bridge between them. It is important to note here that, the holes do not refer to the fact that these groups are not aware of each other, it just means that they do not share or intend to share the same activities.

The question remains why are structural holes important to social capital? The brokering individuals can relay communication between both groups while at the same time "displaying different beliefs and identities to each contact" (Burt, Kilduff and Tasselli, 2013). This argument is later developed into multivocality, which I will discuss further in the next chapter. People who connect across structural holes put them in the position that increases social ties, but also increases exposure to different contacts providing competitive advantage detecting higher social capital that can be used to resolve disagreements and disseminate news.

Burt (2001) goes on to hypothesize that, people who span structural holes find themselves given new identities. Such as synthesizing understandings and fostering creativity. When relationships bridge structural holes, creativity and learning are more likely to occur. Moreover, that social capital generated from spanning structural holes generates knowledge to whom to connect with for support for activity implementation, and when. Because "networks rich in structural holes provide a broad base of referrals… [that] improve due diligence and increase the probability of knowing which alternative ways to pitch an idea" (Burt, 2001, p.212); social capital thus facilitates a more channeled search for support and in a timely manner. Hence, such individuals are not only seen as 'the go-to person' but they can also by themselves see opportunities to launch projects – as entrepreneurs - and ideas that can bring two distinct groups together. Most importantly, broker individuals can also anticipate conflicts and problems, and can be the first to solve them.

There are quantitative and qualitative measure to identify bridging entrepreneurs. Before delving in the complexity of quantitative measures, let me first borrow Burt's (2001) qualitative conditions of successful bridging processes. The conditions for successful bridging processes are:

1. Communicating across differences of opinion

2. Reasoning from the interests of the other

3. Establishing mechanisms that build trust and reputation

4. Re-structuring the organization where the current structure is a problem

In sum, brokerage across structural holes is social capital (Burt, 2000). Actors in a network that span structural holes are associated with creativity and learning, adaptive implementation, positive evaluations, successful teams, and higher rewards.

3.3   A Trusted Broker

Trust remains difficult to measure or recognize. With the help of social network theory approaches, trust can be more valued as a tool that brings about outcomes, and not just a feeling or emotion that exist within a relational dyad. Trust could have social and political implications beyond relational. The lack of social and personal history between two individuals is likely to suggest distrust. Nevertheless, one may commit to trust someone without prior knowledge on how the other will behave (Burt, 2005). For example, a company management may hire a new employee based on his credentials but not trust in his experience with the company yet. As such, the

management is entrusting that the new employee will perform up to their standards. Hence, trust in by itself is ambiguous towards the outcome, brokerage becomes more imperative as it can overcome the unknown where trust has to be given without pervious relational experience (Burt, 2005).

As mentioned above, brokers are actors who bridge structural holes in a network. Tilly defines brokerage as the "continuing series of transaction to which participants attach shared understanding, memories, forecasts, rights, and obligations" (1998, p.456). Hence, brokers' powers stem from their positionality and access to a network's social and cultural resources (Goddard, 2012, p.505). Variation in positions means variation in social and cultural capital, and in the argument here, node's capacity to broker across warring groups. Brokerage is one the most commonly invoked structural relationship (Peeples and Haas Jr., 2013). In networks, brokerage positions are interpreted as an advantageous position that allows the transformation of information and knowledge. Goddard (2012) argues that the broker's positions confer legitimacy on the person and bestows unique capacities.

Thus, in a brokerage model, an actor's intermediate position is seen as a source of social capital, based on the access to resource and knowledge as well as the embeddedness characteristics. As Themnér (2016) argues, brokers often play a key role in ensuring that capital is invested in the right way. As bridges between networks, they can identify new opportunities and facilitate efforts to bring different people together (Burt, 1992; Themnér, 2016). Significant evidence has supported the argument that individuals acting as brokers have seen better long-term outcomes and advancements compared to those who are not brokers (Burt, 1992, 2004; Seibert et al. 2001). Literature on brokerage demonstrate similar outcomes associated with brokers in different settings and regardless of the nodes are individuals or organizations. This suggests that brokerage model is applicable to an array of contexts. Moreover, brokers' position lends multivocality (Padgett and Ansel, 1993). Multivocality refers to the variety of lenses through which communities interpret and make sense of the narratives, interpretation, and discourse (Carolan, 2008). The ability to take in several voices from different communities and/or individuals, the nodes, interpret them and in return speak to a variety of audiences allows a node to connect nodes that would not usually connect (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson, 2006). Hafner-Burton et al. (2009) argue that broker's *degree centrality* is usually high which generates social authority (in Goddard, 2012). The existence of brokers is not enough to explain successful cross-group ties. The presence of brokers

is necessary but not sufficient condition of bridging communities. The brokers need to be trusted by both warring parties in order for this to be successful. This would postulate the question how do brokers gain trust? Which brokers are trusted and why?

In times of disputes and wars, trust between two warring groups becomes a complicated issue. As such, the best that one can hope for in such situations is anticipated trust. Brokering is extremely valuable in war-ridden societies, where the state lacks sufficient security provision that is trusted by all groups. In other words, one can anticipate that the broker is trustworthy enough to maintain one's interest while managing to deal with both groups. Thus, for any anticipated cooperation, Burt (2005) argues that "morality and integrity are implicit in the definition" (p.94). One may trust a broker if a *relationship* with the broker exists. The broker is part of the community and a member (s) of one group know him too well and have had strong relationships with her/him (Yamagishi, 1998). Additionally, one my trust a broker if the broker has a trustworthy *history and reputation.* This pertains to the knowledge that the members of the social relational network possess on the broker's previous experience (Burt, 2001). Igarashi et al. (2008) discuss two types of trust, generalized and particularistic. In generalized trust, people approach others to form social relationships assuming that they are trustworthy – like taking a leap of faith. In contrast, particularistic trust is limited to connectedness between people. This discourages new relationships but could build on relationships that exists. A friend of my friend can be a friend to me.

In the context of social networks, especially those trying to be built after disputes and wars, generalized trust is key to building social relationships, to those who may have the right attitude and behavior. People with high generalized trust tend to perceive the good-will and the values in others too (Siegrist et al. 2005). Once relationships are formed, relational or particularistic list trust may start to arise over time. For example, in my research, in order to determine if a CSO has gained the trust of ex-combatants, I would expect that the ex-combatants with predisposed trust in associations that help would be the first to accept being approached by CSOs they do not previously know. Over time, if the approached ex-combatants increased their trust in the CSO, their fellow ex-combatants from the same warring group who trusts the previously approached ex-combatants are likely to join.

3.4 The Agency of CSOs and Peacebuilding

Civil society has become widely studied in modern scholarship, which made Edwards (2004) describe its surge as "the big idea on everyone's lips" (2004, p.2). In World Bank's 2006 report on Civil Society and Peacebuilding, the question became not whether CSOs play a role in society, but rather how can their potential be realized and what are the necessary conditions for their success (World Bank, 2006). The report also questions how external actors can be of assistance to CSOs in the process. However, despite the myriad studies on civil society and peacebuilding, contested issues on external actor roles, funding sources, local ownership, types of engagement and specific peacebuilding mechanisms have led to a more contested conceptualization on the role of civil society in peacebuilding. Moreover, most peacebuilding scholarly literature focuses on CSOs influence in rebuilding institutions and monitoring post-conflict processes (e.g., John and Kew, 2008; Donais, 2009) or in preventing conflict (e.g., Elbadawi and Sambanis, 2000; Carment and Schnabel, 2003). Scholarly work on CSOs in peacebuilding has mostly focused on looking strictly at NGOs' peacebuilding initiatives. Likewise, several similar works have been critical to their role in peacebuilding. The majority of the findings signal that crowding of NGO actors and local efforts float in peacebuilding processing, which itself threatens the process (Folley, 1996; Paffenhölz, 2001; Belloni, 2001 and 2006; Orjuela, 2004; Bendana, 2003; Bush, 2005; Pouligny, 2005). Other works pointed out to the weak membership base and lack of transparency by both, the donor, and the local organizations. Hence, arguing that NGOs became "donor-driven", and the weight of their work is heavily fixated on securing the funds rather than their capacities to enhance *social capital* and *ownership* of the initiatives (Orjuela, 2005; Debiel and Sticht, 2005; Belloni, 2006). Andrieu (2010) builds upon Habermas's notion of communicative action and Putnam's (2000) definition of social capital to argue that civil society's role in peacebuilding should not be in rebuilding the state institutions but should rather focus on social cohesion and sustainable communications between ex-combating groups. Additionally, Paffenhölz (2010) argues that there are many success stories for CSOs in peacebuilding, yet "unfortunately, most of them are not based on clear success criteria and transparent methodologies" (2010, p.59).

Moreover, the present scholarly work on the effectiveness of NGOs in peace initiatives (while I consider NGOs part of wider CSO definition) concludes that the NGOs lack a coherently designed theory of change that is achievable. The change considered in a single workshop or series of workshops addressing the attitudes of the individuals attending the workshop, may not necessary

trickle down to the wider society. Seemingly, the images of the "other" remains that of an enemy (Cuhadar, 2004; Ohanyan and Lewis, 2005). The Peace Project (Anderson et. al, 2003) found that only when peace workshops address key people in society or include a large enough number of people to create a new critical mass, can these initiatives bring about peace.

In contrast, there is literature analyzing a strong and effective role for CSOs in peacebuilding is pioneered by Putnam (2000) and Varshney (2004), arguing that they can contribute strongly and effectively to sustained peace. Putnam, building on De Tocqueville, discusses the importance of civic groups in maintaining peaceful social relations and democracy. He emphasizes civic community, engagement, and tolerance as key indicators for social prosperity (Putnam, 1993; 2000). In addition to the above, Barnes (2009) demonstrates that CSOs have been detrimental in (1) shifting conflict attitudes, (2) defining the peace agenda, (3) mobilizing constituencies for peace, (4) community-level peacemaking and (5) changing root causes and building cultures of peace. Moreover, Nilsson (2012) quantitatively supported the claim that the inclusion of civil society actors in the peace settlement process increased the durability of peace. He further demonstrates that particularly peace accords in which CSOs and political actors are seated on the same table is more likely to initiate a prevailing peace system.

Yet, research by Paffenhölz (2001; 2006, 2010; 2011), Barnes (2009) and Nilsson (2012) do not identify the exact activities and initiatives the CSOs have taken in peacebuilding during different phases of conflict. They particularly focus on post-conflict stages when violence is halted, and negotiations begin. However, looking into the primary stages of conflict and violence, CSOs intervention can be a deciding factor in whether countries fall into national civil war or contain the conflict and return to peace, which this project aims to tackle. Importantly, the literature does not unpack the mechanisms through which CSOs can perform that lead to a different outcome (Goodhand, 2006; Bukari and Guuroh, 2013; Omach, 2016).

Th nature of the CSO also matters, as discussed above, their history of work and reputation matters a great deal. If the CSO is relatively newly established, its employees and personnel are imperative in the perception of trust. For example, an NGO that is formed by the ex-fighters of the 1975-1990 war with the objective of dealing with violent conflict is more likely to gain trust from ex-combatants because of their story that resonates and the value they bring to them as ex-fighters. Such broker figures have relations with both ex-combatant groups, they function as "social

membranes" (Themnér, 2016) who through social capital that they possess can connect individuals and groups that share scant socio-economic and political space. Therefore, I hypothesize that trust becomes a necessary condition for the success of CSOs in demobilizing ex-combatants. Likewise, a CSO that is untrusted, will not remain as a broker as ex-combatants will break ties with the organization upon the first instance in which they recognize the mistrust.

3.5 Conventional approaches to the study of social capital in peacebuilding

The literature on SNA in peacebuilding has also been gaining ground in the last decade, with some focus on the concept of social capital (see Varshney, 2004; Cox, 2009; Rubio, 2014; Idris, 2016; Cenker-Özek, 2017). Yet, there has not been a systematic study that utilizes a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches to explore the social networks' ability to generate social capital necessary for peacebuilding. There is limited combination of quantitative and qualitative work that addresses brokerage and social capital in peace studies (see World Bank, 2009, Cox, 2009; Varshney, 2004; Koizumi, 2019). There is even less studies on social capital networks in peacebuilding, that address how certain networks can generate social capital and bring about peace (Varshney, 2004; Cox, 2009; Geha, 2019). Of those who have looked at networks in peacebuilding none have looked at the actual mapping of actors, the importance of their positionality within the network and how these networks can actually be successful. Furthermore, there is no comprehensive study using SNA to determine network characteristics during shifts between war and peace. The literature has certainly contributed to shedding some light on the importance of social networks in peacebuilding but has not addressed questions on why some actors are more robust in generating social capital than others? Where should the actors situate themselves on the network in order to manage conflict better? Which actors can we trust? What do they need to possess to be trusted? Furthermore, the studies on social networks in peacebuilding remain broad, with little to no attention paid to peace tools such as mediation, negotiations, or DDR. Nan (2010) argues "inclusive networks require bridging social capital, for which bonding social capital is necessary but not sufficient" (p. 183). Nevertheless, he poses some important questions on mechanisms for robust networks. Among them is "how can this new [network] of inclusivity be encouraged?

The literature also lacks studies that look at the impact of conflict on social capital. Calvo et al. (2020) conducted a formative quantitative study on armed conflict impacts on social capital in

Mali. Their quantitative work focuses on regression analysis and concludes that, trust in people from out-groups declines in case of violence, while the trust inwards remains at high levels and tends to increase (Calvo et al, 2020, p.18). This evidence is worrisome, since such interactions may deepen the conflict. However, Calvo et al. (2020) concede that social capital would be key factor in post-war long-term recovery for communities. Perhaps the most important suggestion is to put forth is the necessity to pay attention to local associations representing "bridging-type" social capital, "they could play a role in preventing a conflict trap whereby armed conflict aggravates social divisions which escalate the conflict" (Calvo et, al, 2020, p.19).

Moore (2010), also, looks at social capital formation in communities of Mali, and along the lines of the previously discussed dichotomy of bonding and bridging, he applies embeddedness and autonomy, borrowed from Woolcock (1998). Embeddedness refers to intra-community bonding and autonomy refers to bridges between primary and secondary groups. In his typology, Moore (2010) categorizes individuals with low autonomy and low embeddedness as amoral individuals who only look out for themselves as individuals – selfish. The low autonomy and high embeddedness would, alternatively, create amoral familism, where individuals are well integrated within their communities but with no ties to the other. A high autonomy and low embeddedness are rare individuals who have high connections with other individuals outside their community but with weak or no ties with their own, these Moore (2010) refers to them as anomie. Lastly, high autonomy with high embeddedness results in, social opportunity where there is strong links with the inside and the outside.

The application of social networks in peacebuilding have also been absent in the literature. I must however, single out the work of Varshney on ethnic conflict and civil society in India. Varshney (2004) explores the importance of associational engagement versus individual ones by looking at the connections that each provide (see figure 3.1). Inspired by Hegel and Habermas, Varshney investigates CSOs imperative role in mitigating violence and ensuring that the rights of different ethnic groups are met. Varshney systematically connects the scholarly work on civil society and ethnic conflict. In his book on the ethnic conflict in India between Hindus and Muslims, he argues that there is a significant causal relationship between ethnic conflict and civil society, evident in the three dyad cities he compares. Cities and towns that had active civil society associations saw more peace, while cities and towns missing civic engagement witnessed violence. In each pair of subnational comparisons, he looks for similar stimuli that led to different outcomes in the two

cities/towns and then identifies the mechanism by which the same trigger produced divergent outcomes (2004). Civil society emerged as a causal factor for all pairs. Varshney concludes that networks of associational engagement, if robust, have a larger impact on peacebuilding than everyday engagement.

Additionally, the existence of such associational networks per se are not enough to establish high degrees of social capital, contrary to Putnam (2000) and it does not necessarily mean that conflicts can be contained. However, the degree in which these networks span ethnic groups is more crucial. This was formulized by K=N (N-1)/2; where N is the number of persons and K being the number of links (Varshney, 2004). Therefore, an organization is expected to have higher N but less K and still can reach effective results more efficiently. Varshney's seminal work was identifying the causal mechanism of cross-ethnic bridging social group interactions. More importantly, Varshney identifies a substantial factor for such bridging capability, namely, the existence of civic associations that creates bridging links between ethnicities. These associations were able to span the inter-group relations and initiate trust between groups, so long as these associations are cross-ethnic themselves. However, his work does not delve into how these associational links can be cross-ethnic nor insights on the positionality of the nodes. Thus, Varshney's wok opens research avenues to adopt SNA to various strands in peacebuilding. This work, looks specifically at how social capital can play a major role in DDR as a peacebuilding tool, allowing CSO to facilitate the initiation of bridging.

Looking at social capital in peacebuilding is certainly essential, but still broad attempt. Determinants and measurements of social capital for peacebuilding requires the breakdown of the peace processes. The hypothesis that bridging social capital can promote peacebuilding still stands, more than ever, however, more accurate research on specific peacebuilding tools can provide us with a more in depth understanding to how and when social capital can be generated and yield positive results. This would also inform peacebuilding practitioners. There is no comprehensive study on social capital in DDR, the literature instead focuses on social capital as a social reconciling tool after peace agreements. The extensive work of Themnér and Karlen (2020), where they use social network theory on the intactness of ex-military networks in Liberia provides evidence to the contrary, that when ex-combatants have less social capital with commanders in post-conflict, they are likely to seek ties that ensure politics of patronage and personal benefits. The relations of the network of ex-combatants may remain intact but are also unconnected to their

former commanders particularly when non elite related brokers interfere. Subsequently, no studies have covered social capital and social network analysis in DDR. With DDR being a key tool in peacebuilding, DDR helps move fighters – who naturally have high bonding social capital due to their embeddedness – away from warring activities and also assists in bringing ex-combatants and victims together to foster reintegration. Such studies may seem qualitative in nature; however, they require complemental quantitative which assist in highlighting the specific actors that enjoy highest in betweenness and brokerage positions.

3.6   Social Networks and DDR

In addition to the previously mentioned approaches of structural holes (Burt, 1992), I map the frequently referenced typologies of social capital seen in Borgatti et al (1998) and Moore (2010) to the situations in which in divided societies, conflict and violence may arise (table 3.1). I also highlight where demobilization and reintegration are likely to happen – ultimately peace – if DDR implementers are positioned in as brokers and are able to understand the groups they are dealing with. These situations are dynamic, in other words, communities may move from one box to another. In fact, it will become imperative in order to move from violence to peace.

Box A represents individuals who have low internal and external links. Such individuals are perhaps very individualistic. They maintain weak ties with the members of their group, most likely their ethnic, religious or race group. Thus, these individuals do not span structural holes and a major disadvantage is that at times of high mobilization and fear, these individuals have a high chance to join the groups they identify in action. *Box C* represents individuals who have high internal but low external links. These actors are usually the groups that join violent conflict and have a high probability to be mobilized. Their high internal social capital is negative for DDR as it is merely bonding social capital (Portes and Sensenbrener, 1993). Fortunately, they also have a high possibility of being demobilized when peace settlements take place. However, given their weak external links they will struggle to be reintegrated. Ties need to be built with the external groups for better reintegration.

Embeddedness within a militant group	Bridging ties	
	Low	High
Bonding: Low	**Box A: Non-Fighter/easy to recruit.** This individual or organization is unlikely to participate with group level conflict and violence since they do not have a particular group belonging. However, with time this individual may be more likely to be recruited to join a fighting group on sectarian, ethnic or race base. Prospects of peace within this stage are limited. **Demobilization ability: Low Reintegration ability: Low**	**Box B: Non-fighter/difficult broker**. This individual or organization is not likely to join fighting factions given the strong ties with the "other". Their position can give him some opportunity to become a broker but need to strengthen their ties with the community (inside). Prospects of peace are possible. **Demobilization ability: High Reintegration ability: High**
Bonding: High	**Box C: Fighting individuals** In divided societies, these groups are very easily mobilized and are more willing to fight to defend their bond. These bonding ties may take the form of religion, ethnicity, race or political groups. Prospects of peace within this stage are limited. The need to move to higher number of external ties. **Demobilization ability: High Reintegration ability: low**	**Box D: Fighting individual/group but possible broker.** Actors in this type are well connected internally and externally. Thus, they may go both ways. With proper channels of within DDR and Peace processes, they can become broker for demobilization and peace. **Demobilization ability: High Reintegration ability: High.**

Figure 3-2. Conceptualizing individual and organizational characteristics of internal linkages and external linkages on fighting or being brokers

Box B represents individuals who have low internal ties but high and strong external ties. These individuals are less likely to be mobilized for war and thus easy to mobilize because their sense of belonging to the group is limited. They have the potential to be brokers and bridge communities if they strengthen their internal ties. *Box D* represents individuals who have high internal and external ties. These individuals can easily swing and are thus the most difficult to deal with but also the group with the potential of highest return. Their strong internal (bonding) ties are likely to make it easy for them to be mobilized into war as a group, however, their strong external ties can see them span the structural holes and if demobilized as an individual can be a robust broker with a high social capital. Consequently, leading possible demobilization and reintegration.

In summary, this categorization allows us to have an idea as to the actors who are in positive social capital positions that can generate the ability to be effective in demobilization and reintegration, ultimately leading to sustainability of peace. This reiterates Moore's (2010) argument that when horizontal linkages through modern associations are not present, opportunities can collapse and when negotiated solutions are achieved, social capital can be appreciated. When traditional bonding links and existing linkages cannot be shifted into social capital opportunities, higher divisions are likely to be seen and could see communities in Box D move to Box C and individuals in Box B move into Box A.

3.7 Quantitative determination of Brokerage

To make sense of social network theory, a series of steps need to be taken. Primarily as a researcher, I collect the data that can map out the nodes (actors) and their ties with each other in order to visualize the network. Furthermore, using the same software for visualization, certain metrics can be calculated which, in turn, infer our hypothesizing on brokerage and social capital. Since my research determines a set of activities that CSOs conduct in which former combatants participate in, then an ego network arises. In this case, we observe types of actors in the network, the CSOs and ex-combatants. Additionally, the analysis needs to look at the *effective size* and *constraint* measures that I calculate in order to identify the brokers in a network.

Furthermore, I adopt semi-structured interviews as a collection tool of the network's data. Interviews have been used to gather data in ego-centered networks before (see Burt, 1984; 1985), which have provided accurate information at instances where participants are more reluctant to participate in impersonal questionnaire. More importantly in my research, many of the ex-combatants do not have the essential educational background that allows them to answer a questionnaire. Therefore, questions related to who they have joined an activity with or who they believe is now their friend from the other warring group were asked. Additionally, observational methods have also been in used in social networks in small groups, which is the case in this project, they prove to be very accurate once the researcher can observe interactions among people in a social setting (Mazzucato, 2021). Therefore, my observations were complimentary to the data from interviews utilized in social networks. This two offers a triangulation for the network analysis. More on this process is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

Measuring social capital and brokerage in the field of conflict management and peacebuilding has been strictly limited to identifying the presence/absence of conflict or polarization and presence of strong social bonds measured by levels of trust and reciprocity (Berkman and Kawachi, 2000). While these measurements remain important in understanding peace and conflict, the nature of these measurements do not give us a complete picture as to how the social capital functions in the networks of participants. Thus, for the purpose of this research, social network analysis concepts will be utilized to demonstrate what it means to have a particular number of ties? With whom? And how many connections does one need to get from member of one group to another. Further, as demonstrated, trust is hardly measured beyond some qualitative meanings.

Quantitative measures of social capital have been on the rise, with particular models of factor analysis, regressions, and correlations (Onyx and Bullen, 2000; Zappala and Lyons, 2009; Edwards et. al, 2015). The network theory measurements of social capital are yet to be studied in the realms of peacebuilding, conflict management or DDR.

In the language of network science, when we refer to the study of an individual, we are looking at ego-networks. Ego node is the person whose social capital we are measuring, and the "alter" is the persons that the ego is connected to directly. Hence, in individual-external focus we are interested in measuring the connections the ego has with other individuals or groups. But we also are interested to know if the alters are connected to each other; the more alters already connected to each other, the less the ego is important. Burt (1992) suggests two basic measures in the presence of a structural hole, **effective size,** and **constraint**. The effective size is an elementary building block in all structural-hole measures. It reflects the number of alters that an ego is connected to without the redundancies. The effective size of a node in network ranges between 1 to N with N being the number of all contacts in a network (Labun and Wittek, 2014). In other words, actors who do not have many ties to a focal person's contacts leads to low constraint measure.

When it comes to measurements with an external focus, we may look at the group as one entity. As such we are still interested in the group degree, group closeness and group betweenness. Moreover, this could pose some difficulties. Specially that, some members of the group may have ties with other but not the entire group. Furthermore, some individuals outside the group may have ties with the group but they are not part of another group themselves. Chapter 5 will go in more depth on these measurements and apply them to the data collected for this research.

I did not conceptually rely on SNA alone to build determine the impacts of the CSO interventions. Metrics for measuring brokerage and bridging ties are indeed important and showcase that a DDR implementer that is positioned as a broker has higher chances of success. SNA presents a significant understanding of the relational aspects within and between combating groups. Nevertheless, a more comprehensive understanding of the transitioning effect that CSOs have on the paths of ex-combatants, life course analysis (LCA) supplies conceptual understanding on how individual lives are shaped and transitioned. Hence, by combining both conceptual frameworks, meso and micro-level factors that determined demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants become clear.

3.8 Life Course Analysis: Brokers as turning points

In the previous section, I built on the concept of brokerage the analytical framework that would inform us on whether the DDR implementer is also spanning structural holes. CSOs tend to focus their work on the individual level, hence, the addition of life course analysis to the suggested analytical framework is integral. Assessing the extent to which the CSO broker involvement was an intervening variable leading to demobilization and reintegration, life course draws on sequential analysis that would clearly highlight the turning points in the lives of individuals.

Life course inquiry research method is a biographical method that follows and unpacks the narrative of the individual participants under study (Nilsen and Brannen, 2011). Despite life stories constituting chronological and sequential trace of events, this approach, especially when conducted through interviews, allows the participant to convey meanings and evaluations of these events in her/his life and relative to her/his community around him/her (Elliot, 2005). As Brannen (2013) puts it "life stories provide holistic and processual accounts both through the concept of the life trajectory and the hermeneutic aspects of the life" (Brennan, 2013, p. 2). Therefore, many processes can be discovered through this approach and trace the flow of information processed by the individual that is usually more difficult to get through process tracing.

Life course methodology allows researchers to focus on multiple-factor explanations and conclude a combinational model with many variables, if necessary, when studying longitudinal timeframes. The concept allows for identifying historical events and sociological interactions outside the personal life as well as with the personal attachment to these events. Generally, social scientist follows two broad methods; (1) the social relations approach that views the impact of the social

surroundings on the individual and (2) the dynamic approach that traces the lives over time. Interconnections of social structures and smaller groups were often addressed through social relations (see Parsons, 1966; Levi-Strauss, 1962). Elder (1974) pioneered the studies of individual longitudinal data reconstruction through his work on the changes in children's' lives. Elder and Giele (1998) formulated a useful framework to trace the interplay of a person and her/his reactions and responses to contextual changes. The frame is divided into four parts, (1) location of the individual in time and place, (2) linked lives and integrations, (3) human agency and (4) timings of lives or adaptation.

Location in time and place refers to the cultural background of the individuals, her/his location (geographic) and the time in which he experienced his childhood and adolescence can have an impact on his personal experience. For example, children who lived through the Great Depression experienced a historical era that is different than that which thus mean that they experienced a different childhood.

The concepts that guide life course analysis include: (1) *Linked lives:* this aspect of the framework looks at the social integration of the individual. Some may have a discontinued internalization of norms and values, whereas other may join the weave in the social and cultural expectations without any problems. For example, in a community of high religious practice individuals' actions will be affected depending on the level of the individual's disruption or interwovenness with the community. *(2) Human agency:* this aspect looks at the individual goal orientation, "the motives of persons and groups to meet their own needs result in their actively making decisions and organizing their lives around goals such as being economically secure, seeking satisfaction and avoiding pain" (Elder and Giele, 1998, p. 5). Lastly, timing of lives is the understanding that for any individual to accomplish their goals, they need to respond to the external events and react to using the available resources. As such, it is a passive and active adaptation tools for individuals. All these elements of the framework, argue Elder and Giele (1998), come together and are experienced through individuals' actions in different situations. To avoid complexity, life course research adopted here is particularly aimed at identifying the action and reaction of participants (ex-combatants) that encouraged them to demobilize and for some to reintegrate. Keeping in mind the activities of the CSOs, a more accurate picture is drawn on the opportunities of demobilization and reintegration of combatants. It is important to note that, no inference on the psychosocial

development of the ex-combatants is made through this analysis.
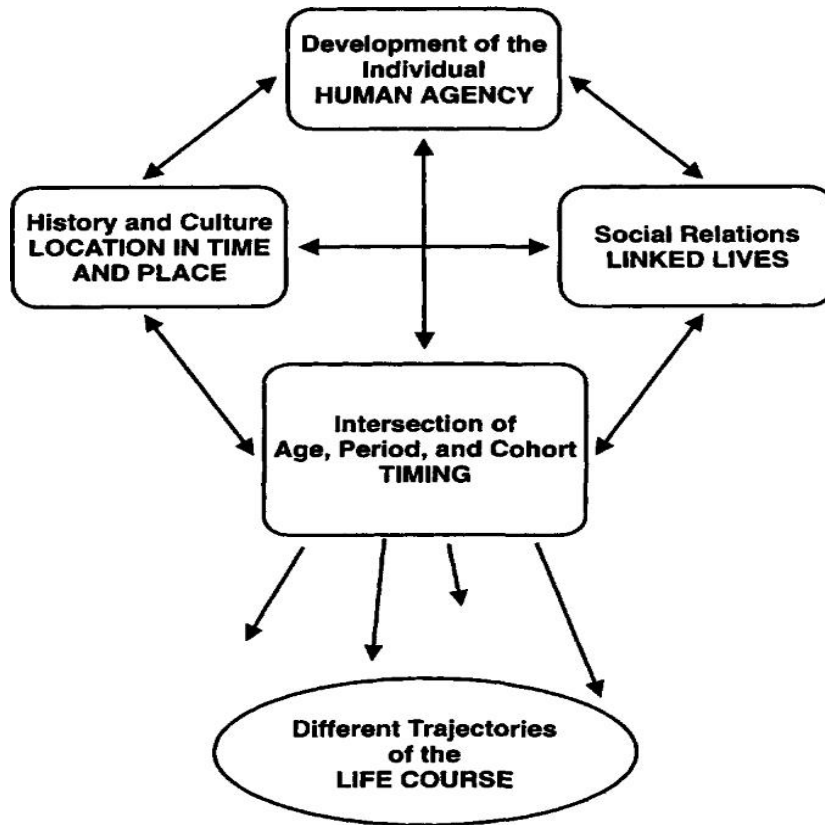
Figure 3-3. Elements of Life Course Paradigm (Source: Elder and Giele, 1998)

3.9 Research Design

The two analytical frameworks guide my research design. As such, the social networks of the ex-combatants are visualized based on collected data that highlight the ties between the ex-combatants with each other's, within the same warring group, and across. The data also showcase the links between ex-combatants and the CSOs. Thus, at instances where the CSOs have connections between two unconnected ex-combatants, quantitative calculation of effective size and constraint are conducted in order to confirm whether the CSO is a broker. Accordingly, the evidence from the first phase of this analysis is cross analyzed with life course analysis whereby the biographic narratives of the ex-combatants conclude whether the brokerage position and activities of the CSO provided the needed catalyst for demobilization and reintegration. Ultimately, the analysis infers if the social network as a whole has been an intervening variable that prodded ex-combatants away from militant life.

While my project looks at a single case study, I apply a mixture of quantitative and qualitative method in a sub-national case to conclude a set of characteristics that allow former fighters to mobilize and demobilize; as well as, to draw out a set of characteristics that allow CSOs to perform vitally in DDR. In deploying life-course analytical approach I draw out the different paths the ex-combatants went through and highlight the impact that CSOs had on their demobilization and reintegration. This method provides a voice to people who have not been heard before, who have been perhaps shamed or even prosecuted. DDR generally overlooks the voices of the ex-combatants and assumes that the ex-combatants will not resort to violence in presence of a political agreement or addressed economic grievances.

There remain several methodological challenges to amalgamating concrete evidence on the impact of CSOs in DDR processes. Chapman (2010) highlights two obstacles facing processes of evidential proof that CSOs' social capital can generate civic peace. The first obstacle, Chapman argues, is to find appropriate measures for social capital because the literature has been vague on such measurements. This work does just that, by borrowing the SNA social capital measurements and applying them to networks of peace. The second obstacle is endogeneity, a rather common research design pitfall. Chapman (2010) argues that it is likely that causality flows in both directions when there is relative peace, formation of bridged communities come about as a result of a peaceful environment. To overcome this, in-depth life course tracing at a micro-level can clearly identify causal mechanisms and elements that shape life choices and trajectories (George and Bennet, 2005). Varshney's (2001) work applies the same method to identify the causal mechanisms of peace in cities and towns by cross-cutting civic associations dispelling rumors to avoid violence in comparison to places where the absence of these civic associations helped in the widespread rumors and ultimately violence. Another approach that has not been employed for some of the measurement reasons above, is to rely on SNA techniques to directly model the endogenous relationship between CSOs – or individual members of CSOs - and violence. Moreover, life-course analysis can unpack personal records on life stories that can highlight casual mechanisms.

Two rationales motivate my choice of studying ex-fighters in this single-case study. First, the case of Lebanon is a least likely case where existing conceptualization do not explain the complex realities of DDR in Tripoli despite the absence of a regional or international processes addressed to the city after the 2014 clashes. Lebanon did not go through any official DDR program after the

end of the 1976-1990 civil war. It was believed that the presence of the Syrian Armed Forced (SAF) in Lebanon in 2005 would be a guarantee for the non-relapse of violence. Hence, after the SAF withdrawal from Lebanon, it was expected that relapse to violence would prevail. Nevertheless, assumption was countered by the rise of violence and its internal containment. Moreover, the expectation being that the violence in Tripoli would remain on going and spread nationally given the absence of any peace plan or DDR plan has also not materialized. Second, the Lebanese case presents a revelatory case with the fact that data could be collected that address the life-story of former-combatants who were mobilized, demobilized, and reintegrated provides a novel opportunity to analyze how the lives of the fighters progressed, usually difficult task to access in Lebanon. Generally, the use of single case studies has been accepted as a method of theory building within political science. This is due to the presence of a workable hypothesis, from which the findings derived gain wider applicability. I am well aware that generalizability may not be sufficient in the study of a single case study, however; to seek a generalization in a number of qualitative case analysis, Charles Tilly (1990) notes, "would be an error because with the multiplication of cases and the standardization of categories for comparison the theoretical return declines more rapidly than the empirical return rises" (Tilly, 1984, p.144). My choice of only one city in a country is motivated by the belief that a single case analysis allows me to get a more in-depth grasp of the complexity of the case (Collier, 1993) and the development of events and mechanisms in the city. Nevertheless, using a single case-study, particularly in social science, poses some challenges in relation to external validity and generalization. To overcome these challenges, I address the scope conditions of this project in order to determine the righteousness of the used method. Yin (2003) identifies conditions under which the use of a single case study is justified. These include, the type of research question proposed, and the degree of focus on contemporary events as opposed to historical ones. It is imperative for this project to focus on a very contemporary event, with a coherent research question. Case study as a research strategy is a holistic approach that covers the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis (Yin, 2003). Based on a mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence this work ties to explain the causal links in real-life interventions and to describe a set of characteristics that makes the intervention process in a particular context useful.

The theory and the literature provide good information on what has been done and the explanations in this research, for example, I have found some important relevance of economic standings on

the effectiveness of DDR programs. However, what has been published may not be as relevant in the Lebanese case. Hence, the first stage of this research was to review the context of my work providing a quasi- historical background on Lebanon's legacy with armed wars and pockets of violence. Doing a single-case study allows for intensive analysis and descriptions of the units of analysis that are bounded by the space and time (Tripoli 2011-2014). The case study was also logical to influence policy, procedures, and future research (Merriam, 2001). The case study orientation that I adopt is participant observation combined with life course interviews. This was an essential step in order to gain the trust of ex-combatants in my research. Ex-combatants tend to shy away from exposing themselves for security reasons as well as feelings of shame. In order to be able to get the stories, a long process of trust had to be built over time (Wolcott, 1973). Hence, I would spend my days attending and reading in the coffee shops of Jabal Mohsen and Bab el Tabbeneh to get the feeling of belonging to the community. I would join activities, such as watching football games and playing cards Being from Lebanon has helped linguistically and eased me into building relations and gaining trust. Still, some ex-combatants came with a pistol to the interviews, but soon after disbanded it.

In addition, I engage in intrinsic case study research to know more about the individuals, organizations, and the emerging group as whole. Using an intrinsic case study, usually researchers are not necessarily interested in examining or creating general theories or in generalizing their findings to broader populations. Nevertheless, the applied grounded-theory approach builds a context-sensitive theory that could be applicable to other cases. This research also adopts an explanatory and descriptive design. Explanatory design seeks to establish cause- and-effect relationship. The primary purpose is to determine how events occur and which ones may influence particular outcomes. Through the descriptive design I attempt to present a complete description of the phenomenon. This involves more than one unit of analysis. This occurs when, within a single case, attention is also given to a sub-unit. For instance, in this case, I elaborate on the main unit of analysis that is CSOs, but the analysis also focuses on the stories of former combatants and how the two are intertwined.

Internal validity

Internal validity is certainly a concern for causal case studies. To avoid the mistake of inferring that there is a causal mechanism between the independent and dependent variable that is not caused

by an unaccounted variable, I use ***pattern-matching*** in my data analysis to address ***rival explanations***. Most importantly, utilizing ***life-course*** ethnographic approaches that draw the paths of the former fighters. More on these techniques will be discussed in the chapter 6 of this dissertation.

External validity

Even though in my research and the selected case study, generalizability is not the primary concern, however, the case study must still address external validation test. Case studies rely on analytical generalization, I strive to generalize a particular set of results to a broader theory. As such, the work done on Tripoli city in Lebanon is not be generalized on a set of cases that encounter armed violence, but, in fact, I intended to cover broader issues in DDR initiatives to be able to build on an alternative theory that deals with CSOs in DDR. What can be deducted from the below case is that a use of the replication logic to multiple other cases can help build the theory of how CSOs can be effective within DDR. Context sensitivity is an essential recognition when designing DDR programs.

Unit of Analysis

There are two units of analysis in this project, the CSOs and ex-combatants. Since this is an embedded case study, attention is given to two units of analysis. Given my research question that explores the success of CSO in D&R programs, attention is paid to the exact mechanisms and activities the CSOs conducted over the course of the selected time period that have established a demobilization and reintegration process. In order to triangulate my findings, the stories collected from ex-combatants help in understanding the benefits of these activities on their life-course. In other words, what exactly was beneficial to them that the CSO did and how. Therefore, adopting a sub-unit of analysis, being the ex-combatants, becomes viable for concluding a set of individual characteristics that are influenced by CSOs. To avoid the tautological problem that would rise from relying solely on the ex-combatants who were snow sampled from the CSOs themselves, building connections with ex-combatants directly, gave me the opportunity to ask the ex-combatants to recommend me their fellow friends who might not have been active members in the CSOs that I study but have participated in selected activities or received some of their services. Additionally, it tests the validation of brokerage model and unpacks the causal mechanism, highlighting the intervening variables of change.

3.10 Data Collection

In the below research, evidence was attained from interviews, observations, research log and documents obtained from CSOs. Data accumulated by different methods but bearing on the same issue are part of a more articulate triangulation. The convergence of my data increases my confidence in getting the true picture.

Semi-structured Interviews

Fifteen interviews were conducted with ex-combatants selected through two main sources. The first is CSOs I approached who put me in connection with several of the ex-combatants they worked with. It also meant spending several days with the ex-combatants at the CSO premises in order to gain their trust. The second, is through two of my acquaintances from the city of Tripoli. A series of connections led me to three extra ex-combatants I could interview who were not at that time involved in the CSO activities. The number of interviews with CSO representatives was formulated according to the snowball sampling and the identification of the most robust and active organizations, amounting to twelve interviews (6 with the executive directors and 6 respective project managers). In Lebanon, due to its multi-factional system, expert interviews were summoned by different groups and communities in order to ensure the non-bias representation of ideas. My semi-structured interviews were guided conversations. The questions were specified in advance but during the interview I took the liberty to define the sequence and wording of questions during the course of the interview. Through my connections with the CSOs it was easier to access and schedule meetings with CSOs and through these connections, I was able to identify former fighters' participants through snowballing. A limited reliance on chain-referential sampling aids in small communities. These interviews provide on-the-ground perspectives on civil society participants, a bottom-up approach (in a methodological sense) complements the desk study. The interviews also unpack the activities that organizations planned and executed as well as the activities individuals have undergone. An interview with a CSO executive director gave insights to the planned and conducted activities. Particular questions in the interviews were closed ended form particular for the data collection required for the social network analysis. Such questions include whether the interviewee participated in a particular activity, member of a specific organization, or received funding from and umbrella organization. Interviewees' identity is kept anonymous unless indicated otherwise.

Participant observation

Participant-observation is the most basic ethnographic research method (Fife, 2005). David Fetterman (1989) notes that "participant observation combines participation in the lives of the people under study with maintenance of a professional distance that allows adequate observation and recording of data" (p.45). I was not a covert participant observer, but in fact I made my intentions clear to the participants and tried to maintain relatively a superficial contact with the individual's studies (ex-combatants), but a sturdy relationship built on trust and mutual respect (Waddington, 1994). This allowed the former combatants to open up more in the interviews as well. Until then, MARCH and SHIFT NGOs were supportive in arranging interviews for me with individuals who trusted me on NGO's behalf. One data collection from observation method I deployed was note taking. I maintained a research log during my time in the field to collect any descriptive interaction of behavior that I may find to be necessary. In my research log I wrote down.

1) Evidence collected from discussion of community members, observation of interactions andbehaviors and,

2) Ideas and provisional explanations,

3) Personal notes consisting of questions to reflect on, insights, hunches and ideas or follow upquestions that I need to bring to the fore.

These notes that included insights or questions to raise in future interviews were carefully reviewed andused either in my upcoming interviews or during the second time that I went to the fieldwork.

Document analysis

In addition to interviews and the research log, I was able to collect documentary evidence from a particular organization, Fighters for Peace, an organization founded by former fighters from different warring groups during the 1975-90 Lebanese civil war. The data collected are of two types. The first was a document on the roadmap to peace in Tripoli that FFPand other NGOs wrote. The document discusses the plan the NGOs strategized to stop the violence in Tripoli.The second document was a series of notes from the focus groups with former fighters conducted by FFP in both warring neighborhoods. FFP where gracious enough to give me the copies of the minutes without any fee inorder to further assist me in assimilating the data and its analysis. I also analyzed

documents by other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are made public[4]. These documents assisted in triangulating my findings. The roadmap to reconciliation allowed me to follow the strategy that the CSOs set out and the activities they carved out. This was also helpful in my interviews to remind the participants about specific phases in the process. While the minutes of meetings at FFP became useful in my interviews with ex-combatants. For example, several ex-combatants mentioned receiving per diems without remembering the specific amount. In the documents of FFP that are dated during the conflict and right after, the per diem amounts were accurately recorded.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I go in depth on the data collection processes that was necessary to assembling evidence for SNA and life course analysis. Each was dealt with separately, with two iterations of interviews conducted with each participant. One focused on collecting information pertaining to ties and connections, while the other was focused on the narrations of the lives.

In this chapter, I have introduced the theoretical underpinnings of social capital, brokerage, and the SNA application in peace studies. As such, while analyzing DDR programs and the effective role of the designers and implementers, one can make use of the quantitative tools available at hand within SNA to examine the positionality of the DDR implementers in the networks that they form. Additionally, I tie the analysis at the social level with an individual-level analysis by combining SNA with life course analytical framework. Essentially, after identifying the roles of the CSOs in the general environment of interaction between ex-combatants in DDR, life course analysis triangulates the findings in such a way that the turning points in the lives of ex-combatants are extracted. In chapters 5 and 6 the applicability of the conceptual framework will be put to test.

In the next chapter, I summarize the research on DDR highlighting gaps in overlooking the role of brokerage governance and the CSOs' designed and implemented demobilization and reintegration programs.

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[4] Accessible documents are available on the CSO websites, as well as Civil Society libraries such as: Civil Society Knowledge Centre (http://civilsociety-centre.org/olp).

4   DDR: A Brief Review

In the previous chapters, I set the stage by providing brief historical accounts of the divided society in the city of Tripoli. In so doing, I demonstrate that he depth of the division in Tripoli is significant to the extent that we should expect it to be very difficult for local organizations to be sufficient in creating social cohesion and long peaceful stints. To unpack this argument, I examined how bridging social capital and brokerage are useful frameworks to approach exploring the influence of local CSOs. As mentioned prior, due to the absence of any peace mediation, intervention or peace agreements, this chapter examines the literature on disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) and more precisely, on the role of CSOs in the process.

Peacebuilding policymakers and scholars alike, have shared a major concern, in the past two decades, how to prevent the resumption of hostilities and breakout of mass violence in war torn countries. Combatants and former combatants can become a major threat to the stabilization of the country in the aftermath of peace settlements. More crucially, if combatants and ex-combatants decide not to perform outside the agreements of the peace processes, or do not find themselves outside warring activities, the probability of re-eruption of war increases. Thus, DDR emerged as a process that ensures that ex-combatants move away from violence and are provided with incentives to return to civilian life. DDR is a program initiated by the United Nations who define disarmament as the "collection, documentation, control and disposal of weapons" (Torjesen, 2009). In most cases, this phase is perceived as a voluntary move whereby the weapons are dumped or bought back. Demobilization consists of discharging active combatants from the armed forces or military groups (Secretary-General note to the General Assembly, May 2005 (A/C.5/59/31). Lastly, reintegration signifies the "social and economic process with an open time-frame taking place at the local level…whereby ex-combatants acquire civilian status and sustainable employment" (*ibid*.). The practice of DDR has followed the definition in sequencing the phases, accordingly, starting with disarmament and only getting to reintegration once demobilization is finished.

Since the early 90s, there have been significant efforts by international states and organizations to end protracted social conflicts whereby several civil wars were settled including Lebanon, Namibia, El Salvador, Cambodia, and Mozambique (Call, 2015). Consequently, models of

peacemaking rose to prominence including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of combatants from warring parties (*ibid*). Most of the DDR programs have been set prior through the political peace accords and ushered by international observers. Many DDR programs featured in UN peace operations in El Salvador, Cambodia, Mozambique, Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guatemala, Tajikistan, and Burundi. DDR programs are established to emphasize the need to (1) reduce the availability of arms, (2) disrupt the command-and-control networks of combatants and (3) help individual combatants recognize other means of living beyond violence and fighting. Unfortunately, not all DDR programs have yielded positive results, their record for the last two decades has been "mixed and little is known about the factors that contribute to their success" (Banholzer, 2014, p.3). In Angola and Rwanda, for example, the refusal of soldiers to go along with the peace process resulted in a devastating war and genocide, respectively (Stedman et. al, 2002). Humphreys and Weinstein (2004) argue that the specific threat coming from ex-combatants lies in the high levels of organizational structure they enjoy, the ability to fight and use weaponry and their willingness to use violence to get what they want.

While surveying the DDR literature, I situate the works into two main categories. First, macro-level studies that look at the impact of DDR at the national level, they usually are contextual, country specific and are mostly concerned with democratic institutions. There is myriad literature on DDR at this macro-level, but they are keenly looking specifically at the success and failures of international actors in such programs. Second are the micro-level analytical studies that have been limited in number. They, however, have had a significant contribution in understanding individual level motivations and obstacles in DDR (see Humphreys and Weinstein, 2004; 2006; 2007; 2008), as well as individual characteristics and experiences that explain the willingness of ex-combatants to leave their weapons and reintegrate into civil society.

Moreover, while the literature on DDR generally looks at its implementation phase, the evaluation, policy deductions, recommendations phases and improved tools for program designs have been largely overlooked. The demobilization of armed groups is also one of the focal points of civil war termination, war recurrence theories and post-conflict peace-building literature. Hence, this review will synthesize the three broad literatures to make sense of the similarities between the different approaches to demobilization and reintegration of former fighters at the two aforementioned levels. I first begin this argumentative review by looking at war recurrence and spoilers' debate. After

which, I narrow down my survey of the literature of scholarly work that focuses on civil war termination/reintegration and DDR, including cases of successes and failures.

4.1 War recurrence and Spoilers

Walter (1997) argues that fighting factions in post-conflict environments face a security dilemma. Signing a peace agreement does not take away the security fears that could still exist between different factions. The absence of security institutions that can protect the different warring groups increases the need to maintain arms and mobilize fighters. The fear stems from the possibility of any disarmament and demobilization happening from one side only. As such, the disarmed and demobilized faction feel vulnerable against the other. Any peace agreement needs to take into consideration the guarantees that can be given to different warring parties. Furthermore, Walter (1997) argues that a possible solution for this dilemma is a third-party intervention that enforces and provides assurances that all warring factions will be protected by punishing those who may cheat the process, ultimately destroying the command-and-control structures. Therefore, identifying a significant role for external actors in enabling the implementation of peace agreements, disarmament, and demobilization. This goes along the arguments put forth by the proponents of liberal peace approaches. Another issue the research on civil war termination focuses on is peace spoilers (Stedman, 1997; Zahar, 2008; Jenne, 2010). The spoilers' argument is based on the foundation that if the peace negotiations do not engage all participants properly, "leaders may use violence to undermine attempts at achieving [peace]" (Stedman, 1997, p.5). Hence, spoilers can dismantle the disarmament and demobilization process when it comes to DDR programs, halting them at their initial stages. Ultimately, allowing weaponry and the command-and-control structures intact, which even if dormant can be ignited at any point. Stedman (1997) identifies a strategy by which spoilers can be contained. To encourage the engagement of all key players; greater protection, greater benefits, and their legitimatization as part of a peace process must be included.

It comes as no surprise that DDR programs are used as incentives to push back spoilers of post-conflict spaces and nullify them. The reintegration phase can address the root causes of the conflict and offer benefits that surpass the returns from spoiling peace. Perhaps, the most important element in reintegration phase is that it "provides a mechanism to legitimize the warring factions (or exclude them) and engages the leadership of the armed groups in program design and

implementation" (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2005, p.7). Inevitably, this has spurred another debate on DDR and Transitional Justice. These challenges require a precise and careful design for DDR that is only more challenged.

4.2   Obstacles to reintegration

There are many sources for problems for ex-combatants may arise and why ex-combatants may face hardships, and in return obstruct effective peacebuilding. The most prevalent of these issues is economical. Because fighters have been at war for a number of years, some lack enough education that allows them to secure jobs that can reignite their careers (Banholzer, 2014). They may also lack the vocational skills necessary to find alternative employment on their own. Moreover, some former combatants may come with injuries that may stop them from performing certain tasks. Many ex-combatants may suffer social stigmas after the end of war, which in turn may cause employers to prefer not to employ them due to their 'history'. Additionally, combatants in the war-torn developing countries, which is the situation in most cases, struggle further economically in creating enough job opportunities for the ex-combatants. As a result, some fighters may join other warring parties in regional countries or even farther geographic ones, for example, Eastern European, Balkan, and South African former fighters joined the violent conflicts in Angola and Congo (Alden 2002).

Rolston (2007) recognizes other causes for the unrest among fighters. Mainly, delivering justice and compensations. Some former combatants may believe that their contribution in the war is an act of heroism and should be officially recognized and rewarded. Shafer (1998) coined it as "compensatory justice" which, if absent, could cause discontent among ex-fighters in many countries. In El Salvador ex-combatants occupied the parliament protesting against the non-distribution of promised payments. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, ex-combatants set up roadblocks to coerce the government to pay out the support they believed they deserved. Similarly, "turn Namibia into another Rwanda" (Colletta et al., 1996, p.209) were the words reverberated by ex-combatants' protests against the government in Namibia. The ex-combatants who could feel that the peace process is unfair, are more likely to remain ready to return to war even if their warring party commanders do not necessarily support it (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2007). This may cause breakdowns of several groups into smaller ones that become radically violent groups.

Lastly, mental health remains a major obstacle for ex-combatant reintegration. Mental health issues are common amongst the majority of the fighters, and in developing countries psychological support is either unavailable or extremely expensive. The World Bank (2006) highlighted the issue as:

> "Some ex-combatants experience long-lasting symptoms that are correlated with unemployment, divorce, spousal and general violence, homelessness, criminal behavior and substance abuse and addition" (p.2).

Odenwald et al. (2005) surveyed former combatants in Somaliland and reported that 16% of them are incapable of performing any job due to severe psychological problems. Psychological complexities add further to the already existing political ones .

4.3 Greed vs. Grievance

The two main mechanisms, individual opportunity cost as a result of economic assistance and inter-group confidence building, are not discussed in detail in the literature to articulate how they play out in demobilization and reintegration phases. In war recurrence theories on economic considerations of former fighters, there has been high emphasis on the effects that DDR can bring to the economy and the socio-economic situation of the fighters. Under the expectation that, a better socio-economic situation for individuals makes it less likely for them to join wars. Broadly speaking, the literature on war recurrence provides a *prima facie* support for the conjecture that DDR has a positive effect on reducing the likelihood of renewed conflict. Yet, the mechanisms through which DDR programs are executed have not been tested in the existing scholarly work.

Through the principle of utility maximization, DDR programs help mitigate the risk of postwar violence through attempting to offer a higher value for ex-combatants to disarm and demobilize than pursue bloody violence. Many works identify the impact of disarmament or destruction of weaponry more as a symbolic tool to recognize the end of the war, and in making weapons hard to reach. Therefore, many practitioners insist on the public displays of the destruction of weapons (Laurence and Meek, 1996). Reintegration programs in particular help improve the economic opportunities for ex-combatants through vocational training and small entrepreneurship initiatives. These logics, however, are often based on the literature in economics and law that "uses a model of behavior in which improving individuals' economic opportunities is associated with reductions in the level of crime" (Schulhofer-Wohl and Sambanis, 2010). This posits the question on whether DDR programs can have a deeper impact than economic. Can reintegration processes have an

impact on social cohesion? If so, in what ways and how can that be achieved? Despite the remarkable work of Humphreys and Weinstein that looked at the micro-level individual analysis of ex-combatant difficulties in reintegrating at the social level, further studies need to demonstrate the ability of the DDR programs at the individual level to propagate a political behavioral shift at the meso-level. In other words, in what ways can DDR programs not only dismantle the command-and-control structures but redraw the cognitive maps of fighters away from the political reasons of war in deeply divided societies.

4.4 Conventional DDR approaches

An ongoing debate has been taking place in the DDR literature when it comes to the impact the program has on crime and violence. Categorizing the two together has been problematic for several reasons, but most importantly, for the fact that levels of crime could be high regardless of whether countries are war-torn or not. Moreover, crime rates may not necessary always be correlated to the warring history of the country. As for violence, there must be a clear identification for what violence is these countries are due to. Violence as a result of a crime is not the same as violence that results from political deadlocks or intrastate wars. Correlation does not imply causation, and as such the increase in crime rate does not necessary result from a failure in peace processes. The literature on DDR continues to assume that the failure to reintegrate ex-combatants causes an increased risk of crime and violence. The World Bank's 2004 proposal for DDR program in Burundi stated that "failure to achieve reintegration can lead to crime and insecurity" (World Bank, 2004, p.64). As Schulhofer-Wohl and Sambanis (2010) argue, crime and violence in post-conflict situations, especially at the micro-level, could be the inevitable by-product of the transition or lack thereof a fully functioning state security apparatus. While correlation may exist, this is certain not a linear causal mechanism.

On the other hand, Tesfamichael et. al. (2004) argues that the low levels of crime in Sierra Leone suggests that allowances to ex-combatants have been sufficient means of socio-economic support that prohibit fighters to take part in illegal activities. While Willibald (2006) and Subedi (2014) demonstrate that the impact of financial renumeration is subject to other factors within DDR and peacebuilding for it to be successful, and alone, there is not enough evidence to claim that it is sufficient. DDR evaluations remain a key element missing in such studies allowing for the issuance of non-modest claims on the overall crime levels and security issues. DDR programs' success

needs to be measured against the violence that results from the remobilization of political supports by political parties or political/ethnic elites. Contrary to that, Kopel et. al. (2004) examines disarmament programs in Cambodia, Bougainville, Albania, Panama, Guatemala, and Mali as post-conflict contexts. They conclude that seldom do these programs reduce crime or violence in the target society, and that often they can increase the vulnerability of law-abiding citizen, particularly if disarmament has coercive aspects to it.

A natural goal for DDR is to encourage civil and political participation that is inclusive and based on domestic democratic institutions to "ensure the conversion of potential spoiler into stakeholder" (Muggah and Colletta, 2009, p.10). In Columbia, many M-19 rebels highlighted how originally, they would pick up arms to show dissatisfaction towards political decisions, but now they believe that the country is starting to open up politically allowing them to express more freely their political concerns as well as give them opportunities to participate in politically life, which, previously, was nonexistent (Schulhofer-Wohl and Sambanis, 2010).

Schulhofer-Wohl and Sambanis (2010) identify three mechanisms that can be influenced by DDR programs. Skill-development and resource creation for individual ex-combatants and civilians (micro-level), conversion of military groups into civilian political organizations (meso-level); and legitimatization of a new post-war political order (macro-level). As mentioned earlier, DDR programs can have a micro-level effect that is on the individuals who have participated in the war. Ultimately, the relational ties of these individuals effect the broader civilian society. The reintegration phase of DDR programs aims at enhancing the social and financial capital of former fighters so they can join local societies and social organizations. Not all phases of DDR are always implemented in all conflict or post-conflict contexts. In Indonesia and Rwanda, for example, reintegration process was determined to be the only necessary support phase (Carames and Sanz, 2009). The Lebanese case, which will be further elaborated below, presents an adequate test for this, as demobilization and reintegration phases where timidly the only phases executed (Karame, 2009). The literature on ex-combatants in deeply divided societies overlooks when and how ex-combatants become demobilized and willing to work together (Muggah, 2010; Simie and Milojevic, 2014). The focus of the literature has also been the DDR after the end of conflicts and not during.

Obviously, DDR programs do not come without incurring financial cost. Annually, the budget percentage for the overall DDR programs from overall peacekeeping missions' budgets is 0.8%, ranging between $133m-$138m (DDR funding overview by DPKO). The financial support is also heavily allocated by the UN peacekeeping missions and the World Bank. Further emphasizing that DDR programs, are heavily focused on financial compensations and are motivated by the believe that greed overcomes grievances, and that the international players have the upper head in the decision-making process on the allocation of the budget towards other line items.

DRR Program Country	Leading actor
Liberia	UNICEF, World Food Program, UNDP and ActionAid
Angola	Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP), World Bank (WB)
Burundi	MDRP, WB
Central African Republic	MDRP, WB
DR of Congo	MDRP, WB
Rwanda	MDRP, WB
Uganda	MDRP, WB

Table 4.1. DDR programs' leading actors (source: DDR Funding Overview 2018/19 by DPKO)

4.4.1 Successes and failures of DDR

The Success or failure of DDR programs are not determined by the program leaders. Many of the programs that were initiated internationally have succeeded, other have not. To name a few, in Sierra Leone renewed outbreak of war was avoided due to the demobilization of around 76,000 combatants according to the United Nations report in 2011. In Nicaragua and Bosnia-Herzegovina noteworthy reductions in active soldiers and available arms were achieved over the course of two and a half years (see Pietz, 2004; Rolston, 2007). Can one conclude that international peace agreements complementing DDR programs lead to success? The short answer is no. In Cambodia and Angola, the warring parties blocked the UN's work. Only 13,000 from 200,000 combatants reported to disarmament in Cambodia with the Party of Democratic Kampuchea completely rejects participating, leading to the UN Secretary General to suspend the program.

The intended goal of this work is not to determine the conditions under which these programs can succeed or fail. However, mapping out cases of success and failure highlights the actual difficulty

in designing measurement tools for DDR programs. The traditional measurements of DDR programs in the literature have been on identifying the cases of conflict that experienced DDR and reverted (or not) to conflict. The World Bank has the only detailed evaluation tool that uses thorough evaluation process using general conflict indicators against previously set goals (World Bank, 2009). Yet again, the World Bank reporting generally looks at the economic aspects of DDR, mainly the socio-economic situation and the formal market reintegration of ex-combatants. This still misses many of the contextual political analysis that is needed to indicate the effects of DDR.

In 2006 the UN launched its Integrated DDR standards (IDDRS), which were designed to provide direction, co-ordination, and guidance to those engaged in preparing, implementing, and supporting DDR programs. The IDDRS have been used as a reference in designing DDR process in Sudan, Haiti and elsewhere. The IDDRS emphasizes the need "to understand the macro- and microeconomic forces that affect the post-conflict communities into which they [ex-combatants] hope to reintegrate" (IDDRS, 2006, p.2.20.4).

4.5 The missing pieces in the study of DDR

The work of scholars and practitioners seldom speak to each other when it comes to DDR programs. Scholars tend to focus on macro-conditions, namely structural factors that impact DDR including social, political, and economic conditions that need to be met for the DDR program to be successful. Academic research is also mostly interested in identifying the characteristics of the conflict, characteristics of DDR program and the role of third-party actors.

On the other hand, practitioners and particularly the World Bank reports are more concerned with the technical aspects of DDR intervention, including the financial spending, economic growth at the state-level and individual economic well beings. While both acknowledge that the combatants' characteristics and pre-dispositions are of high importance, few studies have directly looked at individuals within DDR programs and their ability to be demobilized and reintegrated at an individual level. Individual level evaluations should be separate from program evaluations, the success or failure of one is not necessarily inclusive for the other.

More broadly, DDR programs can help legitimatize the peace process as a whole by providing transparency to how the process were instigated, by assuring local actors have their interests voiced and considered; DDR programs can bridge the gap between traditional liberal peace theorization, that gives a greater impact to the role of international efforts, and bottom-up approaches that call

for the local ownership of peace processes (Muggah, 2005). The literature on DDR undermines the importance of local actors' ability to design and implement local DDR programs. Most studies point out to the role of international intervention in successfully executing DRR programs in order to respond to peace spoilers and the arising security dilemma. However, local DDR programs can have a greater impact on the reintegration processes, due to their knowledge of societal values in connecting with ex-combatants. Most of the formal DDR programs have had an international mandate whether by UN peacekeeping missions or the World Bank. The United Nations Observer Group in Central Africa initiation DDR program in Nicaragua, similarly United National Transitional Authority in Cambodia was launched in 1992. The United Nations was the first to focus on DDR of former combatants in the course of its mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Thruelsen, 2006). Starting the 2000s onwards, DDR programs started to increase in number and in scope to cover regional dimensions, for example, Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) led by the World Bank. The UN also supported DDR missions in countries where there are no UN peace-keeping operations, such as Indonesia, Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, Somalia, and Uganda (United Nations Development Program, 2014).

Despite the UN taking the leading role in most of DDR programs, other International Organizations, International NGOs, and some local NGOs are involved. Table 4.1 shows the missions and the organizations leading them. According to evidence from the DDR missions from international peacekeeping missions, the "DD" phases are generally led by the UN or intervening governments, while the reintegration process tends to be conducted by NGOs (international, regional, and local) (Banholzer, 2014). This does not mean that the reintegration process is funded by NGOs, but the designing and execution is.

The literature on DDR, however, has not yet looked in details at these initiatives, the success of the programs of reintegration through NGOs remain based on reports submitted by the NGOs themselves. Moreover, there is no distinction between the initiatives led by the international and the regional NGOs and those pioneered by local ones. Lastly, the literature on DDR has understudied the impact that NGOs and other Civil Society Organizations can have on the demobilization phase. This research will explore the ability of local NGOs and CSOs to demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants without a clear international support or mandate.

Most DDR programs are designed and launched after the end of a war, such as in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Some programs are designed during peace agreements, others have been launched after the termination of the civil war without a peace agreement, such as the case of the Central African Republic. A few instances have seen DDR programs launched while the war is still ongoing, for example, Cambodia, Columbia, and Sierra Leone.

4.6   The macro-level problems within DDR

4.6.1   Warlords and Political Leaders

An important political factor for the proper execution of DDR is the capability of the state to maintain the execution of the DDR program through strong security (Kingma and Grebrewold, 1998). Tied to the security dilemma that may arise between warring factions, an efficient police force is essential to provide guarantees for ex-combatants and communities that they are strongly protected under the new environment. In the case of DRC for example, combatants were threatened by their own commanders if they keep taking part in the DDR program. The combatants did not trust the state in protecting them against such threats which resulted in the discontinuation of the DDR program (Richards, 2013). This research investigates whether security dilemma challenge was overcome by the CSOs.

4.6.2   Third Party Actors

Third party actors are involved in almost every DDR intervention. Under the theorization that the security dilemma resulting from the warring factions can best be addressed by the presence of external actors who can ensure that the disarmed parties can be protected. Watler (1997) argues that third-party intervention is a decisive factor in the success of peace settlements in general and DDR in particular by observing, monitoring, or even enforcing compliance. Similar issues were addressed by Alden (2002), who points out that third parties can at least encourage commitment of warring parties to the DDR programs. The question remains, is third-party intervention required at all DDR phases? Evidence from the case of Mozambique and Liberia suggests that the presence of a third-party greased the wheels for the process of disarmament and addressed the fears of the militant groups of being vulnerable to the enemy after disarmament (Jennings, 2007; Striuli, 2012). This research tests this assumption further but also requestions the third-party intervention by signifying that local indigenous intervention could also qualify as third-party if the organization enjoys a reputation as a neutral actor and maintains bridging social capital.

The debate for the importance of national ownership as a predisposition for the success of peacebuilding processes has been well documented. This extends to the DDR literature, albeit to a lesser extent. At the 60th UN General Assembly, the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan expressed the UN's recognition of "genuine, effective, and broad national ownership of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process" (in Knight, 2008, p.46). This has been echoed by Rolston (2007) who argues that ownership is a one of the most important factors for DDR success. Thruelsen (2006) points out that, if local actors do not have the necessary institutional capacity to take over the DDR program, various adverse results may come out of it.

Due to the nature of my argument here, it is important to go into more detail in the case of Mozambique. There, the donors preferred to finance NGOs instead of local partners because the latter were regarded as unreliable (Striuli, 2012) based on their experience in DRC. In DRC, the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (CONADER) was led by the Congolese government. Reports on their work showcased inefficiency in delivering assistance to combatants and failed to coordinate the DDR process as a whole (Handson, 2007). More generally, the literature regards national ownership of DDR programs as essential even where a third party is involved; however, international leadership seems to be preferred based on entrusting their capacities. No studies focusing explicitly on local ownership dynamics with local third-party interventions on DDR have yet been carried out.

4.6.3   The stage of conflict and the start of DDR

Another macro-level debate that is going on in the DDR literature continues on whether the DDR should start when a conflict has been terminated or whether DDR programs can be launched while the conflict is still ongoing. This debate offers some important attributed for an efficient DDR for practitioners as well. The main question posited from this debate is, is DDR a war ending tool or a peace-stabilizing tool? Evidence from cases on this stirs further confusion. In Congo-Brazzaville in 2005 DDR initiative started while the war was still ongoing, generating a comprehensive peace agreement (International Peace Academy, 2002). While in Angola and Sierra Leone's attempts to do the same have failed and led to turning DDR sites to recruitment centers. In Tripoli, the linear implementation of the phases (beginning in disarmament followed by demobilization before reintegration) turned out to be negligible, however, this work further shows that contextual conditions for the state of the conflict and the CSOs activities need to co-exist for the linearity to be implemented differently.

4.7 The micro-level problems within DDR

In the past decade or so, there has been in increase in civil war studies from individual perspectives (see Arjona and Kalyvas, 2012; Pugel, 2007; Humphreys and Weinstein, 2008; 2008; Blattman, 2010; Pearlman, 2017), but at the individual-level, meanings combatants individual attributes, path dependency unpacking reasons for their mobilization, demobilization and remobilization remains largely understudied.

4.7.1 Socio-economic metrics:

It is commonly discussed in the literature that combatants join warring groups due to financial and economic need, which was coined in the literature as "greed vs. grievance" (Collier and Hoeffler, 2002). According to Pugel (2007), only 4% of the rebels in Liberia referred to money as their main incentive to join rebel groups. Similar results were found in the case of Colombia, where the reason for joining militant group was based on political incentives (Arjona and Kalyvas, 2012). Surprisingly, Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) find that the more educated and the richer the combatants are, the more difficulties they find reintegrating. They account that towards the shameful feelings that may come as a result. Nevertheless, it remains a general finding without further exploration. There is no systematic study yet that looks at why fighters decide to leave armed groups. A mixed and unexpected results come from the very few studies, which suggests the need to take a closer and deeper look into the individual level characteristics of ex-combatants, their stories and life paths.

The personal experience of combatants matters a great deal to their cooperation in a DDR program. There is evidence to suggest that the intensity of the participation in the war, as in, the level of activities the former fighters were involved in provides more hurdles for reintegration. Less so when it comes to how long they have been part of the militant groups (Bahnholzer, Schneider and Odenwald, 2013). Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) suggest that those who had been members of very abusive groups tended to find it more difficult to reintegrate. Amone-P'olak et al. (2007) argues that those fighters who committed wide range of intense killings have not been able to reintegrate into society. This work delves deeper into the storyline of ex-combatants and contributes to this gap in the literature by conceptualizing a life-course approach to understand the motivations for mobilization and demobilization in order to provide insight for future programs.

Similar to the DDR implementers, it is quintessential to follow the lives of the ex-combatants when researching their motivations.

4.8 DDR processes in Lebanon

The literature on Lebanon when it comes to DDR is at best limited. There has not been a complete study on Lebanon's disarmament, demobilization, or reintegration post-1990 conflict. Of those written, even less were conducted at the individual level analysis, while most have been approached through national, regional, and international lenses. Possibly, because there has not been a clear sponsored DDR program in Lebanon since the end of the civil war. The lack of a proper DDR program could partially explain several recurring instances of violence since then.

As demonstrated above, comprehensive DDR programs must be implemented by the international community and assisted by the host governments in order to ensure the success of the effective transition of ex-combatants into the social sphere (Rolston, 2007; Mitchell, 2008; Emerson, 2012; Simie and Milojevic, 2014). The case presented in this project, Lebanon, has not witnessed robust DDR efforts post-1990 civil war, not by the Lebanese government nor by the Syrian forces or the international community (Nauphal, 1995; Picard, 1999; Rowayheb and Ouaiss, 2015). Picard (1999) notes that many factions and ex-militias in Lebanon hid their arms following the war, while the Lebanese government was not able to disarm them. Moreover, there was no comprehensive plan of reintegration of ex-combatants by any of the local, regional, or international actors (Rowayheb and Ouaiss, 2015). Along the same line of argument, Karame (2009) notes that the DDR in Lebanon was led by indigenous actors and was fairly limited in scope. Because the peace agreement after the Lebanese civil war brought back the same political leaders, who headed the militias during the war, only those ex-combatants who continued to swear allegiance to the same political elite received some of the jobs, mostly through the public sector (Picard, 1999). That is due to the fact that the political elites kept a hand over the state resources by either being appointed as ministers or public officials. Other reintegration facilities, such as micro-credit loans, were also provided for the ex-combatants who continued to support and work for the political elites and their parties (Rowayheb and Ouaiss, 2017).

Some might argue that the Syrian troop's presence in Lebanon and the dominant hegemony of Syria over Lebanon in the subsequent years of the peace agreement have hindered the proper implementation of DDR programs because Syria had an intrinsic benefit in maintaining the ability

to raise tension between Lebanese factions when required. Nevertheless, during that 15-year period there was no international pressure on Syria to enforce a DDR program by the international community nor a direct intervention to do so. Meanwhile, local initiatives were also limited to same sect NGOs who attempted to reintegrate some former fighters. In addition, since the Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon in 2005, the successive Lebanese government did not require assistance nor initiate any DDR program under the presumption that the war days are well over (Rowayheb and Ouaiss, 2017).

Rowayheb and Ouaiss (2017) re-highlight the three types of reintegration of ex-combatants to the Lebanese case. First, *community-sponsored reintegration* (USAID and UNDP Report, 2000). This type of reintegration happens through the political parties and sects reintegrating their own fighters with the expectation that in return, the ex-combatants remain loyal to the political groups and sects. Consequently, this led to the formation of NGOs working for ex-combatants of a particular affiliation or sect, such as, Liban Message, Jean Paul II Center for Social and Cultural Services, and Ibleh Women's Association. These organizations would only service ex-combatants from their communities providing social and economic services to ex-combatants who live in areas of their support base. The second type is, *self-sponsored reintegration* (Harik, 1994; Rowayheb, 2006). From its name, here the reference of focus is the ex-combatants who rely on themselves in the reintegration process. The former fighters have always had social connections through their education and work and have only fought in the war as a result of ideological support but continued to revert back to their job or education when fighting de-escalated and vice-versa when tensions re-escalate. Karame (2009) refers to them as 'militant' to distinguish them from 'full-time combatants' (Karame, 2009, p.507). Hence, for them reintegrating after the war was an easier process. Third, there is the *non-community-based reintegration type.* These types of ex-combatants are reintegrated through NGOs that are independent from any governmental, political party, family, communal or sectarian influence. Hence, this ultimately implies that these ex-combatants have cut all ties with their former warring parties and are not receiving any form of support from them (Picard, 1999).

Rowayheb and Ouaiss (2017) pay particular attention to the non-community-based reintegration process that occurred in Lebanon for the civil war ex-combatants. In doing so, they demonstrate how a group of ex-combatants were willing to share their war experience publicly to discourage new generation of youth from following the same footsteps. They essentially became peace

advocates themselves. The support of local civil society was needed to secure new job and have some sort of financial stability. Furthermore, all needed help to reintegrate back into their communities. Thus, they would seek the assistance of politically nonaffiliated civil society groups.

Few studies have dealt with how DDR programs lead ex-combatants to become peacebuilders themselves, namely the cases of Northern Ireland and Mozambique present some of them (see Rolston, 2007; Mitchell, 2008). This research will also look at how informal networks of ex-combatants who undergo DDR also aid in the bottom-up process of peacebuilding (Mitchell, 2008, Clubb, 2016). This research does not intend to argue that DDR can occur without the international community or an external-third party; however, I argue that demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants can still happen without them; which the literature on DDR has not tackled so far.

4.9   DDR & CSOs

International DDR programs have generally tended to disregard the role of local CSOs. On the one hand, policy makers concede that International NGOs as well as local NGOs have a role to play for effective DDR programs. Nevertheless, how, and when remain unarticulated. It is left to the programs' designers to determine the extent and the role that CSOs can be involved. As much as flexibility is helpful, a more uniform base approach needs to be identified in order to ensure that proper channeling of money to the implementers, in addition to ensure reaching out to the most effected groups from the war.

Academic research, on the other hand, has relatively ignored the cases in which local CSOs contributed significantly to DDR programs. To my knowledge, the work on Mozambique case remains a sole in-depth study. Other studies have focused on CSO involvements through international advocacy or representation in international conferences (Klem and Douma, 2008). Certainly, some literature looks at the assisting role of CSOs in demobilization (Goodhand, 2006; Douma et, al., 2008; Klem et, al., 2008) and a more prominent role in traditional reintegration such as vocational training, provision of tools for agriculture, guidance towards school for the underaged ex-combatants and de-mining jobs (Klem and Douma, 2008). Cases where local CSOs could design innovative demobilization and reintegration processes remain unstudied. This becomes problematic as the debate on the approaches to peacebuilding grows. There has been a recent surge in peacebuilding publications particularly as intrastate wars have been increasing. In the below section, I survey the most essential work on CSOs in peacebuilding in an attempt to

highlight the potential of the CSOs contribution to DDR. There is a need to bridge the approaches of CSOs in peacebuilding to their potential contribution in DDR.

4.10 Chapter Summary

In summary, despite significant growth in the scholarly work on civil society peacebuilding, more emphasis on NGOs' effectiveness in peacebuilding is being given, and less so on their ability to implement peace. The arguments on the difficulties of assessing the theory of change is due to the CSO's outreach, the skepticism surrounding the CSOs ability to maintain ownership over their initiatives and their ability to expand their social capital. The primary focus of any systemic research that can benefit policy makers is an actual assessment to the contributions that CSOs can bring to peacebuilding. What is missing is a coherent conceptual understanding of the capacities, limits, and conditions under which CSOs can be effective in achieving positive peace. Paffenhölz (2010) states that "civil society is often considered within many peacebuilding theories to be a core actor in the attainment of positive peace. Yet, the underlying theory framework by which civil society – driven peacebuilding can be achieved remains largely unclear" (p. 61). Most of the literature on civil society in peacebuilding discusses their role in post conflict situations. Likewise, the literature gives much credit to CSOs in conflict prevention. However, little has been said on the impacts the CSOs have during the stages of tension build up and the rise of armed conflict in the conflict lifecycle. Given that local CSOs understand the context of their operations, they are highly capable of determining the buildup of prospective violence. Their intervention when violence is at a small scale can also be crucial in prohibiting its proliferation into a national civil war.

In addition, this research will contribute to the policy formulation of decision makers. So far, the literature has failed to provide a coherent implication for these studies on formulating practices for decision makers (Chetail and Juterstonke, 2014). Peacebuilding commissions remain in need for practical knowledge to deal with the challenges on the ground (e.g., Autessere, 2014).

The attempt to narrow the literature further into focusing on peacebuilding tool, DDR, has also shown that CSOs have been understudied. Specifically, in how CSOs can demobilize and maintain the mobilization of fighters. The studies have also not focused enough nor provided evidence to how CSOs can reintegrate former fighters back in society. Furthermore, no significant study has yet outlined the when (conditions) and the how (mechanism) CSOs may face and adopt,

respectively, DR phases. The importance of looking into this, could potentially explain many cases in which peace processes have ultimately succeeded.

What my research does is to shed light on the CSOs' capacity in DDR not only at the implementation phase, but also at the design phase. Scholarly work on DDR has been mostly concerned with the international implementations, success, and failures. As much as these are necessary and of high importance, an approach that focuses on CSOs in DDR remains essential to provide a full picture for understanding the complexity of peace in deeply divided societies.

Ultimately, this extends into more general debate on peacebuilding approaches. The attempts to underpin the functions that CSOs can play peacebuilding when more effective functions can happen in certain peacebuilding tools. Scholarly and practioners work should concentrate on collecting representative information on combatants and delving deeper into the combatants' own interpretations of their experiences. This literature synthesis also aims at showing that much more research is needed in order to systematically bridge the role of CSOs in DDR and their impacts on approaches to peacebuilding, while, at the same time, I showcase the conditions that favored successes and led to failures of DDR and the peace process more generally.

5   CSO Peace Brokerage in the case of Tripoli

The topic of social capital and social relations has been gaining momentum in studies of peace and conflict (see Themnér, 2011,2012, 2015, Themnér and Utas, 2016, Kilroy and Basini, 2018). This body of work has progressed especially in terms of determining if the "causal relationship between social capital and conflict [is] reciprocal" (Cox, 2009, p.1). So far, there are two general understandings of the role of social capital. One is that social capital can promote civic awareness and can aid in building more resistant communities that ultimately withstand civic conflicts and outbreaks of violence. The other understanding finds that social capital can in fact manifest itself stronger in groups that use violent means. In other words, social capital within warring parties also intensifies due to the strengthened relationships that develop on the battlefield.

The significant work on social capital in peacebuilding and conflict management, albeit having had important contributions, is yet to utilize quantitative measures of social capital alongside the vast qualitative approaches in the literature on social capital in peace/conflict. The same could be said about DDR, where social capital and social cohesion are understood primarily as the absence or relapses into violence of conflicting parties (Özerdem, 2012). While social reintegration remains the overall objective of DDR, the reality of relational ties is much more complicated and unpacking local dynamics in the DDR process - the actors who should have the strongest gatekeeping abilities - becomes imperative. This chapter does just that. Using SNA, I determine the brokerage roles and bridging capacities of local CSOs in their DDR projects. This follows the logic that local CSOs are likely to have resourceful social capital that allows them to bridge ex-combatants from both communities and contribute to the demobilization of ex-combatants and, and consequently, their reintegration in the wider community.

As outlined in Chapter 3, brokerage is one mechanism by which weakly connected/isolated individuals or groups can interact socially, economically, and politically. Brokers can thus play a role in building a connection between two or more isolates to foster and strengthen the network or to mediate across conflicting individuals/groups. This brokerage position allows the broker to play different roles that can be positive or negative. In this chapter, I highlight the work on brokerage, specifically on peacebuilding and DDR. In that, emphasis is put on the informal networks of combatants that have been explored and compared in scholarly work, to understand their motivations in resuming violent activities or seeking out peace (see Themnér, 2013;2015; Themnér

and Karlen, 2020). However, the work of Themnér and Karlen (2020) focuses primarily on the structures within an armed group rather than the networks that could emerge in the social cohesion and social reintegration phases. Such phases that are inclusive of members from different armed groups and can determine the successes and failures of DDR programs more generally.

Brokers make deals and sometimes act like middlemen gaining leverage and dependency by virtue of their control over access to resources, and their connection to other important political actors. As such, brokers can act as gatekeepers, liaisons, or representatives (see chapter 3). Themnér (2015) identifies the brokerage roles that ex-commanders of paramilitary groups perform after the war. In his research, he identifies the conditions under which the ex-commanders either move towards becoming peace brokers or gatekeepers to remobilize their combatants' networks for either spoiling peace or remobilizing to other neighboring wars. This is particularly evident in cases where neighboring countries also suffer from civil wars and require the injection of new but experienced combatants. Themnér and Utas (2016) argue along the same lines, that in the absence of proper state-building processes in post-conflict situations, the political elite govern through brokerage. That is, they utilize the influence of local leaders and commanders of the communities that were war-affected. In their work, the authors highlight the structural holes that may exist between the elite and the local communities after the end of the war, often due to resentment and unfulfilled promises. In a more recent study by Themnér and Karlen (2020), comparative SNA of two ex-military networks in Liberia are explored in order to understand why some ex-military structures of armed groups remain intact leading to failure of DDR programs.

However, while Themnér (2015) recognizes the brokerage role that the ex-commanders play, he focuses on two isolated actors within the same military group (in-group bonding). In other words, he unpacks the reasons for the ex-commanders to remobilize for a positive or a negative cause based on networks of patronage that the commanders have in the hierarchy of the same warring faction. Additionally, as much as the work of Themnér and Utas (2016) is seminal in understanding the networks of governance that rely on brokerage in post-conflict contexts, it still lacks SNA conceptualization and theoretical grounding. Moreover, the dynamics of brokering two warring groups who may share high levels of tension, and hostilities remain understudied. Even though the later work of Themnér and Karlen (2020) does not investigate the brokerage across warring factions, they do contribute in two important ways to the study of ex-combatants, ex-commanders, and ex-military structure. They do this through: (a) utilizing visual tools of SNA and (b) outlining

that in a certain context and under specific conditions having an armed group remain intact socially after DDR programs still yields positive results in the rebuilding processes. Nevertheless, as the section below will further demonstrate, the application of SNA conducted by Themnér and Karlen (2020) relies on simple quantitative measures that do not fully capture causal mechanisms of brokerage. They apply descriptive results to demonstrate the strength of the network and the number of ties ex-commanders and ex-combatants have and solely rely on qualitative metrics to measure brokerage roles.

Varshney (2004) hints at the roles of informal and social networks through his work on civil society and ethnic conflict in India. In so doing, he identifies two main advantages that could make civil society effective in combating violence; (1) that associations have more ties and require less effort to reach out to the wider public as opposed to quotidian ties, and (2) that associations of civil society need to be cross-ethnic and work with both communities. However, Varshney's (2004) work explores causal mechanisms on the intervention of organizations in cities and towns that witnessed less to no violence in India. It would be necessary, I argue, to further explore concrete and systemic examples of associations or CSOs activities in bridging conflicting communities to precisely determine the ties and structural holes that CSOs span by combining the two conditions set forth by Varshney (i.e., cross-communal, and associational). Inherently, the bridging of groups may not always necessarily mean positive brokerage.

As demonstrated in Chapter 3, *tertius gaudens* brokerage behavior attempts to benefit from the position as a broker for non-altruistic goals, but rather work on remaining the broker for a position of power. Moreover, the identified civic organizations that have more associational ties as successful cases need to be unpacked in depth in order to determine what initiatives and activities, they essentially do, that helps them maintain their social capital. The Cartagena Report on Colombia (2009) compliments this work by focusing on networks and organizations' social capital, stating:

> Shared norms, values, and social expectations, which are expressed through both behavior (such as trust and social engagement) and both formal and informal organization (such as civic associations and social networks). Social capital is often treated as a property of civil society but may also describe the health of the relationship between society and the State. (p. 5)

In DDR studies, there is still no work that investigates the networks created by bridging ex-combatants themselves from opposing groups of conflict. This is surprising because one of the tenets of ensuring sustainable reintegration of ex-combatants is not only providing the economic support and opportunities but also ensuring social reintegration with their community members. This becomes even more imperative when the combatants live in the neighborhoods that witnessed war and who believed that they are fighting to defend the same neighborhoods and communities. The combatants in Tripoli, as mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, fought on the same streets they were born, grew up and worked in, and, ultimately, fought for.

In this chapter in my research identifies brokerage behaviors that link ex-combatants from opposing sides. It also offers insights into the social relations at the group level in the DDR programs designed and implemented by the CSO in the city of Tripoli, which forms the basis of my case study. This work sheds light on the relational ties between the ex-combatants themselves, and between ex-combatants and the DDR program implementers. I also showcase the bridging activities that CSOs implemented in the city of Tripoli. Ultimately, this informs us about the abilities of CSO in establishing robust social capital that is created in the process of demobilization and reintegration in Tripoli. By utilizing the CSOs' social capital across the fighting groups in the two neighborhoods, the CSOs were able to: (1) recruit a higher number of ex-combatants and (2) run demobilizing and reintegrative activities that gave ownership to the ex-combatants over the demobilization and reintegration projects, in turn formulating new ties with the "enemy" and increasing the social capital of the ex-combatants.

5.1 Research, Methods, and Data Collection

The utilization of SNA in political science is in its early stages. Many recent academic works based on SNA produced important results in understanding terrorist networks (e.g., Perliger, 2011), lobbying (Victor, 2007; Victor and Koger, 2016), financial donations (Basile, 2004; De Goede, 2003), and interstate relations (e.g., Hafner-Burton, 2009). In the study of ex-combatants, other than the work of Themnér and Karlen (2020) only Marks and Patrycja Stys (2019) employed SNA to analyze the reintegration of ex-fighters. However, to my knowledge, my work is the first to apply SNA to ex-combatants in DDR programs to better measure the programs efficiencies. Given that successful DDR pillars itself on strong social cohesion outcomes, SNA is best equipped to explain social relations and connections, at different levels, in complex environments with multiple actors. Usual approaches focus on units of analysis and individual characteristics rather than relational ones. SNA can complement the interpretive work by zooming out on their

intersubjective social positionalities to look at the wider network, which could in many circumstances impact individual behavior and decision-making.

Reintegration is about building relationships and fostering a new social contract between fighters in the aftermath of war, hence studying and analyzing social capital is a fundamental part of reintegration mechanisms. Kilroy and Basini (2018) argue that "where a DDR programme increases social capital, this feedback loop can in turn help to enhance the reintegration process itself" (p.350). The strength of the networks forged in DDR programs, especially those relationships linking ex-combatants, is integral to how the success and the process unfolds, particularly to determine the strength of the social reintegration and the "reconciliation [that] may emerge"(Kilroy and Basini, 2018, p.35). Coletta (1999) adds that rebuilding social capital is a necessary step for the social reconstruction in postwar contexts. Based on the above survey of the recent social capital turn, focus should be paid to bridging social capital (cross-ethnic in the case of Varshney) that is able to establish new joint spaces for conflicting groups. As Bowd (2011) succinctly puts it:

> The restoration and strengthening of bridging social capital between previously conflicting groups or factions … within civil society offsets very strong bonding social capital within groups with previously antagonistic relations with other groups. When bridging social capital is relatively strong it can suppress the effects of overly strong bonding social capital by reducing the propensity for an 'us and them' attitude to develop or be maintained (p.58).

Data collection for the social network was challenging in terms of ensuring sufficient representation. One way to go about this in this research was to use snow-ball sampling as a means to reach ex-combatants on both sides. For example, to ask an interviewee who is he highly connected with; who s/he participated with in armed conflict; who is the friend he spends most time with from the days of the battles? The initial interviewee though had to be contacted through the CSOs. As such, the likelihood that a member of the CSO network would indicate another member of the CSO is high. Now, suppose the ex-combatant from Bab el Tabbeneh who is a member of the CSO suggested another ex-combatant who is also a member of the CSO but from Jabal Mohsen. This indicates a link between the two that is probably formed by the work that the CSOs have conducted with both of them. As such, in the follow-up phase, questions on whether they friend before the conflict or became friends after the CSO intervention and whether it would have been possible without the CSOs were asked.

I also asked CSOs to randomly select ex-combatants from both sides who are members of their network to reach representative sample of ex-combatants in the city. Through my interviews with them, I follow their links to other fellow ex-combatants. Moreover, to avoid superfluous response from only interviewing ex-combatants recommended by CSOs, I overcame the problem by asking the ex-combatants to suggest someone I should interview. Another ex-combatant who might have participated in the CSOs activities but is no longer active. This proved to be vital in understanding some the shortcomings and criticisms to the CSOs in operation. The third approach I used to control for the sample data was to ask if the ex-combatant came to know another ex-combatant from the opposing side after the armed conflict and without the help of CSOs. Thus, in total, I would have the following profiles in the network:

1) Ex-combatants from both opposing warring factions who are friends because of the CSOs.
2) Ex-combatants from both opposing warring factions who are not friends but members of the same CSOs networks.

Interviewing ex-combatants for the purpose of understanding their social ties was conducted in a different phase than the interviews for their life history, which I discuss further in Chapter 6. As such, each ex-combatant was met with twice, each appointment served a different purpose. The first one was a short interview in which the ex-combatant answered questions pertaining to their relationships and ties with friends and ex-combatants from the opposite side and with CSOs. It is important to note and re-emphasize that this representative sample of ex-combatants have all participated at some point or another in at least one of the CSOs' DDR initiatives. Accordingly, their tie with the CSO is a pre-existing one. This made sense because my unit of analysis is the CSOs, and because I aim to demonstrate that their intervention has had a successful impact on these ex-combatants. Therefore, ex-combatants who have not participated with CSO initiatives are essential for counter factual understanding in case they have also been demobilized and reintegrated as well. However, this is not only beyond the scope of this research, but also no DDR initiatives other than those conducted by CSOs have taken place in Tripoli. Hence, in case there are demobilized and reintegrated combatants outside these initiatives, it is more likely that the demobilization and reintegration occurred on the individual level without a specific external third-party intervention.

The ex-combatants never told me their full names. Some were comfortable in giving me their first names, others I provided them with pseudonyms in order to maintain anonymity and protect their identity. Each name or pseudonym was also given a code/ID constituting a letter and a number, starting with the letter "F" followed by a number. The data was then transcribed and translated from Arabic to English. Relational data was extracted and drawn out into an adjacency matrix (Appendix I). Following that, the matrix data was inputted into NetworkX package on Python programming language for calculating network analysis metrics.

5.2 Brokerage and Social Capital: Hypothesis formation

I first recall the basic concepts in describing and measuring social capital in SNA. I do so in order to hypothesize on the role of CSOs in expanding the social capital of ex-combatants, bridge between them and hone the relationship for more sustainable demobilization and reintegration. Ego-networks consist of a focal node, "ego", and the nodes to which the ego node is directly connected to, also called "alters" (Crossley et. al, 2015). Thus, a high degree for the ego means a high number of alters that are connected to the ego, and thus a higher chance for efficient social capital. Another measure that could infer positively on social capital and brokerage is betweenness centrality. This measures the number of times that the ego node falls along the shortest path between two other alters. Nodes with high betweenness are positioned well to link less connected alters, "creating opportunities for exploitation of information and control benefits" (Borgatti et al., 1998, p.71).

The above posits the following hypothesis regarding the brokerage of the CSOs in the network. To be able to identify whether the CSOs acted as brokers, bridging structural holes, the CSOs would need to have a low constraint measure and a high effective size measure. As such,

> *H1(a): The higher the effective size measure of CSOs, the more likely their designed and implemented DDR program spans structural holes created by the warring parties.*

> *H1(b): The lower the constraint measure of CSOs, the more likely their designed and implemented DDR program spans structural holes created by the warring parties.*

Burt (1992) proposes two measures of structural holes, effective size, and constraint measure. As noted in the previous chapter, structural holes are the absence of a link between two alters who both have links with the ego. In the following paragraphs, I define what is meant by constraint and

effective size measures and why they are best applicable for measuring brokerage. Both measures are sufficient to completely underscore brokerage and social capital measures. Ultimately, these measures are used in order to argue and identify whether the CSOs in the case of the conflict in the city of Tripoli truly bridged the warring factions, thus encouraging fighters to demobilize and successfully integrate as a result of renewed social relations and a more cohesive community. In other words, were they the nodes responsible for spanning the structural holes that are naturally present between fighting ex-combatants due to conflict?

The constraint measure is "intended to capture the extent to which an individual has access to many non-redundant others" (Everett and Borgatti, 2020). Thus, the absence of a tie to an ego node's links could represent an opportunity for a brokerage. As such, bridging the structural hole could provide added value for the node. Constraint, then, measures the extent to which the node's network of contacts constrain or block the ego, thereby limiting its ability to seek out isolated nodes. On the one hand, the low constraint indicates disconnected connections or structural holes. These in turn provide opportunities to broker connections. The high constraint, on the other hand, indicates a high level of connection with contracts and few opportunities for brokerage (Burt, 2008). Simplifying it, Burt (1992) argues that "contact j constrains your entrepreneurial opportunities to the extent that: (a) you've made a large investment of time and energy to reach j, and (b) j is surrounded by few structural holes with which you could negotiate a favorable return on investment" (Burt, 1992, p.54). Hence, the higher the score on the constraint measure, the more structural opportunities are constrained and, consequently, the lower the network benefits are.

Effective size is a node's ego network size, that is, the number of ties this node has minus the average number of ties each contact has within the ego network, excluding the ego node. This could also be referred to as the average degree and is equal to the density of the ego network, excluding ties to the ego node multiplied by (N-1). Therefore, to have high social capital means that the node would want to have many ties with other nodes that are not connected to each other, than directly with the node of the broker. The following section will lay out the results and the analysis of the *constraint* and *effective size* measures.

5.3 Analysis and Results

The network I analyze consists of three main components. The first group is the CSOs that have been mapped out in my desk research as very active in Tripoli and whom I have interviewed in my fieldwork. These include five CSOs; March NGO, Fighters for Peace (FfP), Shift, Ruwad, and Utopia. The second group is six ex-combatants from Bab el Tabbeneh (BeT) and finally, the third group is six ex-combatants from Jabal Mohsen (JM). The network is visualized in figure 4.1.

To begin with, I first look at the density of the network. Density refers to the general level of connectedness of the network. Thus, if every node is connected to every other node, we have a complete network with a density of 1. If the nodes are not connected to each other (also an extremely sparse network in this case) then the density is 0. In a network, the density of a graph is the number of ties in a network divided by the number of nodes. In the network of D&R designed by CSOs, the general connectedness of the network is determined to describe the cohesiveness of the network and sets the stage for what to expect from the ego. For an undirected graph the formula is:

$$D = 2* \text{(\#E (G))}/N(N-1);$$ network density is is **<u>0.5</u>**

To unpack this further, I highlight the centrality measures for this network. Most relevant for our analysis is degree centrality (number of ties) of each of the nodes in the network and betweenness centrality to determine the number of times that the ego node falls along the shortest path between other alters. Albeit merely a descriptive statistic, it indicates how well connected each network member is. Similarly, I expect to find that the CSOs should have more connections than ex-combatants since they are connected to members from both Jabal Mohsen and Bab el Tabbeneh, while ex-combatants, with a few exceptions, are only connected to their friends in their own groups. Table 4.1 represents the number of connections of ex-combatants in Bab el Tabbeneh (BeT) and Table 4.2 represents the number of connections of ex-combatants in Jabal Mohsen (JM) and Table 4.3 represents the number of connections of each CSO.

Bab el Tabbeneh Ex-combatants (BeT)	Degrees
F1	10
F2	9
F3	8
F4	10
F5	8
F6	9

Table 5.1: Ex-Combatants of Bab el-Tabbaneh (BeT)

Jabal Mohsen (JB)	Degrees
F7	7
F8	9
F9	8
F10	8
F11	7
F12	9

Table 5.2: Ex-Combatants of Jabal Mohsen (JM)

CSOs	Degrees
March NGO	10
Ruwwad	10
Fighters for Peace (FFP)	11
Utopia	2
SHIFT	9

Table 5.3: CSOs who designed and implemented D&R in Tripoli

The total number of nodes in the network is 17, hence, the data above shows a high level of connection for each of the nodes with each node at least connected to 7 other nodes, with the exception of an almost isolated CSO with only two connections (Utopia). In lay words, this means that 3 out of 5 NGOs are highly connected to the participants I interviewed in this network. Most ex-combatants also show high degree of connections, but this is not surprising as the bonding ties (ties among group members) are strong in militant groups.

Another important centrality measurement for the positionalities of the nodes, and in particular for the CSOs, is the betweenness centrality. Betweenness centrality refers to the number of times a node acts as a bridge along the shortest path between two other nodes. Its mathematical formula is indicated below, however for faster and less tedious mathematical calculation, the results below were generated using Network X on Python software.

$$C_B\left(n_i\right) = \sum_{j<k} g_{jk}(n_i) \ / \ g_{jk}$$

We should thus expect, or want to see, that in a conflict, in the network resembling the conflict, the CSOs should have the highest betweenness centrality and a high number of shortest paths that pass through the CSO nodes, meaning they act as a bridge along the shortest path between to other nodes multiple times, suggesting that the shortest path from a node in BeT to a node in JM is through one of the CSOs. Table 4.4 displays the number of shortest paths each node that passes through it, Figure 5.1 color codes the nodes with highest betweenness centrality. As expected, March NGO and FFP rank among the highest for betweenness centrality. It is also important to note that F8 has 7 paths in which he is the "middle-man", which indicates that the ex-combatants do link many other actors in the network. However, it could be that F8 is on the shortest path for many of the members of JM (to which he belongs) to the CSOs, or this could indicate that the ex-combatants have built ties with BeT over time.

NODE	BETWEENNESS
MARCH NGO	7.2
FFP	6.6
RUWAD	3.5
UTOPIA	0
SHIFT	4.3
F1	4.4
F2	0.9
F3	1.3
F4	3.5
F5	1.3
F6	3.2
F7	1.2
F8	7.4
F9	1.96
F10	8
F11	2.5
F12	11

Table 5.4: Path Betweenness of each node in the Network

	deg	betw	clos	eig
MARCH NGO	0.6250	0.060298	0.727273	0.279851
Ruwad	0.6250	0.029534	0.727273	0.298876
FFP	0.6875	0.055347	0.761905	0.309758
Utopia	0.1250	0.000000	0.457143	0.043180
SHIFT	0.5625	0.035833	0.666667	0.260638
f1	0.6250	0.037173	0.727273	0.295545
f2	0.5625	0.007589	0.666667	0.277783
f3	0.5000	0.011181	0.640000	0.242809
f4	0.6250	0.029534	0.727273	0.298876
f5	0.5000	0.011181	0.640000	0.242809
f6	0.5625	0.026687	0.666667	0.266798
f7	0.4375	0.010000	0.640000	0.172535
f8	0.5625	0.062381	0.695652	0.221168
f9	0.5000	0.016250	0.666667	0.200561
f10	0.5000	0.067361	0.666667	0.177360
f11	0.4375	0.022153	0.640000	0.170157
f12	0.5625	0.092500	0.695652	0.210620

Table 5.5: Results of Centrality Measures

As expected, the highest betweenness centrality is for two of the CSOs, MARCH NGO with 0.06 and FFP with 0.05. Ex-combatant (F8) and (F12) from JM also seem to have high betweenness centrality of 0.062 and 0.092 respectively. This indicates that these two ex-combatants link many other actors in the network. After running the basic metrics, I map out the network (Figure 4.1) without any categorization or classifications. In other words, without indicating the differences in node centrality measure or giving different color coding for nodes with high betweenness.

5.3.1   The Spanners of Structural holes

Relevant to determining the significance of the CSOs in building ties between combatants is the cross-communal brokerage that links the structural holes, which result from the absence of ties between the Sunni community of BeT and the Alawiite community of JM. In essence, what I am also measuring is the social capital of these organizations. In the realm of SNA, a set of ego-network measures are insightful to quantitatively determine brokers and their effective positionality in the network. Hence, the "ego" is the node to whose social capital to be measured and the "alter" is usually referred to the other nodes that the ego node is directly connected to.

As such, in order to properly measure the roles of the CSO in spanning the structural holes, effective size and constraint measures need to be calculated. Hence, I start by calculating effective size, which is essentially "the number of alters, weighted by strength of tie, that an ego is directly connected to, minus a "redundancy factor" (Borgatti and Everett.,1997, p. 31). In other words, the more different connections across the network a node have ties with, the greater potential of information and control benefits the node enjoys. In terms of numbers, this translates as the higher the effective size of the node is, the more likely it spans structural holes and puts itself in brokerage positions.
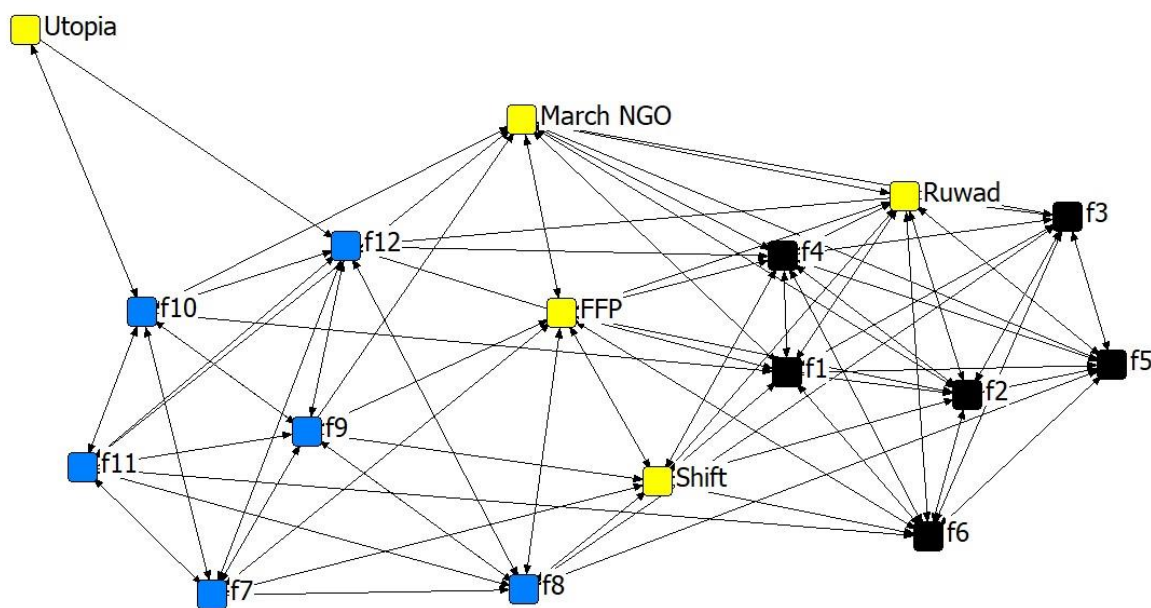
Figure 5-1: CSOs and Ex-combatants' network in Tripoli (Blue represent Alawiite fighters/Black represents Sunni fighters/Yellow represents CSOs)
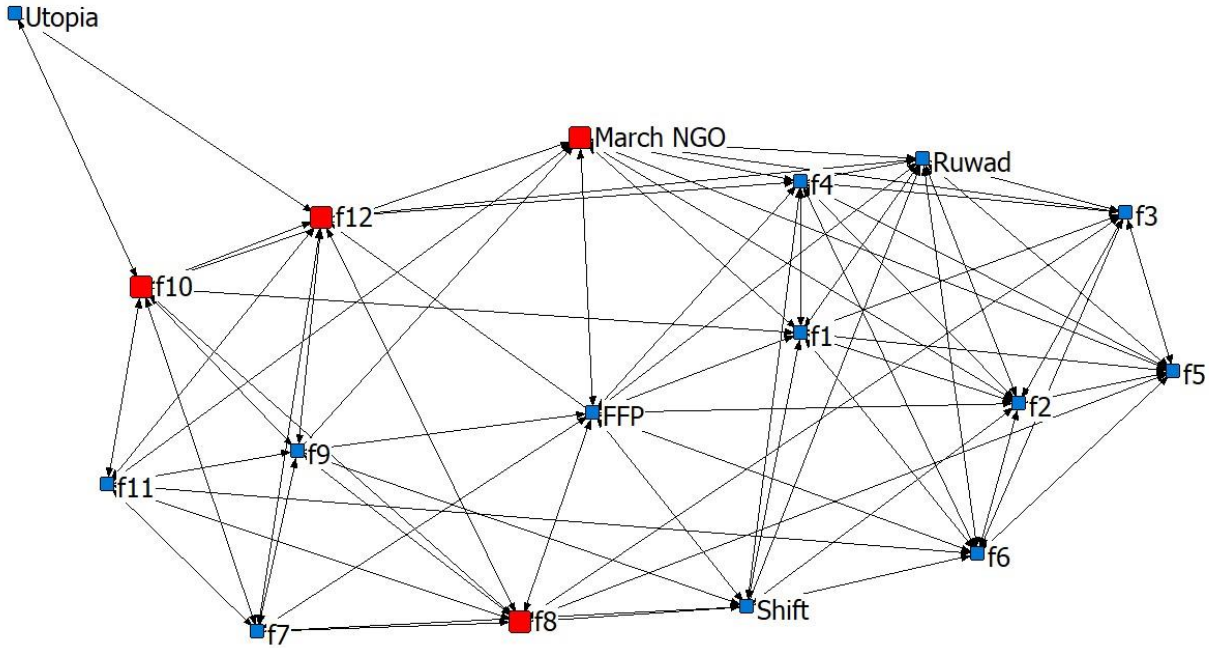
Figure 5-2: The network demonstrating highest Betweeness centrality

The formula developed by Burt (1992) aims at estimating to what extent is contact j redundant with other contacts of node j. In other words, it is an investment of time and energy in a relationship

$$\text{Redundancy} = p_{iq} m_{jq}$$

with another node q, with whom node j is strongly connected (Burt, 1995).

$$\text{Effective size of i's network} = \sum_j \left[1 - \sum_q p_{iq} m_{jq} \right], \quad q \neq i, j,$$

Where piq is proportion of i's energy invested in relationship with q,

And mjq is calculated as j's interaction with q divided by j's strongest relationship with anyone.

The redundancy in network is calculated by summing up this product across all nodes q. One minus this expression expresses the non-redundant portion of the relationship. Effective size of i's network is defined as a sum of the j's nonredundant contacts.

The other metric measure, constraint, is the "extent to which all of ego's relational investments directly or indirectly involve a single alter" (Borgatti et al., 1998, p.31). This measure demonstrates

that the more constrained the node is, the fewer opportunities for action it has. In terms of number, this translates as the lower the constraint value of the node is, the more likely it spans structural holes. Below is the formula for measuring constraint. Node constraint measures the extent to which the ego's network is not constrained by alters, limiting the vision of alternative ideas and sources.

Constraint of a network is the sum of each connection's constraint *Cij*

$$c_{ij} = \left(p_{ij} + \sum_q p_{iq} p_{qj}\right)^2, \quad i \neq q \neq j$$

As mentioned previously, these calculations were conducted through network X on Python. The results of effective size and constraint for each node is presented in Table 4.6.

	Effective size	Constraint
March NGO	5.1*	0.248*
FFP	5.5*	0.24*
Ruwad	3.36	0.315
Utopia	1	0.67
Shift	4.3*	0.25*
F1	3.9	0.286
F2	2.4	0.329
F3	2.7	0.314
F4	3.9	0.286
F5	2.7	0.314
F6	3.77	0.28
F7	2.5	0.344
F8	5.3*	0.247*
F9	3.2	0.325
F10	4.7*	0.27
F11	3.7	0.294
F12	5.0*	0.29

Table 5.6: Effective-size and Constraint measures for each node in the network
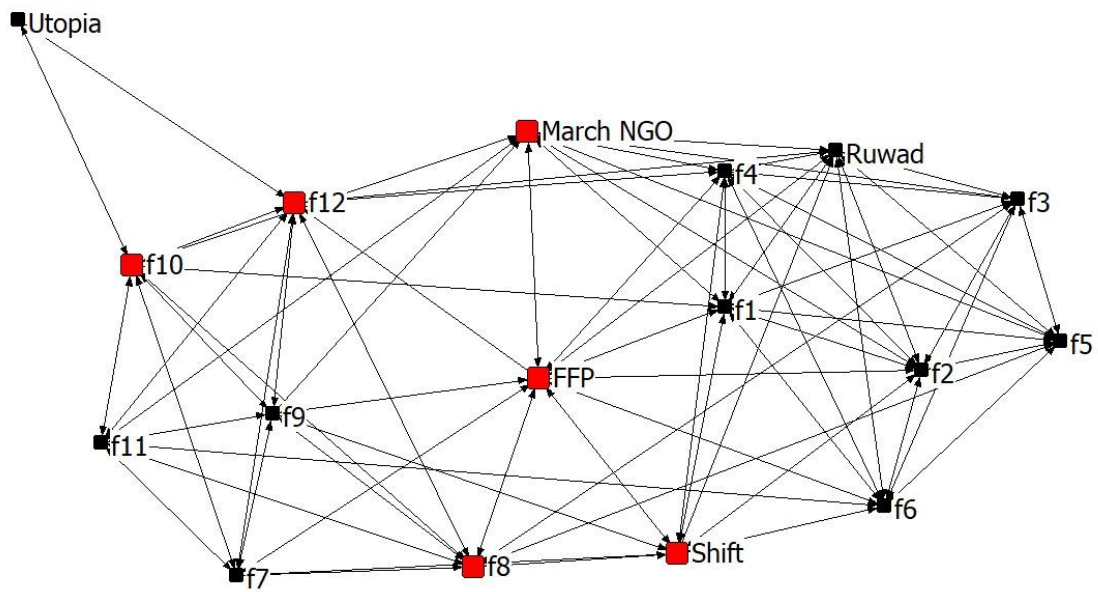
Figure 5-3: Highest Effective size nodes in red
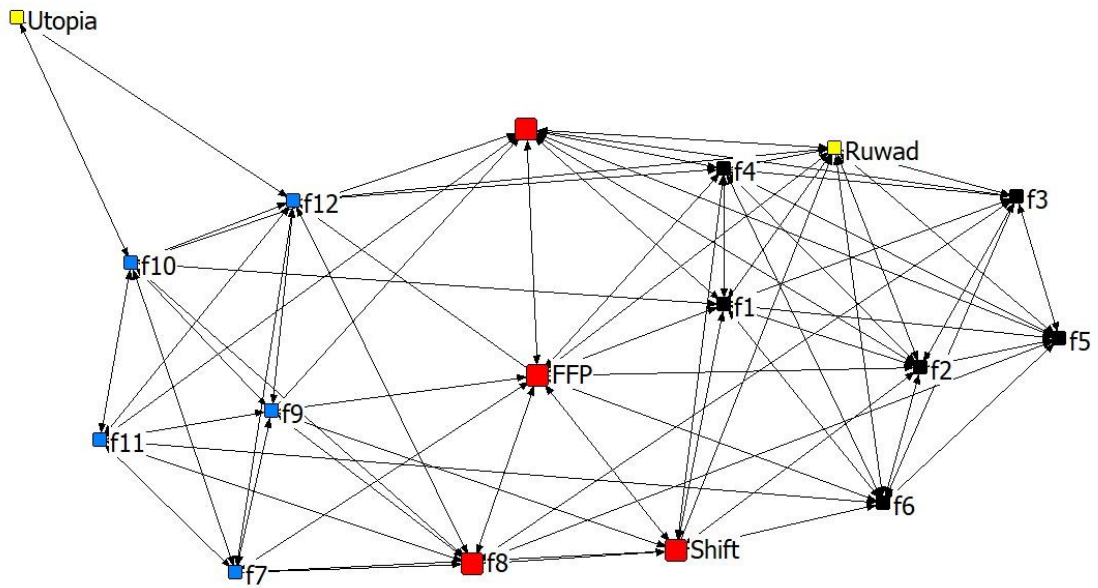
Figure 5-4: Lowest Constrain nodes highlighted in red

The results in Table 4.6 clearly demonstrate that the actors with highest effective size - meaning the nodes with the highest social capital across the network who also have different connections across the network – is FFP and MARCH NGO, which are both the CSOs with high level of activity in the city of Tripoli. Another notable mention with an effective size of 4.3 is SHIFT organization, which is a hyper-local organization and have supported FFP in recruiting ex-combatants to their events. Ex-

combatants indicated as F12, F8 and F10 also have a high effective size. This indicates that there is potential of being brokers, now or in the future. The result is not surprising given that the ex-combatants developed ties through this network that encompass members from the opposing clique.

However, effective size alone is not sufficient to identify the brokers' spanning of structural holes. Some ex-combatants in the network also have high effective size. this could suggest that that they also play a significant brokerage role. Therefore, the calculation of constraint ties is a more stringent measure that completes the test of my hypothesis. Constraint measures, in simple terms, consists of how much the node is constrained by ties that blinds it from viewing structural holes, which can yield robust positionality for the node. Looking at the constraint results, again, we see March NGO, FFP and Shift scoring the least. While from the ex-combatants who scored high on effective size, only F8 shares almost the same constraint score with the CSOs. MARCH, FFP and Shift are exerting constraint over several others (nodes/actors) and are not very constrained by them. The situation arises because MARCH NGO and FFP have a considerable number of ties, and many of the actors to whom they are tied to do not have many independent sources of information. This signifies that most of the brokerage and spanning of structural hole is with the CSOs. Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that the social networks created by CSOs can possibly also set the stage for brokerage by ex-combatants, such as the case of ex-combatant F8. This would ensure sustainability in efforts for reintegration and social cohesion. However, the data collected so far is not sufficient to conclude on that question. First, more data needs to be collected with more ex-combatants to control whether the ex-combatant in this network is an outlier or that it is a more present pattern. Second, the study of the network should take into consideration time conditions. In other words, to take snapshots of the network at different times and control for the development of individuals as brokers. However, for the CSOs' associational nature Varshney (2004) suggests that their formation of ties spans a wider individual and thus despite having a small network, the data is more conclusive. The bridging activities of March NGO and Fighters for Peace are also characterized with their brokerage positionalities.

After showcasing who the brokers spanning the structural holes are in social network terms, I now turn to who these two CSOs are. In doing so, I narrate the exact activities that March NGO and FFP conducted in the city of Tripoli. I also highlight steps that will infer the type of brokerage behavior, conduit, *tertius gaudens* or *tertius iungens*, performed by the two brokers.

5.4 Fighters for Peace and the Roadmap to Reconciliation in Tripoli initiative

Prior to the conflicts in Tripoli, Lebanon witnessed a fully-fledged civil war that lasted approximately 15 years (1975-1989) and resulted in a deeply divided society across sectarian beliefs (see Salibi 1976, El Khazen 2000, Hanf 2015). The disagreements between the Lebanese factions escalated in the early 1970s. The breakdown of the Lebanese state, as a result of the civil war, allowed Lebanese militias to establish their *de facto* rule over well-defined geographic locations across Lebanon. In order to impose their domination, they committed all sorts of violence such as mass killings, bombardments, assassinations, kidnapping and forced expulsions against Lebanese who were from different sectarian or political affiliations (Beyoghlow 1989, Corm 1994, Rowayheb 2006). In 1990, the war ended by the signing of the Taif Accord. The Taif Accord was the agreement negotiated by the Lebanese members of parliament in the city of Taif in Saudi Arabia. This agreement was sponsored by the international community represented by the US, and by regional powers represented by Syria and Saudi Arabia. The Taif Accord that brought an end to the war did not call for a well-defined truth and reconciliation process nor did it set out any DDR processes for the war combatants (Karame, 2009). Many Lebanese NGOs like the Committee of the Parents of the Missing and the Lebanese Foundation for Permanent Peace rejected the 'policy of amnesia' and have been trying hard to pressure the Lebanese governments and ex-militia leaders to reveal what happened during the war hoping to bring the war to a 'real end' (Safa 2007, Karame 2009, Haugbolle 2011, Kovras 2017).

After the outbreak of violence in Tripoli city in 2011, some of the ex-combatants of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1989) took the opportunity to work together to mentor younger ex-combatants, forming a new organization under the name "Fighters for Peace", thereafter FFP. They held a press conference on December 6th, 2012, announcing the formation of a new organization calling for: (1) other ex-combatants to join them, and (2) for young combatants in Tripoli to lay down their arms. In their mission statement, the founding members wanted to engage with other counter violence associations, and in particular "with fellow ex-fighters in order to build a lasting civil peace" (Chaftari, personal interview, 15 July 2018).

The members of this organization, who came together as a result of individual efforts, wanted their stories and testimonies to create a space where Tripolian fighters can find a way out of violence.

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They also envisioned the ability to perpetuate their work and help fighters in the neighboring region from Libya to Syria (Chaftari, personal interview, 15 July 2018). As such, they decided to build on their individual experiences by accessing schools, universities, refugee camps and other institutions and conducting dialogue sessions. Moreover, the organization's projects continued by reaching out to violent communities through selected activities, offering psychosocial support, and connecting with other combatants in other countries. Nevertheless, their main efforts and activities are targeted towards the Lebanese youth. So far, FFP have reached out to over 5,000 youth between the ages of 15 and 25 (Rowayheb and Ouweiss, 2016). In relation to the conflict in Tripoli, the FFP founding members wrote a letter to the combatants' leaders of the two areas, JM and BeT, asking them not to repeat the mistakes of the past – to remember that in Lebanon's civil war there were no winners, there were only losers. FFP called on all Lebanese interested to work for peace to join their association. Currently, FFP members count for 20 ex-combatants from all Lebanese former militias who fought in the Lebanese civil war.

5.4.1 The Brokerage of FFP

Through partnering with local organizations, namely SHIFT, FFP recruited ex-combatants from each warring faction to initially work separately as two distinctive groups, and not to mix the two in common activities to avoid tension or hostility. Each group openly discussed their concerns, feelings and why they took part in violence. This helped FFP to highlight the reasons that encouraged the mobilization of the fighter from both BeT and JM. FFP also initiated the playback theater, which is a form of improvisational theatre where members of the audience tell their stories, after which these are re-enacted by theatre actors. In collaboration with Live Lactic Culture, a Lebanese improvisational-theatre organization based in Beirut, the stories of ex-combatants from BeT and JM were dramatized, while FFP members analyzed these stories, noting their commonalities. This approach was needed to identify that the stories of economic desperation and political manipulation are of the same nature for both groups.

The imperative work of FFP came with their initiative, which was in partnership with other local and national CSOs including SHIFT, Permanent Peace Movement, and Peace Labs. The project was called "Road for Reconciliation in Tripoli (RRT)". It focused on engaging people in a communal reconciliation process in Tripoli. Understanding that reconciliation is a more complex process that includes transitional justice and reparations, the project focused on reintegration. The FFP team explained to the fighters the bottom-up approach that focuses on peacebuilding and

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building relationships as a prerequisite, while tackling important components that are usually not covered by civil society approaches. One of these critical components is the reintegration of former fighters in the community, mainly relying on the expertise of the project partners" (The Roadmap to Reconciliation in Tripoli, p. 6). For that, FFP conducted 29 communal conversations as well as thirteen key informant interviews. The sessions included more than 300 individuals from the conflict neighborhoods invited through gatekeepers from Jabal Mohsen and Bab el Tabbaneh. Out of the 300, 100-120 were former fighters, 123 were directly affected individuals, and the rest were local activists and business owners. Each group discussed their own grievances and aspirations. Additionally, each group was asked how they perceive the reintegration process taking shape, and whether they are willing to be part of it.

Moreover, the project extracted a list of common issues that both communities felt they are the victims of. For example, both groups felt that they were victims of national and regional political battles in which they are used as pawns. Both felt discriminated against in two conflict zones, both talked of being deprived of socio-economic rights, individual and community security. The most striking commonality is that from both communities, many of the fighters and victims are categorized as stateless. In other words, they have no official identification papers, making it almost impossible for them to formally access services and the job market.

Through this process, FFP identified the common problems that both communities share, which are also not problems that they caused for each other. Rather, it was the lack of proper care from the state. Gradually, the ex-combatants' perception of each other changed and thus built some trust between the previously warring individuals/groups. increased in trust. Moving forward, FFP placed the ex-combatants at the forefront of any reintegration process that should be spearheaded by them. This included documentary films, playback theater, camps that include ex-combatants and youth, dialogue sessions "whereby they tell their story to students and others" (Roadmap to Reconciliation in Tripoli, p. 23), as well as exhibitions focusing on the positive relations and advocating the positive change agents that ex-combatants are.

5.5 March NGO: Innovation with Arts

MARCH is an NGO that was founded in 2011 with the aim to promote social cohesion and personal freedoms, while advocating for equal rights through peacebuilding and conflict resolution (March NGO website, accessed on February 10, 2018). Led by their executive director, who was

trained in mediation, MARCH focused on arts, theatre for reconciliation and utilizing common spaces to "mend the feuding and war-torn neighborhoods of Beb El Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen"(March NGO website). The Tripoli Conflict Resolution team at MARCH began to work on various possible ideas for conflict mediation and countering violence in Tripoli. Supervised by the Executive Director, their drafted ideas were pitched to potential international donors in order to raise the necessary funds to support a play production. The organization believed that typical dialogue workshops without tangible work experience is less likely to work in fostering ties between ex-combatants. What they decided to do, instead, was to have the stories of ex-combatants shared in a theatrical play that they themselves acted in. The ex-combatants had ownership of the work and remunerated compensation. Moreover, they made small steps in working with members from the other community. The ability to do so – in an environment where MARCH was the "people-to-go-to" for any hostilities – provided guarantees from members of both groups that their voices and concerns will be heard and addressed. However, the international donors were not supportive of the projects initially. In the words of MARCH Executive Director, "when we submitted the project proposals for funding, the first time with the [theatre] play it took time to convince a donor to fund. Several donors rejected the proposal. They were skeptical about the [possibilities] of success" (Baroudi, personal interview, July 28, 2018). They were finally able to secure the funds from the British Embassy in Beirut.

5.5.1   The Brokerage of MARCH NGO

Within a few months, MARCH produced the theatre play "Love and War on the Rooftops", featuring 16 former fighters aged between 16 and 29 from both Bab al-Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen. To recruit these ex-combatants turned actors, MARCH networked with hyper local civic associations like Tabbaneh Youth Council and other NGOs present in Jabal Mohsen, such as *Lubnan al Mahabba* (Lebanon Love) and *Chabab El Ghad* (Youth of Tomorrow). Like FFP, the use of local gatekeepers was essential for MARCH, particularly in the recruitment of ex-combatants spanning the structural holes.

Of course, the path to produce this play was not linear. The organization's managers needed to address concerns of many individuals who were at first hesitant to cooperate with the combatants from the other neighborhood. On the first day of rehearsals, one of the combatants came with his handgun and grenade, just in case "things go wrong" (Baroudi, personal interview, July 28, 2018).

Another ex-combatant participant continuously told the managers of the organization that they will not be able to make them friends, but that he is merely there for the financial returns (ibid.). However, that the same ex-combatant is now a permanent staff member of the organization and fully committed to the current projects (Baroudi, personal interview, July 28, 2018).

The theatre play was performed four times. After the performances were concluded, the ex-combatants had developed a new sense of belonging and a feeling that their voice matters. MARCH continued their work by launching '*Kahwetna* Café' (which translates to 'Our Cafe') in February 2016, located on the frontline between Jabal Mohsen and Bab al-Tabbaneh. The café employs youth from opposing sides who were former combatants. It is also a space where former combatants from both neighborhoods can meet for coffee, lunches, and other regular events, such as playback theatre and watching football games. MARCH also organized bridging football tournaments between the combatants and the Lebanese Armed Forces in Baal Al Darwish (an area in the vicinity of the two neighborhoods). This bridging activity included not only linking ex-combatants from both warring factions but also with the Army, an institution which has been perceived by the residents of Tripoli as an oppressor rather than a security provider. Further social cohesion work with the Lebanese Army took place with an initiative that involved ex-combatants from both sides building a military base in Tripoli for the 12th brigade of the army. This also improved the capacities of the ex-combatants in structural building as a vocational training, which can be utilized as part of their economic reintegration.

Other projects from MARCH focused on employing young people from both sides to renovate shops in the main historic market on Syria street, the demarcation line between two neighbors, called "Beb el Dahab" (the golden door). They took graphic design classes through MARCH's organized workshops and were given the job of designing new signs for these renovated shops. In total, they renovated 90 shops that were mostly affected by years of war. This initiative was aimed at "giv[ing] this group of young, motivated youth a chance to forge themselves a better future, strengthen social bonds and give them a sense of true belonging" (Baroudi, personal interview, 28 July 2018). To aspire the former combatants further, MARCH also bridged between the ex-combatants by involving them in training led by international artists. This included inviting internationally renowned instillation artists, painters, muralists whose visits encouraged numerous ex-combatants to take part in the artistic workshops. Ex-combatants went on to "write their stories" even after the workshops were over (March NGO website, accessed April 16, 2020).

As can be seen from the examples above, March NGO used workshops, theater, and dialogue to change ex-combatants' behaviors and develop their self-understanding of religion and social conflicts. This personalized focus draws on local understandings of customs and community concerns to help individual men targeted by the CSOs to reduce violence.

5.6 Shifting in Brokerage Types

In this section, I turn to the third component of the analysis, which consists of identifying what type of brokerage enhances the outcomes of DDR programs. First, I identified MARCH NGO and FFP as the two CSOs that acted as brokers (spanning structural holes) to increase their and ex-combatants' cross communal social capital. Second, I described the bridging activities they ran. In the following paragraphs, I will explore the type of brokerage they performed.

As identified in Chapter 3, there are three major types of brokerage behavior: conduit, tertius gaudens, and *tertius iungens* (Burt, 2004; Obstfeld, 2005). Since the CSOs considered here are operating with the intention to demobilize and reintegrate, fostering a new form of peace, it is safe to assume that the process-based view of brokerage for the CSOs is not to divide and conquer. However, there might be in cases other than the two identified in this project, where they do exist as counter-productive actors to the demobilization and reintegration process.

Conduit brokerage involves mere simple activity of passing information, money, or resources between parties. In that, for example the broker B relays the resource from A to C without attempting to rearrange the relationship between A and C. In other words, B does not aim to divide the relationship nor encourage a formation of a tie between the two actors, but rather mediates and transfers information. Burt (2000) gives several examples of brokers working conduit roles. For example, if A has a problem that C has solved, the broker B can transfer the solution from C to A. This requires that broker B has the knowledge that the problems are of a similar nature and that the solution is applicable. It is worth noting that this role entails that the broker has the knowledge to translate solutions, or even uses this position to distort and withhold some of the information for his potential benefit. On the latter point, the broker who understands his position may utilize it to seek rent or even demand rewards. Nevertheless, altruistic intentions may very much be the driving motivations for the brokers.

Thus far, conduit brokerage is one process type that could determine the behavior of March NGO and FFP. *Tertius gaudens* brokerage constitutes a broker exploiting the conflict between parties

and purposefully taking no action to bind them (Obstfeld et.al, 2014). This is also referred to as divide and conquer (MacDonald, 2014). This was first explored by Simmel (1950) and later built on by Burt (1992). Simmel (1950) argues that the broker spanning a structural hole can encourage the conflict between alters stating that, "the distinguishing nuance consists in the fact that the third element intentionally produces the conflict in order to gain a dominating position" (Simmel, 1950, p.162). It could also be the case that the tertius fears the unification of the alter-alter relationship (Burt 1992, MacDonald, 2014). Evidence of this brokerage behavior does not exist in the case of Tripoli. In fact, March NGO and FFP seem to have encouraged the unification of ties between ex-combatants from conflicting parties, evidently by the ties of ex-combatant F8, F10 and F12.

Tertius iungens brokerage, contrary to tertius gaudens, consists of a broker who actively pursues forming ties between the disconnected alters, the *iungens*. Obstfeld (2005) argues that there are two types of *iungens*, brief and sustained. Brief *iungens* needs the broker as catalyst to do the introductions and facilitate initial contact, while the alters can take it from there and facilitation on the long term is unnecessary. On the other hand, sustained *iungens* require an "ongoing broker facilitation" (Obstfeld et. al, 2014, p.147) and mediation. Thus, in a brief iungens structural holes seize to exist, while in sustained iungens structural holes are slowly formed but still require a broker to maintain them. Once the broker is removed, the tie between the two alters breaks.

5.6.1 FFP as a Conduit brokerage

For both organizations, at the beginning of their projects, the participants from both warring parties had no prior ties. March NGO's behavior as a broker was that of tertius iungens, with exceptions when it operated as a conduit brokerage. On the other hand, FFP behaved as a conduit broker with, in exceptional times, operating in tertius iungens behavior. Shifting between the two behaviors depended on the period and the actors. FFP at the beginning opted to not introduce the different ex-combatants to each other, and thus operated with no initial prospect for ties to turn into triads. Nevertheless, as different CSOs became involved in the process with new and innovative projects, FFP had more leeway to close the structural holes, shifting as a result from conduit brokerage to *tertius iungens*. However, by FFP choosing to initially hold meetings with ex-combatants from each warring sides at separate times, they became involved in pitching a unifying narrative that would appeal to both sides. Instead of trying to set the two groups together and present ideas, information, collaborative opportunities, and a common narrative hoping it would appeal to both parties, FFP took a two-step approach. First, given the lack of complete alignment between the two warring

factions, FFP approached ex-combatants from BeT and through hearing their stories, concerns, and motivations to fight (or to move away from violence), FFP proposed narratives and activities tailored to appeal to BeT's (N^{BeT} where *N denotes narrative*) interests. FFP implemented the same process to a group of ex-combatants from JM, proposing a narrative that would appeal to JM (N^{JM}). Then, from combining the two findings, responses, and reactions, FFP presented a new narrative that addresses the interests of both BeT and JM (N^{BeTJM}).

5.6.2 MARCH as a Tertius Iungens

On the other hand, March NGO behaved as tertius iungens with shifts to conduit brokerage. In line with its mission and goals which are constituted in their projects, introducing members from both warring parties who did not previously have ties to each other was imperative. However, in certain instances and over time, some of the members formed ties amongst themselves. At the beginning of the projects, it was a brief iungens requiring March NGO to continue fostering the ties while after several interactions, projects, and years of work, members of both groups developed ties amongst themselves and between the groups, that are stronger and sustainable. Thus, March NGO focused on bridging through activities and less so through convincing ex-combatants using a common narrative. They approached ex-combatants and provided them with activities by which they can improve their skills and provide capacity building for reintegration. From that, they can develop a common narrative about each other based on the activities, theatre plays, and sports interactions. In some cases, the brokered collaboration between the ex-combatants became sustainable after the recurrence of several activities, even in the absence of the broker (sustainable iungens), in other cases the ties between them remained conditioned by brokerage. For example, when March NGO worked with ex-combatants to write their own script for the theatrical play, information and perceptions that were transferred from both groups were facilitated and assisted by the broker. Thus, in these instances, March NGO's behavior shifted to that of conduit brokerage because it provided information for one group about how they are perceived and thought of by the other. On the face of it, it seemed a practice that would generate division rather than unification, however the brokerage helped in synthesizing new knowledge about the two groups. Nevertheless, MARCH NGO remained an actor "to-go-to", to maintain the basis of cooperation because of their reputation of solving problems and provision of services.

The above will become more evidential in the next chapter, where I explore the relationship of the ex-combatants with March NGO through their life stories.

Conduit Brokerage	Tertius iungens
FFP	March NGO
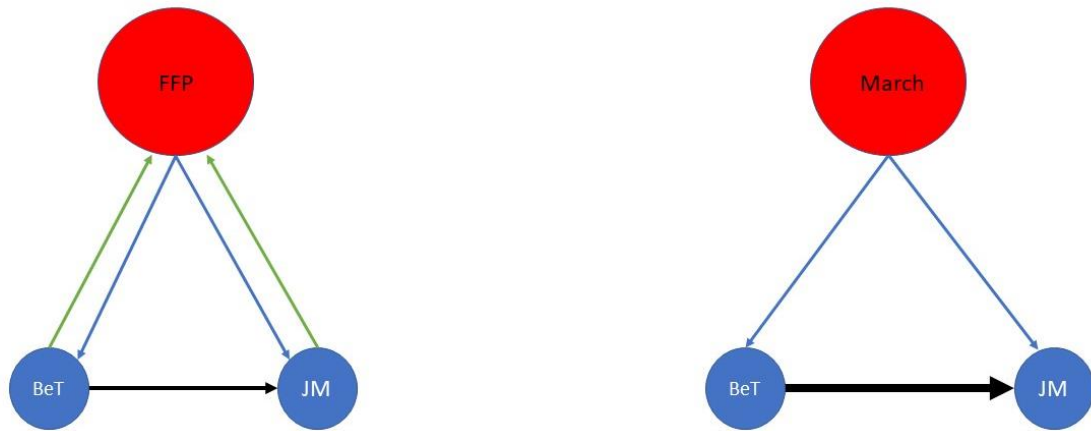
Figure 5-5: Different types of brokerages by different CSOs

5.7   Multivocality of FFP and March NGO

In their work on the rise of the Medici family between 1400-1434, Padgett and Ansell (1993) coined the term Multivocality. Multivocality refers to "the fact that single actions can be interpreted coherently from multiple perspectives simultaneously, the fact that single actions can be moves in many games at once, and the fact that public and private motivations cannot be parsed"(Padgett and Ansell, 1993, p.1263). As such, some ego nodes consciously choose actions that would mean differently things to different alters. As Padgett and Ansell (1993) further argue, in such circumstances "all alters constructing their own distinctive attribution of the identity of ego" while the "only point of this, from the perspective of ego, is flexible opportunity[y]" (p.1263) that will keep the actor/node in a strong and influential positions.

Therefore, robust brokers may choose to apply the same strategy in order to maintain their "flexible opportunities" (Padgett and Ansell, p.1263). FFP and to some extent, March NGO, attempted to be multivocal in order to address the different concerns of the two groups. By discussing with the ex-combatants in the interviews their perception of the FFP, it was evident that FFP was perceived as a mediator. The FFP developed a new single narrative (N^{BeTJM}) of the conflict that was relevant

for the experiences of ex-combatants from both warring parties. However, the ex-combatants of BeT perceived FFP as more of a mediator and provided resources and activities to assist them in demobilizing and reintegration, while ex-combatants of JM perceived FFP as a group of experienced ex-combatants whose testimonies reflect the difficult realities and harsh outcomes of being part of organized armed groups.

5.8 Conclusions

This chapter focused on the application of SNA tools to analyze the networks created by CSO's D&R programs. An SNA approach helps in analyzing not only the characteristics and attributes of an actor in a social reality but also informs us about the characteristics of their position in regard to their relational ties. Through the use of Network X scripts in Python, the network data collected through extensive fieldwork showcased insights into the social capital advantage that local CSOs have as DDR initiative designers and implementers. One can make two inferences from this analysis.

First, D&R programs by local CSOs in Tripoli focused on spanning structural holes, which gives them a strong edge in providing a convincing narrative and argumentation for ex-combatants to demobilize from battlefield, as well as provide crucial and transparent reintegration paths. This emerges in contrast to DDR programs run by international third parties, and in some instances national governments, that are more focused on economic reintegration and the disbursement of stipends with little attention paid to social reintegration and addressing the root causes of the war.

Second, local CSOs in Tripoli had the capacity to design and implement out-of-the-box innovative projects focused on the needs of ex-combatants. The local organizations understood their concerns and problems at a more contextual level and were able to maintain themselves as a third-party bridging broker over a long term, and potentially even beyond D&R activities. This is essential for the sustainability of demobilization and reintegration. Unlike traditional DDR program implementers, who usually leave the post-conflict context as soon as the technical side of the programs are concluded, CSOs maintain a presence and the ability to relaunch networks in abeyance at a later point in time. Additionally, these networks started to attract more combatants who initially may have approached them to benefit from the resources that CSO have collected. Over time, those opportunistic combatants were nudged into becoming active members in the

network, through engaging with the events and activities the network in sum performs (personal interview with ex-combatant, 3 January 2020).

In a broader sense, the intactness of the combatants' networks with each other did not disrupt D&R programs' execution and effectiveness. This analysis builds on Themnér and Karlen (2020) perspective, in that CSOs' D&R programs can build on the strong network ties of the paramilitaries and expand them to include commanders and combatants from the opponent factions, eventually forming a bigger cohesive network. The same militant network is then transformed into a new cross-communal network with components of ex-combatants from two warring factions with ties amongst themselves and with the CSOs. This goes a long way to demonstrate that demobilization and reintegration can take place without disarmament. More importantly, the notion suggesting that networks of war need to be disbanded (UNDP, 2006) can be reconsidered. The network of CSOs and ex-combatants in D&R programs in Tripoli demonstrate that the network structure of warring groups were used as components within a larger integrated network.

6 The Turning Points in the Lives of Ex-Combatants

In the previous chapter, I discussed at length the brokerage roles the CSOs (FFP and MARCH) performed through the creation of social networks of ex-combatants from both warring parties. In so doing, FFP and MARCH were able to span structural holes left by the conflict and redraw cognitive maps that no longer securitizes the 'other'. This opened ways for a more cohesive social reintegration. In this chapter, I utilize life course analysis in order to study the biographical stories of ex-combatants I met in my fieldwork. This approach is offering the additional data on the lives of the ex-combatants beyond their relational ties and their interactions at the social level. Through the biographical narratives I unpack the ex-combatants' engagements with their own emotions, opinions and events and not only their socio-economic variables. I select six interviews that I refer to repetitively in this chapter because they represent a diversity of all the stories collected in the field. The other remaining stories follow a very similar sequence and thus have been analyzed but not frequently referred to (for detailed transcriptions of the responses see Appendix I). In the following sections, I highlight how the D&R processes by CSOs were a successful intervention that served as a turning point in the lives of these individuals, shifting them from a combatant career path to a more peaceful life path.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first explores the conceptual pillars of life course analysis, distinguishing between transition points, duration and turning points. In so doing, I refer back to Giele and Edler (1998) life course paradigm that will form the basis for the analysis further on. The second section discusses in detail the type and the procedure in which the data was collected. The third section analyzes the data and deduces the transition points of the ex-combatants, but most importantly, explains how the CSO activities where the main turning points in the lives of the combatants. In the penultimate section, I explore the challenges that the CSOs were not able to address, and in the last section I summarize my findings.

6.1 Recalling Life course as an analytical method

Life course analysis took a new turn in the 1980s, where studying differential life course sociology emerged as one way that allows the exploration of patterns of life courses that varies within limited periods of societies (Mayer, 2009). Prior to that, life course analysis was utilized for either cross sectional studies of age stratification or for psychological human development (Elder, 1974). In the new trend (mid 80s to the 90s), life course perspectives were founded on three

main pillars. Firstly, life course is a longitudinal analysis of changes in human lives considered over a stretch of time. Secondly, life course is to be analyzed as the outcome of an amalgamation of macro and meso-level events as well as particular individual life events. Thirdly, life course is an essential approach "for social policies with a paradigm shift from curative to preventive intervention" (Mayer, 2009, p.414). The latter principle is of extreme value for understanding individual behaviors of combatants during transitions into and out of wars. As such, life course is an informative method for the study of combatants and ex-combatants. Since D&R aims to push combatants from a phase of violent engagement to a phase of peace and reintegration as community citizens, transitions and turning points – which I will explain further in the paragraphs below - are essential conjunctures along their trajectories. They are the points that would shape their careers from civilians to combatants and back to civilians. Therefore, following their lives is absolutely integral in order to assess the D&R strategies' impacts on the long run. Within life course analysis, the division of life paths into different phases, stages and diversions are the basics to understand the life contexts that nudge individuals towards different decisions or directions. Let me first emphases the definitions in the literature of life course that are necessary for the analysis of this chapter, particularly those that are quintessential in life course approaches.

The first important element in life course analysis is *trajectories*. Trajectories are social pathways that are followed by any person in a society. This mostly includes the general path from birth to death, passing through education until retirement. Oftentimes, these pathways are shaped by historical events or social institutions. The step taken to move from being single to getting married is one example. Certainly, trajectories are subject to change, "both from impact of the broader context in which they are embedded and from the impact of aggregation of planned interventions and unplanned change" (Edler Jr et. al., 2003, p. 8). In other words, while individuals choose the trajectories and the steps they undertake on the trajectory, choices are constrained by the opportunities presented to them through historical events, economic status, social norms, and culture.

Trajectories constitute a sequence of experiences that are made up of the various states/roles an individual undergoes. The changes from one state or role to another are referred to as *transition points*. Transitions open new experiences along the same trajectory that leaves new spaces for new opportunities for behavioral changes too (Wellman et al., 1997). For example, when an individual leaves school in pursuit of a career, or when an individual gets married. These all involve a change

in role and status along the trajectory that the individual is paving for her/himself. In between transitions there is *duration*. Duration is the time in between transitions by which one performs her/his interests and obligations of their respective roles regularly (Edler Jr. et al., 2003).

Another imperative element in life course studies is what is referred to *as turning points*. Turning points are instances in which a substantial change occurs in one's pathway. Thus, it is what comes after that point that makes it a turning point. We are not able to determine a turning point until we actually witness a change that can be retrospectively attributed to it. In other words, to change the entire trajectory that one is moving along into another trajectory needs a turning point. To give a clearer example by referring to the cases under investigation here, a combatant before becoming one would be a regular individual transitioning between the different phases on her/his trajectory. This would include enrolling/exiting school, employment/unemployment, or marriage/divorce. When the individual is recruited and mobilized into a group in order to take part in violent conflict then this point would be identified as a turning point because the now- combatant has moved onto another trajectory that consists of a different starting point, transitions, and end point because he/she has moved into from a civilian life to a combatant life that entails different objectives and everyday practices. Likewise, the demobilization and reintegration of an ex-combatants would be another turning point into another trajectory that is buttressed on resuming mundane life trajectories. It is thus important to showcase that not every move made, for example, from exiting school early into working is considered a turning point, as practical work is considered a transition. However, joining armed forces (whether the army or a paramilitary) or becoming a drug lord, are considered turning points. This is because their entirety of those careers is different, wherein their lives are put more at risk than usual or are they being operating outside legal systems. In other words, if the career could end up differently than they are on a new career path, in contrast to the regular mundane careers where we expect a job that would not be the direct reason for anything illegal.

In life course research, analysis for transitions has primarily utilized event history analysis. Event history analysis focuses on the events that cause transitions and trajectories to occur or stop. Thus, longitudinal data becomes an essential empirical application (Blossfeld, Hammerle, and Mayer and Schoepflin, 1989; Mayer and Tuma, 1990). Through longitudinal data collection, a series of events, transitions, durations, and trajectories are analyzed in a sequence. Sequence analysis represents a thinking towards thinking of "events in context" to replace "entities with variable

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attributes" (Abbott and Tsay, 2000, p.24). As such, "this trend is similar to developments in other emerging subfields of sociology, such as network analysis" (Aisenbrey and Fasang, 2010, p.424). This is so because both analytical approaches, LCA and SNA, place the micro-level data and link it with the macro-level. In SNA, individual relations are than understood in a wider context, in LCA, individual stories are then linked with the spatial and temporal shifts over time. Therefore, complementing life course analysis with SNA, this work leads to a significant novel approach to understanding the life pathways of individuals from being combatants to civilians.

Crucially, the different phases from duration, transitions and turning points are put together in order to understand how life courses unpack. Through the convergence of four central themes, we can draw the picture of a life story that had impact upon the individual by analyzing historical events in their lives. The life-course perspective is marked by the adoption of four major aspects. These four central themes in the study of life course are: (1) Lives and Historical times, (2) the Timing of Lives, (3) Linked Lives, and (4) Human Agency (see chapter 3 for more details). To provide theoretical orientation that can provide guides for research, the above paradigm emerged as an interplay of social pathways, developmental trajectories and how they could relate to social environment and social change. For the study of DDR and its long-term impacts, the above components are integral. Combatants are on trajectory whereby DDR's objective is to be the turning point and cause a shift onto another trajectory, ultimately causing social change. If DDR program implementers do not contribute to the creation of this turning point, then the DDR program is likely to fail.

To recall from chapter 3, *lives and historical times* refers to understanding the concept that emphasizes the birth year as a starting point with respect to the historical time**.** Historical events may well impact life course for a particular cohort that are born in a range of specific years. Thus, these historical accounts and social changes reflect the life patterns of specific cohorts. As such, the year of birth moves from being just a year to an inference about an exposure to historical change. Accordingly, for this research I inquire into what implications historical events have had on ex-combatants born in a particular generation, and how it was reflected in durations, transitions and turning points of their life courses. *The timings of lives,* simply refer to the timings based on social meanings, namely, the social, cultural, and demographic meanings that are attached to a certain age within a society. For example, education is expected to be between the ages of 6 to 18, marriage is expected in mid to late 20s and so on. In other words, it is to ask what is usually

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expected at this age, as Elder Jr. (1994) puts it "the social meanings of age deserve a special attention because they have brought a temporal, age-graded perspectives to social roles…relevant expectations and beliefs based on age" (p.6). Sometimes, the opposite could happen where unexpected events may occur outside of traditional timings. This could also impact the choices of individuals.

Linked lives, the third theme, is extremely integral to the study of life course. In essence, it is what chapter 4 was entirely designated to demonstrate. Human lives are embedded in the social relationships of family, friends, and colleagues. Consequently, this means that the disruption of ties or the creation of new ones affect the support system as well as transitions. For example, in Lebanon it is common for young men who are undergoing financial difficulties to resort to their parents or even move back in if they cannot afford rent. Oftentimes, individuals are affected by larger social changes, "because lives are lived interdependently, transitions in one person's life often entail transitions for other people as well" (Levy et. al, 2005).

Lastly, *human agency*, refers to the individuals' aspirations, plans and choices among the options that are available to them and the constraints they face in their worlds (see Clausen,1993; Elder and O'Rand, 2009). This becomes particularly important when there is a selection process involved in choosing one option over the other. Certainly, many of these choices could be driven by personal desires, but they could also be selected based on the timing of the lives and their linkages with others as outlined previously.

The sociological interest in life course has conceptualized life courses research into two categories: one is structure oriented and the second is culture oriented. The structure-oriented approach focuses on age stratification (Riley et al., 1972). The structure-oriented proposal builds on a macrostructural level and unpacks individual life courses in a wider social system. The problem in such an approach is that relationships between different individuals or between individuals and their associations (family, work etc.) is not taken into consideration (Levy and Buhlmann, 2016). The culture-oriented (contextual) approach stresses the less macrosocial aspect or age stratification, instead brings in the meso level social interactions of individuals at their workplace organizations, family, or other associations they might be involved in. These major aspects mentioned above provides us with a more culture-oriented approach that includes but does not

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fixate on age stratification but rather recognizes the choices and the decision-making that individuals make (Levy and Buhlmann, 2016).

In order to complement social network analysis of the ex-combatant's embeddedness in the DDR network of social change, I deploy a contextual approach that uses the individual as the main unit of analysis characterized by the attributes of the groups to which they belong to. This is of particular importance because of the choice that individuals make to join warring factions, and the transition they go through when they are part of the military group. In other words, choices of joining military groups are not always based solely on the recruiters, but often times it becomes the only option if friends and family members are joining too.

6.1.1 Data collection

As outlined in chapter 4, data collection in this research, which focuses on information collected by ex-combatants was a challenging task, particularly as it was to ensure sufficient representation. As mentioned earlier, interviewing ex-combatants for the purpose of understanding their social ties was conducted in a different phase of the fieldwork than the interviews that unpack their life history, which I present in this chapter. I have explained in chapter 3 that, each ex-combatant was met with twice. The first time was a short interview during which the ex-combatant answered questions pertaining to their ties and relationships with friends and ex-combatants from the opposite side and with the CSOs. This part informed my analysis on the roles of social ties presented the chapter 5. The second phase was a longer meeting during which I asked general questions about their lives in order to draw out their paths. My role was limited to highlighting the essential transition points; when they were born, if they went into education and for how long, and what they worked previously and currently. Then, a simple but highly important question was proposed: Can you *tell me your story as an individual, your life story from being a young kid to where you are now*. Certainly, all respondents spoke at length about their mobilization and demobilization from the battle fields as the narration demonstrates. Despite not specifying in my questions to my participants anything related to that phase with its events and encounters, there was an underlying assumption, particularly because of the reasons for making contact, that I am interested in their combating phases, the choices that led them to be part in the conflicts defending their sects and the choice to move away from it. Contrary to what I expected, they did not shy away from speaking about it, but did so with a sense of pride that they went through this phase but then moved back onto a civilian life track.

It is crucial to recall, because of the nature of this study, that not all ex-combatants in the representative sample were recommended from the CSOs alone. In order to ensure that the sampling is not affected by recent memories and biases towards the organizations, through the trust I built with the ex-combatants I secured responses from ex-combatants who were recommended by the ex-combatants themselves. To fit the scope of this project, the recommendations needed to adhere to the fact that the nominated ex-fighters have also participated in some shape or form in the CSOs' activities to qualify as a combatant who underwent D&R.

The recorded in-depth interviews gave me retrospective and longitudinal insights into the lives of the ex-combatants and their reflection on their experiences. Generally, in-depth interviews are used as a research method within the general designation of qualitative methodology for grounded theory. Grounded theory often asks to employ coding as a way to separate information into categories for analysis, however, I do not implement this in my work, because in doing so I would be separating the information into possible logical categories. However, the sequence of their decision-making process needs to be embedded in the story they are narrating and, as such, the information is extracted as a comprehensive whole rather than seeking particular keywords that could be indicative of a phenomenon. Rather, I rely more on the life history and the formation of the broad questions asked that guide my research, assisting in a more holistic biographic narrative interpretive method (BNIM). The aim of BNIM is to interpret the narratives that are told, and the researcher situates them in historical events (Ross and Moore, 2016). This includes probing the participant and encourage memories of particular incidents based on the incident narratives (Wengraf, 2000; 2001).

Storytelling is a compelling, universal endeavor for social sciences. This case is no exception. The practice of asking questions about participants' lives and getting answers in the form of stories has been going on for centuries. Even though scholars in the past regarded work based on narrative as the presentation of a simple story, many believe now that narratives are not so simple. We pay attention to other personal accounts because a narrative reveals "a way of thinking and imagining" (Wengraf, 2000, p.19) that takes us into a life. As such, a narrative is holistic: "It never tears asunder ideas and feelings"(Wengraf, 2000, p. 19). Nevertheless, there are limitations to this kind of approach, and perhaps more so in my specific pool of respondents. Namely, that (1) the data collected is relatively narrow and can be idiosyncratic, (2) the data could also reflect a selectivity

of narrators, and (3) that life review interviews present retrospective evidence distorted by memories.

The first two limitations are addressed by the fact that the central research question of this project pays particular attention to the D&R process of ex-combatants who participated in the CSOs initiatives. Hence, the representative sample of interviews and my ethnographic work required to gain their trust were cross checked. Together, an array of ex-combatants within these initiatives were interviewed (with a total of 22 interviews, while the selected six simply represent all the recorded different profiles and stories) and therefore the problem of idiosyncrasy is overcome by the fact that this study is only focused on those particular individuals in any case.

Certainly, the interviewing approach to one's life is also subject to pitfalls of respondents' memories being inaccurate. However, the fact that the onset of this research began only two years after the end of the conflict in Tripoli, and that the fieldwork started four years after, in addition to the fact that the ex-combatants sampled are of a young age, the accounts of past events will not be severely distorted given the relatively short period of time since the end of combatant activity and the ability of the young ex-combatants to recall events accurately. Moreover, probing in relation to some of the events recorded using desk research was one way to prompt participants to remember personal experiences. Thus, the identification of key transitions and turning point, from the research and accumulation of interviews were a framework within which biographical details are unpacked (Humphrey, 1993). The selection of appropriate conjunctures was arrived at by a combination of rigorous academic research as well as the interpretation of the interviews of the participants using their own language.

In my interviews, alongside a voice recorder, I used the 'grid' as a tool to record the data. Figure 6.1 demonstrates the categorization and cells within a grid. The vertical axis of dates starts with the ex-combatant's date of birth and the axis of age corresponds to their age during the event. The left of the age axis indicates the direct events that have been collected. My only entries into the grid are the ones relating to the start and end of the conflict. The events in between were selected from each respondent's story. Each of the five columns- family, education, work, mobilization, and demobilization & reintegration were imputed from the ex-combatant's personal experience in each of these at each of the directly indicated years and events. During the interview, events such

as leaving school, marriages, work, mobilization, and demobilization were entered chronologically into the grid.

At the beginning of the interview, I described to the research participant how the grid works when requesting the permissions to record the interview so that I could concentrate on entering the information on the grid rather than on manually writing notes from the interview. In order to gain their trust, I had to ask them not to share their real name with me. Instead, they were asked to and sign their consent form using an ID number and a pseudonym associated to each participant, which I provided for appropriate filing.

Events	D.O. B	Age	Family	Education	Work	Mobilization	D&R
Enter their essential year indicated by participant							
2011: Start of the conflicts		18				18	
2012: First intervention of FFP		19					
2013			Marriage				
2014							21 MARCH Theatrical
2015							

Figure 6-1: The grid recording tool (Source: Author, inspired by Parry, 1999).

6.2 Analysis and Findings

In this section, the data that has been collected is analyzed through the lens of life course. I begin by highlighting the transition points along the trajectories of the ex-combatants. After, I move on to establishing the two turning points that the individuals underwent: first through the intervention of commanders from the warring factions to becoming combatants and the second through the CSO interventions to become civilians. Lastly, I showcase the process by which old ties were broken and new ties with the opposition were formed. As a result of the CSOs' interventions which resulted in breaking the links with the commanders and replacing them with links of memberships a the CSO.

The narratives collected from the fieldwork have shown specific patterns and processes that are common across the ex-combatants from both sectarian divides who participated in the events and activities of the CSOs in Tripoli. Their life courses seem overlapping particularly when it comes

to their education and social ties. The ex-combatants from the communities of Bab el Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen both underwent only elementary education, had to enter the job market at a relatively early age and struggled socio-economically to provide for themselves and their families. The participants fall within the same generation, all of them born after the end of the Lebanese civil war; between 1990 to 1993. Hence, birth-year range is a strong indicator that they shared *lives and historical times* as they grew up in a uniformed generation, where their parents witnessed the initial conflicts between Bab el Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen back in 1985 up until 1989. The respondents' formative years were influenced by the stories of atrocities that the 'other' inflicted on them, as well as pictures of their deceased relatives - who lost their lives in these conflicts hanging on their walls. This perpetrated a continuous securitization of the other.

6.2.1 Transition points

Ex-combatants from both sides shared similar transition points. Categorically, these transition points can be divided into the following categories: (1) exiting school between the ages of 11-13, (2) beginning work at the same age, and (3) moving into marriage between 18-22 years old. The stories of Shadi, Sami, Habib and Hadi, show a pattern of exiting school by the 5th and 6th grade or about the age of 11 and 12 years old. Evidently, Shadi states "my parents could only afford to send me to school until 5th grade" (interview with Shadi, 13 July 2019) and Habib mentions "I went to school until the 4th grade. The tuition was free until then" (interview with Habib, 21 July 2019). Hadi and Tahir are exceptions, where they completed middle school up to 10th grade or equivalent. i.e., until they were between 15 and 16 years old. This meant that they did not receive the Lebanese Baccalaureate that will provide them with minimum economic opportunities. All stories indicate that after exiting school, the ex-combatants sought low-skilled jobs as apprentices, in order to become carpenters, blacksmiths, electricians, house painters or mechanics. For example, Sami mentions that "I was doing my apprenticeship at a cars body shop" (interview with Sami, 29 July 2019). Additionally, apart from EF1, all other ex-combatants transitioned from single status to marriage between the ages of 18 to 22. In that, the participants show a consistent adherence to *times of lives* where the demographic meanings for marriage are attached to the 18-22 age range within their communities. As such, it is a community expectation that within this age range, single men in Bab el Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen should get married. From the information above, we can also place transition points onto the life trajectories of the participants as shown in

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Figure 6.2. The transitions points announce the end of durations of education and the start of the work phase, likewise with marriage.

6.3 Turning points of mobilization, demobilization, and reintegration

6.3.1 Turning points facilitated by warring parties

Turning points are the most essential corner stone in the study of life course, not only to understand life trajectories but also to identify the conjunctures that were most influential in shaping the life paths. Ultimately, this explores why and when the ex-combatants chose careers as combatants, as well as the times in which they reverted back from that trajectory. As previously mentioned, by using oral history or life story in life course approaches, the turning points are only possible to be determined depending on the changes that come after that point. As such, we can only retrospectively assign an event as a turning point based on what unfolds afterwards and not while it is happening. From the respondents' life stories, *the times of lives* (tenet 2 of the life course paradigm) that determine their mobilization into career fighters indicates the first turning point. This point varies across the respondents. For the slightly older combatants, it is the clashes of 2008 while for others, the slightly younger combatants, the clashes that started in 2011 are crucial, as shown in Figure 6.2.

During the sectarian conflict, *the times of lives and linked lives* surface to become essential motivations for turning one's life into a combatant life. It becomes the community's expectation for young men to defend the land, property, and their existence. Additionally, the ties with friends and colleagues – *linked lives* – are peers' motivation that fuels the enrollment into violent groups, otherwise the men risk being outcast. This was evident in the collected stories, particularly Shadi's accounts *to times of lives* generational upbringings, when he mentions that "we would hear stories from our parents about how the days of the Lebanese civil war impacted Bab el Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen" (interview, 13 July 2019). Likewise, Sami was the most constrained by the fact that had he not joined, he would be committing treason towards his community. He states, "if we do not participate as young men, it means that we are not ready to defend our sect and are thus committing treason. There was a social cost" (interview, 29 July 2019). Similarly, Tahir notes that "because I saw it as a group of people attacking us and wanting to kill us or take our lands" (interview, 4 February 2020) while Fadi indicates that they were told that they must protect the street and houses (interview Fadi, 6 Aug 2014) from attacks.

All of the cases I interviewed indicate that the main rise in tension between the two communities after the end of the civil war began with the early skirmishes in 2008. Thus, this was their turning point towards switching to a combatant trajectory. However, this compounded over several years of upbringing by the older generation who underwent the Lebanese civil war and witnessed the massacres and atrocities perpetrated then. Consequently, the upbringing was based on rejecting the other sect/community. Since some combatants were the first to be recruited by their commanders to pick up arms and participate in the 2008 clashes, the period between 2009 and 2011 saw a slower but wider recruitment of fighters from both sides. In an interview with one of the former members of the Lebanese parliament, who was elected for Tripoli and wishes to remain anonymous, he tells me that one of the main army colonels in Tripoli, born in Bab el Tabbaneh and a Sunni, was disgruntled by the army's neutrality during the May 2008 clashes. Soon after the Doha Accord, he resigned from his post in the army and went on to build his own network of young men from Bab el-Tabbaneh who were willing to fight if another round of clashes were to occur (Anonymous, 10 August 2018). Using his connections from years of service in the army, he knew exactly where weapons and ammunition could be stolen or bought from and distributing them to fighters he recruited. Cash liquidity followed from the local and national politicians allied to the Future Movement for one side, and the Alawite Arab Democratic Party and Hezbollah for the other side.

6.3.2   CSO interventions: A Turning point

The collection of stories also sheds light on the turning points that resulted from the intervention of the CSOs. This time, the turning points steered combatants' lives onto different trajectories away from combatant careers to which they are now on. Through their events and activities CSOs managed to allow the creation of more *linked lives* with the other community to showcase counter narratives of hatred influenced them from a very young age. This also gave more *human agency* to the individuals by providing them with a new choice that, if chosen, puts them on an altogether different track. In all recorded stories, the participation of ex-combatants from both sides in the activities at the newly established spaces (coffee shops) and, vocational training and dialogue sessions by CSOs, have provided them with the choice, void of coercion, of going through demobilization and reintegration. Participants Shadi and Sami, state respectively that "the experience [working with MARCH] was so essential…we could sit down and work together as well as learn about each other… I will certainly not go back to fighting, I will never participate in

this again even if the parties pay me a lot of money" and continues to add, "after working with the NGOs, I realized truly that they are [combatants from the other side], just like us…I will never participate again anymore in any conflict if they are to be renewed" (personal interview, 13 July 2019). Sami was uncertain whether hunger could drive people to fight again but insisted that "I will never go back to fighting, I learned and saw how we are all human and similar in our needs and wants. Most importantly I could now see that we were very much deceived". He also goes on to explain how he came to understand his own responsibility going forward, "we have the responsibility now to make [the others who might be recruited] aware"(personal interview, 5 January 2020). Fadi had a slightly different story to tell. He himself went to FFP and asked to take part after a near-death incident. This is further evidence that the mere presence of local D&R led by local CSOs could lure many ex-combatants to defect from their command-and-control structure, particularly if these structures were not very rigid to begin with. Habib, who perceives the executive director of MARCH to oftentimes favored "some ex-fighters over the other" is still adamant, despite the misgivings, that going back to fighting will not bring any benefits to him personally nor to his community.

6.4 Rewiring the ties

6.4.1 Breaking the ties with the commanders

The perception that ex-commanders have deceived ex-combatants was a noticeable pattern across all the interviews[5]. The ex-combatants perceive the ex-commanders as being the only group of individuals who enriched themselves while avoiding taking part in any actual fighting through the years of the conflict. Thus, they were safe and protected while mobilizing ex-combatants for their personal benefit. To this account, Shadi states: "we now see that the commanders were paid much more than us and became super rich. But they never participated in the actual fight…we were at risk every minute of every hour and they were just getting richer and richer"(personal interview, July 13, 2019). Ex-combatants now call them *tujjar hareb,* meaning traders of war in Arabic. This was what Shadi called them as well as Sami by stating that "commanders became super rich, they were recruiting and giving ammunition and per diems, we now call them traders of war. These commanders were never held accountable and benefitted at our expense and security"(personal

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[5] I refer to the commanders as ex-commanders under the assumption that during the time of this research the ex-commanders were not actively recruiting and mobilizing as the conflicts has ended. Nevertheless, this should not be confused with being demobilized commanders. It could very much still be that they are merely abeyant.

interviews, 13 July 2019 and 5 January 2020). Fadi similarly states, "everyone who participated gained financially, but the commanders Z.A. and S.A. became super rich. It became a trade "(personal interview, 6 Aug 2019). Sami gives a more detailed description of the socio-economic differences that was achieved by ex-commanders during and after the conflicts: "our commanders lied to us and theirs lied to them. They sat down and made tons of money. My commander bought a big OPEL car, built a water bottling plant and distribution facility, and accumulated a wealth of around US$100,000 without lifting a finger or risking his life like us" (personal interview, 5 January 2020). Despite no certainty towards the exact number of wealth accumulated by this ex-commander, it was clear to the ex-combatants in his unit that he was better off during and after the conflicts than he was before. Whereas the same cannot be said about the ex-combatants.

CSOs' activities and events focused on demonstrating to the ex-combatants that the ex-commanders and political elites that infiltrated their lives with ideologies of hate instrumentalized their sectarian loyalties for personal and political benefits. FFP's workshop facilitators, who are ex-combatants from the 1975-1990 Lebanese Civil War, would consistently showcase the traits of abuse by ex-commanders in the conflict and demonstrate the similarities of the conflict in Tripoli to their days during the civil war. Some of the facilitators have been ex-commanders themselves, which led the ex-combatants from Tripoli to trust and strongly believe their testimonies (Assaad Chaftari, personal interview, 16 July 2019).

6.4.2   Forging the ties with other combatants and CSOs

The question remains as to what the brokerage role, shown in the previous chapter, as well as the newly created networks of CSO and ex-combatants from both sides contribute to redirecting combatants' pathways The newly created network is an integral part within the turning point that was made possible by the CSOs. In other words, the turning point to a peaceful trajectory is a result of the existence of CSOs D&R initiatives. Due to the creation of the network that included ex-combatants from both sides in these events, the events themselves allowed the ex-combatants to fully re-engineer their perceptions of the other and experience working with them. The ties forged with CSOs (as brokers), and members from the opposing warring parties in various spaces (including the theatrical play, coffee shop and reconstruction projects) in turn, allowed individuals to examine and cross check the stories they shared and collectively draw out the common noticeable patterns across commanders and political parties from both sides. Through that, they identified that the motivations behind the conflicts are actually structured by political elites and

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commanders. I will give two examples of this, one that highlights how the combatants revealed the intentions of their commanders together, and the other that demonstrates that the friendships that were built during the CSO events resonated with the ex-combatant's humanitarian side. The first example is found in a FFP report on one of the dialogue sessions workshops of ex-combatants from both neighborhoods. In that, the report states that ex-combatants were able to identify that the commanders from both warring parties were getting paid a total of $US 350 per week, while fighters were handed a mere $US 100 per week (FFP workshop minutes, 9 September 2016). Over the whole month, this amounts to commanders getting $US 1500, while the combatants receiving a total of $US 400. The significant wage gap combined with the commanders not risking their lives as combatants meant that the fighters noticed injustices and abuse from their hierarchical chains. The second example demonstrating that the network was key to the creation of bonds that allowed a change in behavior is evident in Shadi and Sami's stories who come from the different neighborhoods. It was clear that they now spend time together on recreational activities and visit each other's neighborhoods without any fear.

Hence, redrawing the timeline of the ex-combatants shows that the network was itself an integral launchpad for a turning point. Breaking ties with commanders and replacing them with like-for-like experiences of combatants from the other side was challenging and could have been a risky endeavor. However, the CSOs had collected data and information about the chains of command and detailed knowledge about the conflict rounds from local residents, which ensured that - through their initiatives ex-combatants could witness their similarities with each other and the abusive similarities that their commanders inflicted on them (interview with Chaftari, 16 July 2019).

6.5 Remaining Challenges for CSOs

CSOs remain unable to provide solutions or support to the three main challenges that the ex-combatants in Tripoli still face. These challenges are centered around the inability of the CSOs to (1) reach out to all individuals who actively participated in violence during the years of the conflict, (2) run long-term economically beneficial projects, (3) address the proliferation of drug dealing and addiction, and (4) partner with the private sector sufficiently. First, the capacities of the CSOs, financially and in terms of projects and spaces, are limited. Hence, the CSOs were not able to reach out to include all the combatants. As a result, many combatants could only participate

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in rebuilding projects for a short period of time so that they could leave space for new individuals who were not yet demobilized and reintegrated. The CSOs are aware of that problem and are trying with their donors to overcome it through securing more projects. For example, another way MARCH is addressing this issue is to ensure that the demobilized and reintegrated ex-combatants are themselves incubators of peace for their own friendship and kin networks (Baroudi, personal interview, 6 August 2019).

The second challenge lies in the fact, that the projects administered by the CSO do not last long enough to support long-term economic reintegration. Therefore, their presence, at the individual level, continues only in encouraging social reintegration and social cohesion. Shadi wishes that the CSOs can get more projects to support them, while Fadi felt that the vocational training sessions for newly required, new set of skills (like computer software) would provide them with better opportunities to secure more sustainable jobs. This has been further echoed by Sami, who was frustrated that the work of CSOs is consistently focused on jobs around reconstructions. While this is important for the largely destroyed city, the long-term sustainability of jobs and the provision of jobs beyond reconstruction is limited.

The third is that the ex-combatants who have been socially integrated but still suffer from lack of job opportunities are resorting to drug use. However, it is important to note that none of the ex-combatants I interviewed were referring to themselves when they talked about drug use and addictions. Moreover, from the brief time I spent with them, I could not observe particular signs of drug addiction that usually prevail. Nevertheless, the ex-combatants said that drug trading and usage was made possible by the drug dealers who were selling local drugs at a cheaper price. At least 4 of the ex-combatants I interviewed highlighted this problem, and two were very vocal about it. Hadi states that the recorded cases of violence in the post-2014 war in Tripoli are more related to "people who are drug addicts. The CSOs also need to focus on this and help with this. Many young men are dealing and taking drugs specially when they are unemployed" (Hadi, personal interview, 5 January 2020). Meanwhile, Sami gives a more detailed account on how this is happening: "I worry mostly about the younger generation that a lot of them are on drugs, they are able to afford it from finding and selling metal scraps" (Sami, personal interview, 5 January 2020). Drug addiction is interrelated with the inability to secure long term jobs, reiterating that the job opportunities brought in by the CSO are limited to their short-term projects. However, it is certainly more difficult and demanding for CSOs to play the role of sponsors for both long-term

social and economic reintegration. Consequently, what CSOs would need to do is strengthen connections with the private sector.

The fourth challenge is that CSOs are not yet able to galvanize the support of the private sector as another source to provide long-term jobs for ex-combatants. Private firms are reluctant to employ ex-combatants fearing that they may disrupt the firm's disciplined behavior or that they may stop showing up to work in case clashes are reignited. Thus, private firms continue to hold the disposition that ex-combatants are prone to continue preferring a combatant career instead of a peaceful one. This is because the private sector is ill-informed about the demobilization and reintegration efforts that the CSOs have driven in these communities. Ex-combatant Habib has become unemployed after the CSO projects ended "because the perception is that we are thugs. We are stereotyped now as fighters who are not able to create a proper life for them. We are not stereotyped by the community but by the companies we apply to work for" (personal interview, 4 February 2020). This opinion was also shared by the executives of FFP and MARCH, who reported that many small and medium enterprises expressed that they have had a decrease in customer turnout due to the negative word of mouth circulating about them as "employers of combatants" (personal interview, 11 August 2019).Therefore, more efforts need to be expended to educate the private firms, as well as the wider community of customers and clients, about the work the CSOs with the ex-combatants and the effectiveness of D&R activities in turning these young lives away from violence.

6.6 Conclusions

In this chapter, a micro-level analysis was conducted to examine the impact that the social network created by CSOs had on the combatants' lives, shifting their life paths towards peace rather than violence. To do so, I utilized life course analysis as one way to unpack the individual stories of the ex-combatants by collecting and recording their expressive voices as well as understanding the timings of events (when do they happen) and their sequencing. This allows me to determine the exact turning points that move individuals from one trajectory onto another. In so doing, this proves to be an important measure for D&R, since the essence of these processes is to change the career trajectories of a group of individuals from fighters to non-fighters and ensure a robust social and economic network for their reintegration.

The data collection for life course analysis in this chapter focused on the biographical narratives of the ex-combatants from both warring neighborhoods, Bab El Tabbaneh (Sunnis) and Jabal Mohsen (Alawiites). The stories portrayed in this chapter were carefully selected in a way that includes all the information collected by the representative sample to meet the requirements for a life course analysis. While the total number of collected narratives (15) is not sufficient to generalize the experience across all the ex-combatants in Tripoli, it is important to note that it is an accurate representation of the ex-combatants in the two neighborhoods. The CSOs' initiatives themselves, due to capacity and resource reasons, were not able to reach all the combatants. Thus, from those who went into a D&R process with MARCH and FFP, the sample selected can significantly generalize the experiences of the ex-combatants with the CSOs.

The analysis concluded that: (1) the CSOs' activities and social networks across warring groups provided a turning point that counters the turning point caused by the intervention of the war commanders. Moreover, (2) CSOs rewired the links by breaking the ties between ex-combatants and ex-commanders and replaced them with new ties with fellow ex-combatants from both sides and the CSOs themselves. The rewiring also occurred through showcasing the manipulation and abuse of local leaders and political elites to mobilize the ex-combatants' efforts for their own political and financial benefits. Lastly, (3) the chapter also highlighted the remaining challenges that CSOs as D&R implementers still face, according to the narratives of the ex-combatants. To conclude, three arguments are highlighted in the following.

First, there is enough evidence in the stories to conclude that the CSOs' projects and newly established social networks served as a turning point for ex-combatants who underwent a trajectory change as a result of their participation. This was confidently vouched for by all 15 collected stories in general and in the six particularly highlighted stories in this chapter. Moreover, the activities that the ex-combatants participated in matters, where they were able to voice what they believe and to listen to their counterparts. According to them, the activities that built ties with the others also enhanced their social reintegration because they no longer feared roaming across to the other neighborhood. They also felt pride in improving their sets of skills and learning new ones that could be beneficial for their economic reintegration.

Second, uniformly across all stories of those who participated in CSO activities, their perception of their commanders changed. This can be attributed to two factors. The first is that the ex-

combatants narrated to each other what their commanders did, and, as a result, patterns of abuse and manipulation from both sides became clear to them. This indicated that the commanders and local leaders were involved in the conflicts not for strengthening their sectarian safety, but rather for the political benefits that serves them as individuals. The second is an external factor, in that the commanders lavishly portrayed their wealth in the post-conflict days while the ex-combatants were struggling to make ends meet.

Finally, there are still challenges remaining for CSOs to fully address the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants in Tripoli while at the same time relying on international funding. Primarily, the resources at their disposal are not enough to include all those who participated as fighters in the conflict. CSOs have to juggle between coming up with innovative projects, drafting and submitting project proposals and waiting for sufficient funding before they can proceed in any implementation. Additionally, these projects have limited economic opportunities offered to ex-combatants, as explained earlier. Hence, the remunerative work of ex-combatants with CSOs does not exceed 6 to 10 months. Another challenge is that the private sector in Lebanon is still hesitant to employ ex-combatants. This is a direct result of CSOs not having the financial capacities nor the human resources to publicize their work outside Tripoli in order to change the private sectors' perception of the men from these neighborhoods. A further challenge that CSOs are still facing – which was evident from the participants' interviews - is that some of the ex-combatants who completed their participation with the CSOs and were unable to secure long-term jobs have found it easy to collect metal scraps and sell them in order to trade them in for drugs that could bring a higher income. Along the way, some of the ex-combatants picked up the addictive usage themselves.

In relation to the literature on DDR, the single most common shortcoming of DDR processes is the fact that their measurements for failure and success is based on the number of arms withdrawn and reintegration is evaluated through the number of stipends or per diems received (Skocpol, 1992; Knight and Özerdem, 2004; Hume-Smith et. al, 2005; Willibald, 2006). But the human abilities, aspirations, goals, interests, and skills of ex-combatants are largely ignored. Likewise, scholarly work addressing the successes and failures of these processes remain focused on the quantitative number of violent incidents in post-conflict contexts. Life course analysis consists of investigating the pathways and the different phases in life, while paying careful consideration to transitions and turning points (Moen et al., 1995). Therefore, a micro-level analysis that draws out

the pathways, phases, transitions and turning points is essential to understanding when, why and how individuals are motivated to join or withdraw from violent forces. Such a micro-level analysis is a novel approach that could be utilized to readdress certain concepts within conflict transformation to include the transformation of combatants from violent individuals to incubators of peace. It also provides insights on CSO policies and strategies as designers and implementers. The findings also provide discernments on how international organizations' efforts on DDR can be reshaped in a way that local CSOs are partners on the process from the designing phase until evaluation.

In the next chapter, I discuss in more details the implications of the Tripoli case for policy, including integrating CSOs as designers and implementers of DDR. Additionally, this provides insights to DDR missions to include local CSOs in their program plans, particularly for long term social cohesion and reconciliation objectives. I also discuss the contributions to the overall scholarly work on DDR and avenues where future research on DDR can explore further.

TRAJECTORY I:
Combatant Career

working
duration

fighting
duration

Trajectory Outcome

Remobilization

Foreign Fighter

transition
leaving school

transition
combatatant

transition

Death

turning point
CSO intervention

Trajectory Outcome

Civilian Life

TRAJECTORY II:
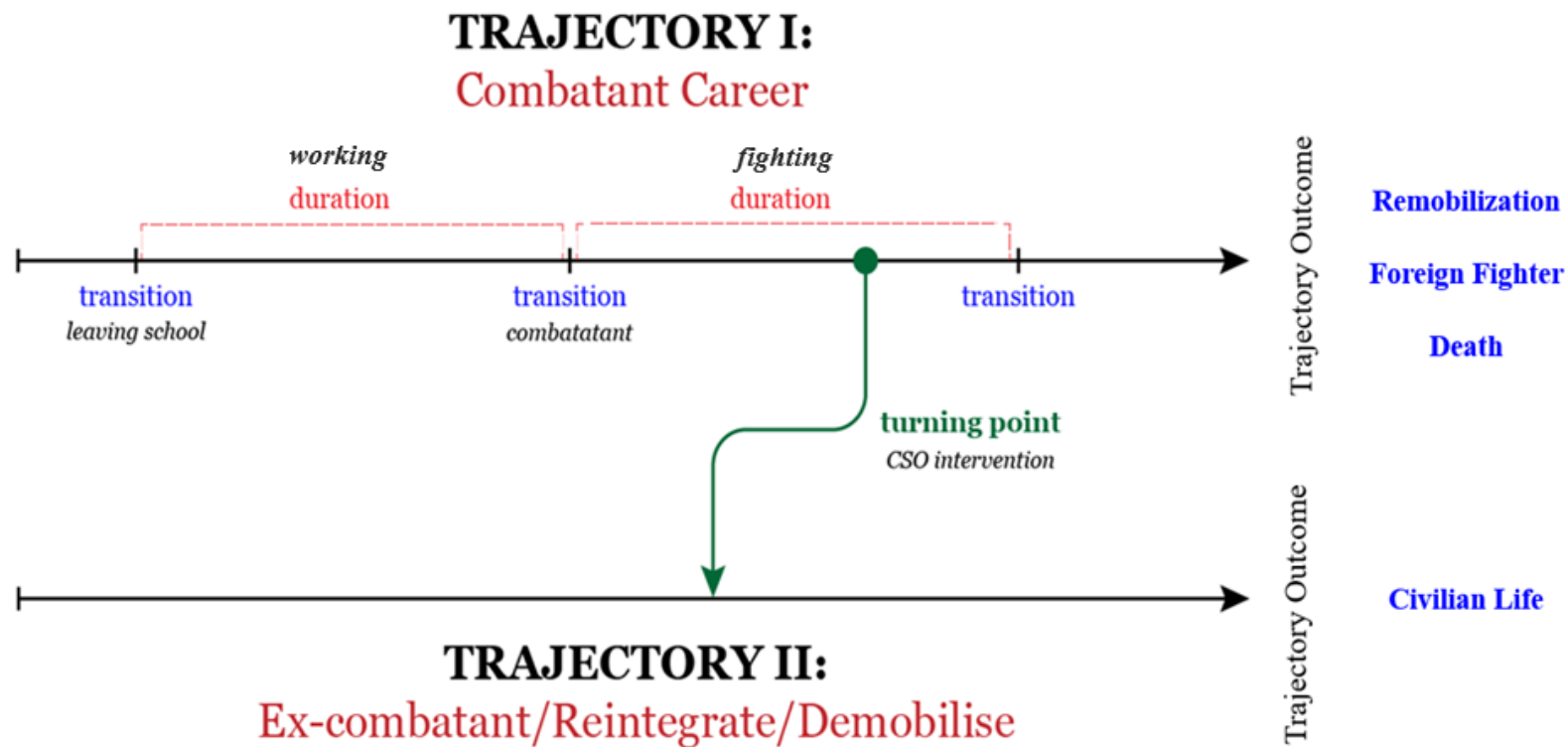## Ex-combatant/Reintegrate/Demobilise

Figure 6-2: Life trajectories of ex-combatants in Tripoli (moving from militant to civilian)

7   Conclusion

Since 1989, international DDR programs have been designed to support combatants by providing them with the means to move away from violence and reinsert themselves into civilian life. The macro-level conditions that lead to successful DDR have been widely researched by scholars, while policy analysts debated the steps that could shape a better design and implementation strategy for DDR programs. However, little is known about the conditions that contribute to successful demobilization and reintegration at the micro level (i.e., individual combatants). Moreover, there is scarce scholarly work on the CSO' precise functions and abilities required in design DDR programs. The UN understands the role of CSOs in DDR as a role that can support in reintegration and reconciliation in the aftermath of the conflict. Hence, the CSOs' strong but limited role begins and ends at social reintegration. In the UN's view, CSOs can help in making ex-combatants find their feet and pursue normal civilian life with their families and friends, through "formal or informal processes of reconciliation [where] communities are in better position to reintegrate former soldiers and facilitate their reinsertion into civilian life" (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2007, p. 534).

In the preceding chapters, I analyzed the DDR programs by CSOs that affected individual level determinants of successful demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants in the city of Tripoli in Lebanon. Hence, this project does not only contribute to scholarly and academic work through novel research methodologies that measure the effectiveness of DDR programs, but also has policy implications and a suggests a toolkit, for DDR missions in future conflict and post-conflict contexts. On the scholarly side, the contribution of this research proposes methodological and theoretically innovations. For the former, the application of SNA aids in understanding the social ties of ex-combatants while providing precise measures as to whether the command-and-control chains have been disrupted between the ex-combatants and their commanders. Moreover, it showcases whether the DDR implementer brokered ties between warring factions for a long-term reconciliation and reintegration process. Policy makers and scholars alike would benefit from life course analysis by following the life paths of ex-combatants after their demobilization and reintegration phases. This is one way to measure if the CSO activities yielded to long-term demobilization and a change in the mentality of ex-combatants towards understanding of the conflict, becoming more tolerant towards the enemy. Such behavior is of equal, if not higher,

importance to addressing economic grievances to successfully avoid relapse into violence. International Peace Academy (2002) perceives economic dimensions of post-conflict reintegration as a priority and argue that "ex-combatants must be able to earn a livelihood through legitimate means"(p.5). The findings of this work go a step further in providing evidence that CSO's designed DDR programs are able to dissolve the networks linking ex-combatants to their commanders, provide spaces for reconciliations, open up opportunities for income earning for ex-combatants, facilitate reconciliation with the warring community. The following section will provide brief highlights into the theoretical and methodological contributions of this research. Following that, I discuss a set of characteristics that can be generalized based on the performative action of the CSOs that designed and implemented DDR programs in the case of Tripoli. In so doing, a list of conditions and characteristics was deduced that CSOs need to attain and possess in future interventions.

Theoretically, this research validates three important realizations and provides three theoretical propositions to be researched further. In regard to the validated theoretical insights, the first is that DDR programs are context sensitive where one-size fits all approaches should be averted. In some conflicts, and in contrary to the logic of DDR not prioritizing disarmament in order to prevent the spiral of a security dilemma pays dividends. By allowing them to keep their arms – albeit with risk of violence - communities and combatants are provided a guarantee during times of mistrust. The second validation is that the intensity of the conflict also determines whether CSOs can design, implement, and conclude a successful DDR program without an international mission. Usually, international efforts are a result of a broader peace agreements preceding a highly intense violent conflict. However, in instances where smaller pockets of violence erupt in deeply divided societies, their intensity is of a magnitude that local actors, particularly CSOs, can contain provided they have the knowledge and capacities to do so. Thirdly, despite the effectiveness of the CSOs in such contexts, the programs still only provide interim stabilization. That is not due to their inability to achieve long social cohesion - on the contrary this research shows that even after several years of the end of violence - but due to the fact that CSO need the assistance of the military and the police force to carry out disarmament, and the support of the private sector to provide long-term economic opportunities. To do so, it is critical that they persuade the government, companies, and enterprises to destigmatize relations with ex-combatants.

7.1 CSO strategies in Design and Implementation

Before going in-depth on the conceptual and methodological contributions in my conclusion, the following section emphasizes the CSOs' strategies in designing and implementing DDR programs. In the preceding chapters, the collected evidence attests to the strong ability of local CSOs to design and implement DDR programs. The broad strategy they followed was based on targeted reintegration assistance (Transition International, 2015) where special focus was paid to male ex-combatants (due to the absence of female ex-combatants) with conflict carrying capacities capable of destabilizing the community. In addition to that, it targeted individuals at risk for re-recruitment and those who have the potential to become peace spoilers. The CSOs also adopted more detailed sub-strategies that made their operations effective. The below illustrates these sub-strategies thematically, taking into consideration that some of them can be generalized while others are particular to the city of Tripoli. Nevertheless, the below characteristics could still provide inspiration to similar work to CSOs in area-based conflicts.

7.1.1 Impartiality and social capital

CSOs need to actively demonstrate their impartiality towards the conflict in order to gain the trust of the combatants. Their impartiality should stem from having social capital with both warring parties, potentially placing them as brokers with bonding social capital embedded in each of the communities. Furthermore, they must uphold values that their work is not meant for self-promotion, neither for the organization nor for the managers personally. For local CSOs it is challenging to be neutral towards the conflict. Most of the volunteers or executives are either form the cities and villages that were affected or at best from the same country that suffered through the violence. In Tripoli, hyper-local organizations that already worked in Bab el Tabbaneh or Jabal Mohsen separately found it difficult to launch projects that are cross sectarian. Even though they wanted to offer support to both communities, in such a situation it was more difficult to be perceived as completely impartial individuals and organizations. Nevertheless, they networked with bigger organizations to support in linking them with combatants. Ruwwad, Beit el Hikmeh and SHIFT are some CSOs that lent support to MARCH and FFP by utilizing their connections and knowledge of their own neighborhoods. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the organizations that show signs of pursuing their support to promote themselves in the future, their work was short lived. In Tripoli, Utopia's executives ran for local elections (municipality council) in 2016 and national elections (candidacy for member of parliament) in 2018. In doing so, they aligned with

political elites and parties who are accused of fueling the conflict. By 2016, it was evident for the ex-combatants that the leaders of Utopia had other aims than to support them or the reconciliation process. Consequently, as the network shows, the ties push Utopia to become a peripheral actor relative to the core of the network. In contrast, MARCH and FFP confirmed in the interviews with ex-combatants that their only priority is to help out the individuals primarily and the community secondarily. This allowed them to be swiftly integrated into the communities and be able to attract interest and trust from both neighborhoods. As the MARCH executive director stated: "they trusted that I am, first, not from Tabbaneh or Jabal Mohsen, and that I do not speak to them to want them to love me because I was brutally honest all the time" (Baroudi, personal interview, August 2, 2018). FFP also enjoyed the reputation that they come from all over the country and are all living testaments of being ex-combatants during the 1975-90 Lebanese civil war themselves.

The combination of inter-personal skills as well as having a proven track record of positive engagement in the community is crucial to establishing enough capital that places the persons in charge of the CSOs in a position of influence. Moreover, the CSOs' social capital that extends to members from both factions enjoy a brokerage position. Once in this position, a local CSO representative becomes a quasi-leader obtaining the ability to prevent individuals from turning to violence, de-escalating tensions, and shed light on different narratives of the war. CSOs that operate as *conduit* brokerage or *tertius iungens* go further in the field in so far as they strengthen their position as spanners of structural holes or oftentimes attempt to foster direct ties between different members of both communities. Without establishing a relationship through common trust, a CSO leader is not likely to ever be in a position where a young person confides their concerns. Certain redeemed individuals with a particular history in violence like the members of FFP members can help significantly in violence preventative projects. Thus, ideally, local initiatives implemented by local leadership would be the most effective method to prevent further radicalization along sectarian or ethnic lines.

7.1.2   Joint efforts and network governance

The situation in Tripoli city involved multiple CSOs working effectively but working separately. MARCH was more focused on initiatives that involved arts and creative spaces, whereas FFP focused more on creating dialogue sessions and testimonies from older experiences. While the hyperlocal organizations like Ruwwad and SHIFT emphasizes day to day services from food and some medication. CSOs capacities differ and often the majority need to build their capacity and

strengthen their activities to cater to larger number of combatants. The startling success of MARCH and FFP is because the founders themselves have been involved in international programs oriented towards this line of work. However, CSOs are more effective if projects are coordinated and division of labor amongst them is achieved. This is precisely because each organization brings to the table a different competitive advantage and capacities that, if put together, designs a more holistic demobilization and reintegration plan while spending less resources. Moreover, it would offer local CSOs collectively higher chances to secure international funding form the donor community. International donors trust CSO consortiums more as they would operate with division of labor but in a collective manner, both technically and financially, resulting in more efficiently allocated and distributed funds. Likewise, if CSOs take the initiative to a coordinated network, in turn the network would encourage the international organizations to reconsider their process of funding which, as it stands, is putting the CSOs as competitors rather than collaborators. Nevertheless, the challenge remains, like in various contexts, ensuring accountability and transparency of all organizations. A governing committee consisting of representatives from the CSOs, and international organizations is an essential step to maintain checks and balances on all activities including, staff salaries and tendering activities. Corruption and embezzlement are not alien to organizations working on peacebuilding. The experiences of Life and Peace Institute (LPI) in Congo is a case in point (Autesserre, 2021).

7.1.3 Moving away from a linear DDR approach

One of the most profound advantages of CSOs is their ability to be flexible, adaptable and act quickly in times of violence eruptions between warring factions. This is mainly because they do not have to go through the traditional bureaucratic channels nor await an international decision on the next action. Instead of thinking of DDR as a post-conflict tool, CSOs launched projects already while the conflict was ongoing. As a result, CSOs also do not have the obligation to stick to the traditional DDR plan and could start their demobilization and reintegration before the disarmament process. This is exactly what happened in Tripoli, as soon as the clashes started, FFP began their work in late January 2012. Consequently, MARCH began preparations for the theatrical play to star combatants in June of the same year. Both started just several months after the outbreak of violence. Despite the quick efforts, it still took a couple of years for the clashes to be completely quelled, and several more years to reintegrate and reconcile ex-combatants. Nevertheless, the swift

action to the crisis allowed for demobilization to start taking place while the clashes are ongoing, and in that attempting to break the chain of command-and-control when it mattered the most.

CSOs in Tripoli overlooked the traditional phases in DDR that consist of disarmament followed by demobilization and finally reintegration. Given the context of the conflict, combatants did not feel sufficiently secure to disarm. Verkoren et. al., (2010) argue that "starting with sensitization and trust building reduces the need to carry arms. Letting go of the standard sequence of D, D and R also creates room for different divisions of labor" (p.15). By disregarding disarmament, CSOs in Tripoli immediately went for demobilization and reintegration specially because the fighters already worked and lived in the neighborhoods, they were fighting in. In that, the CSOs witnessed through action "the importance of influencing the means of motivations rather than strictly reducing access to hardware" (Coletta and Muggah, 2009, pp.445). As previously mentioned, the fighters did not need to be demobilized to their own communities, as this is where they lived and fought. Nevertheless, the two neighborhoods are of extreme proximity and together share access to the same markets. In fact, residents of Jabal Mohsen travel to Bab el Tabbaneh in order to enter the main edifices of the city of Tripoli. Hence, it was the CSOs' laser- point focused efforts to reduce violent motivations and increase co-existing ones that assisted in demobilizing ex-fighters.

The CSOs also combined demobilization and reintegration phases DDR phases, as they overlap at several points. Essentially, MARCH merged demobilization activities with reintegration and reconciliation activities. Ex-combatants would participate in activities that are in and by themselves job opportunities (so they can be independent from fee paying commanders) finding themselves also working with fellow ex-combatants form the other neighborhood. Through that, reconciliation opportunities developed and bridging social capital was formed.

7.1.4 Innovation
CSOs in Tripoli were not only innovative in merging or rearranges the stages of DDR. They were also innovative in the design of the activities. Traditional DDR programs suggest dialogue and tolerance workshops, stipend distribution or micro-financing. With the large number of ex-combatants and efforts to centralize the program, the workshops become a source of fatigue for the ex-combatants rather than an opportunity to learn about tolerance or the opposition's dispositions. Moreover, the ex-combatants do not sense ownership of the programs nor find the added value of understanding how to use the new economic opportunities offered to them. Whereas

MARCH gathered all combatants through their networks and discussed with them the process, their distinctive interests and likes before embarking on the projects. Consultations became even more important after and end of the first project and in preparation of another. MARCH executive director mentioned to me that: "actually the café idea came from the ex-combatants. After we had finished the theatrical play, they insisted that we do something else and not just leave, but we at MARCH NGO had no idea precisely what to do. The idea of a café was theirs because they felt they have no space to meet and do fun stuff. We just made sure that we make it happen" (Baroudi, personal interview, August 2, 2018).

Therefore, innovation becomes a crucial step that shapes the effectiveness of the programs, as Muggah (2010) argues: "ultimately, a common mantra today is that DDR must never be based on a fixed blueprint. Rather innovation and creativity and a sensitivity to 'context' always remain important for efficient and effective interventions (p.4). Innovative projects create a pull rather than a push strategy for recruiting combatants. The innovative ideas including the theatrical play, the café, and the market renovations brought spotlight to the participating ex-combatants as well as job opportunities and financial remuneration. Fellow combatants were attracted by witnessing and alternative path and made the first move to enroll in the projects. The pull strategy increased the number of beneficiaries and allowed the programs to reach a wider group in the community. There is caveat, however, that CSOs need to have enough mechanisms to conduct their due diligence to ensure that the individuals wanting to enroll were actual combatants. Networking with hyper-local area-based organizations was one way to do so in Tripoli.

7.1.5 Commit to building the capacities of ex-combatants

In line with innovative approaches, CSO in Tripoli were able to be successful through providing vocational training and continue developing the capacities of the ex-combatants that address critical-long term sustainability of demobilization, reintegration, and social cohesion. This includes providing a new set of skills or enhancing already existing ones for the ex-combatants. Through that, ex-combatants will not be solely reliant on the CSOs for jobs but can also seek opportunities in the private sector. Most importantly, improving their skills allows them to completely detach from their commanders who they no longer need to rely on to navigate life. Detaching from the hierarchies of command-and-control structure and simply sending ex-combatants back to their communities is not sufficient for reintegration (Vries and Wiegink, 2011). Even though DDR programs seek to alleviate the economic situation of ex-combatants, it has been

seldom successful (Utas 2005, Humphreys and Weinstein, 2007). If on the long run the ex-combatants do not secure their economic survival or the tools that would ensure it, there is a high probability that they will take up arms again (Özerdem, 2002). Additionally, breaking up social ties with the armed group does not necessarily mean that ex-combatants will be able to find employment or acceptance in their own communities (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2007). This also testifies that disrupting the social links among ex-combatants does not challenge the possibility of the ex-combatants' to continue to be involved in the systems of patronage (Giustozzi, 2008).

Moreover, the project managers at MARCH paid particular attention to individual cases from the pool of participants and were also able to detect personal interests and cater to each of them. For example, according to Baroudi, they noticed one of the ex-combatants who is in his late 20s showed keen interest in learning design software, "we were able to enroll him in one of the intensive courses for Adobe Illustrator and now he works full time in communications office for the organization" (Baroudi, personal interview, August 2, 2018). Nevertheless, CSOs face an uphill battle to coordinate with the private sector even when jobs in the private sectors are available, businesses are hesitant to offer jobs to ex-combatants due to mistrusting their motives, skills, or the perceive them as a security threat in the workplace (Strengthening the Economic Dimensions of Peacebuilding, International Alert, 2012). In order to be able to materialize the opportunities and destigmatize ex-combatants in the workplace, reintegration programs need to be designed to target economic projects that involve the local private sector in the implementation, getting their buy-in incentivizes them to get stronger in the local economy. Other partnerships with the private sector must include monetized support in the form of micro-financing that would provide opportunities to establish small enterprises for largely destructed and economically recessed communities.

However, if CSO designed DDR programs do take the above step, it is crucial that CSOs deliver what they promise, but also only promise what they can deliver. Tahir from Tripoli told me later that there were promises that were not met for him and a few others. Luckily, Tahir and his friends understood the limitations of the CSOs in terms of dispenses and did not hold any animosity towards them. If inputs are promised but not delivered there will be a considerable state of dreariness for ex-combatants that will - through the word of mouth spread across their networks – causing mistrust in CSOs and in their ability to attract participants in future funding projects. By

failing to deliver, ex-combatants are likely to lose trust in the new dispensation system, break from it and revert back to the old networks and disbursements of the commanders.

7.1.6   Commit to building the capacities of CSOs

CSOs capacity differs from one organization to another and often the majority of them need to build their capacity and strengthen their skill sets to cater to larger number of combatants. The starring success of MARCH and FFP stems from the capacities of the founders themselves who have been involved in international courses with international organizations and academic institutions. These included seminars and workshops on mediation, peacebuilding strategies and dealing with ex-combatants. The founder of MARCH had undergone international and local mediation course in the United States, while the founders of FFP attended workshops and courses with organizations in Northern Ireland to learn from their experience. This organizations included *Coiste na nlarchimí*, Northern Ireland Alternative (NIA), and experts from the George Mitchell Institute for Global Peace, Security and Justice at Queen's University Belfast.

7.1.7   Advocacy

Advocacy has been one of the main peacebuilding functions for CSO modeled in the literature (Paffenholz, 2009). However, the literature is broad on the issues that can be advocated for in conflict or post-conflict contexts. This research can single out two very important topics that CSOs should pursue in their advocacy campaigns. The first issue is the reformation or establishment of a fair and transparent justice system where victims receive reparations and commanders are tried for war crimes. A fair justice system will also be able to decide individual cases of amnesty for foot soldiers and commanded ex-combatants.

The second advocacy topic is security sector reform (SSR) that integrates former combatants in the ranks of the national army or the police. In particular where the conditions of conflict are divisions marked by cross-communal threats or hatred rather than rebellious movements. In such cases, many of the ex-combatants are supportive of joining the security institutions and to serve the nation as a whole if they can trust the government. Instating ex-combatants into the army or police force is not new to DDR, nevertheless, it remains a very risky prospect if the ex-combatants are not entirely detached from their sectarian or ethnic militarization organization that seeks to defend their own community rather than state territory. Local CSOs as DDR implementers are in the best position to evaluate their true intentions due to the daily interaction with the ex-combatants

in their own neighborhoods. Upon which advocating for SSR and ex-combatant integration in the security sector can be determined. In Tripoli, many of the ex-combatants showed significant willingness to join the armed forced if the opportunity was offered (evident in the interviews with Tahir and Habib). Their skills in operating weapons and patrolling would be vital, while giving them a chance to put that knowledge into a being integral part for the security of the country builds stronger patriotism towards the state rather than the sect.

7.1.8   Trauma and psychosocial support

Effective interventions by CSOs require providing youth with a sense of hope for a better future that is not manifested by armed conflicts or violence. Ignoring Post-Traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and despair increase the probability of ex-combatants relapsing into violence, alcohol, or drug abuse. The latter could lead to criminal activity that threatens community security. MARCH and FFP, as well as the hyper-local CSOs, focused on activities that recreate civic engagement and civic spaces for the combatants. Moreover, MARCH managed to demonstrate to the ex-combatants the value they bring to themselves through working on innovative projects such as theatre, cafes, and artifacts. Additionally, MARCH unleashed the non-combatant skills that the ex-combatants possess. This was essential to rebuilding their confidence in themselves. As Baroudi summarized it, "we wanted to let them see that they are more than foot soldiers taking orders in combat" (personal interview, August 2, 2018). MARCH encouraged ex-combatants to express themselves, giving them a platform to articulate their experiences and their feelings of hurt and anger. Through art (visual, music, or theatre) they could show how they want to live in their communities in the future. One of the ways to prevention violent activities is by increasing the psychological resilience of individuals. Individuals are less likely to become violent with the reduction of personal uncertainty, by providing someone with self-worth they do not need an outside group to provide personal normative values (Doosje, 2016, p.81).

FFP and other local organization that worked with prisoners organized group therapy session for former combatants to also extract the specific experiences that ex-combatants are struggling with. Ruwwad, an organization that focuses on educational support for at-risk youth by providing scholarships, also emphasize the importance of providing ex-combatants with resources and opportunities so that they can hone their skills. Moreover, they stress the importance of individual talks with ex-combatants because it also helps understand the wider communal situation. For example, Ruwwad were able to identify the Imams who are initiating political and sectarian

discourse by witnessing how the Friday Prayer Speeches starts to negatively impact the thoughts of ex-combatants who have not fully completed their transition. The CSOs do not seek to supplant religion but rather make sure that ex-combatants are no longer only exposed to extremist rhetoric.

Nevertheless, a more cohesively effective CSO intervention requires rehabilitation programs that include counselling and therapy for PTSD. CSOs need to collaborate and hire professional psychotherapist and psychiatric units. Such unites were absent from the CSO in Tripoli. Ex-combatants in Tripoli witnessed former combatants and/or family members die before their eyes. For instance, Tahir lost a friend in combat while he was a few meters away from him and his brother in the explosion that targeted the *Takwa* and *Salam* mosques. He did not undergo any therapy and it was evident in the interview and through my observation of him at the café that loud noises were scaring him. Even though PTSD does not necessarily risk relapsing into violence, ex-combatants receiving therapy are more prepared to actively reinsert themselves into civilian life and social engagement. Crucially avoiding suffering from depression, stigma that comes from it, and drug abuse due to hyper-arousal and nightmares.

The above set of guidelines for CSOs involved in their own designed DDR programs are not necessarily exhaustive. CSOs may adopt some of them or may have entirely different set best practices based on their operational context and case conditions. As continuously discussed in this work, many instances of DDR interventions are initiated after peace agreements and almost always coming after a nation-wide breakout of violence. Moreover, DDR programs that have been fully designed and implemented by CSOs remain rare. As such, the collection of the above guidelines identified in this research must emphasize that no one-size fits all approach exists but must recognize that many of the efforts taking place in Tripoli are encouraging for similar initiatives to take place, more so in deeply divided societies that still struggle with area-based armed conflicts.

A note on international support

Even though the scope of this project does not entail unpacking the best supporting strategies of international organizations and the international community to CSO driven DDR programs, nevertheless, this research highlighted some of the projects that local CSOs could collaborate on with the international body. One of them is the necessity of coordinating funding to a cooperative network of CSOs rather than funding supporting one or two CSOs. In that, the CSOs would have the ability to work on different aspects within DDR rather than just one of them. For example, they can tackle activities with women who, if not been directly involved in combat, they have had to

navigate through complex everyday activities during confrontations and as mothers and wives of combatants. Coordinating international community's efforts to enhancing the internal capacities of the CSOs is also a priority for many CSOs. Such support may include providing the CSOs with access to multiple international programs, organized study trips to post-conflict countries, and expert/academic workshops organized on tools in reintegration and reconciliation. By having robust capacities, the CSOs are able to continuously formulate theories of change and deliver innovative, coordinative, and forward-looking programs.

Another aspect that requires international support is in psychosocial support. Some of the CSOs in Tripoli have been actively seeking the assistance of the international donor community in establishing a successful psychosocial support scheme for ex-fighters. CSOs planning to hire professional psychotherapist and psychiatric units. The expertise and financial support that the international community can offer in that regard is imperative for the psychological resilience of ex-combatants as they reintegrate into civil live.

7.2 Conceptual additions

This research brings to the table four new conceptual approaches that further research on DDR can benefit from. First, demobilization and reintegration programs can be effective in recurring zones of conflicts where violence is area-based even if it is nested within larger regional and international conflict. In Lebanon, the violent surge in 2011 was a direct result of the increase of violence between Sunnis and Alawiites in Syria. The long history of violence between Bab el Tabbeneh and Jabal Mohsen resulted in the creation of a vulnerable area along sectarian lines. Varshney (2004) refers to such zones as pockets of violence where armed violence swells while other zones remain peaceful. Consequently, we see DDR programs only in cases where the violence has proliferated across the whole nation. This work demonstrates that DDR should start at the beginning and not wait till it is accompanied with a peacebuilding process. The CSO intervention in Tripoli was designed based on the particularities of the neighborhoods and the implementation was based on the capacities of the CSOs and the potential capacities of the ex-combatants.

The second theoretical contribution is apprehending the reality that DDR programs need to be considered as a phase that starts during armed conflict and not post-conflict. To do so, the fastest way to intervene, is through local organizations. Hence, while international efforts are focused on ceasefire when violent conflicts erupt, international efforts could also locate active and effective

CSOs who can simultaneously design and implement demobilization and reintegration activities that could assist in the overall peace process. As the case of city of Tripoli demonstrates, the rising conflict between Sunnis and Alawite in the Syria was still at its pinnacle when FFP and MARCH intervened in 2012, within 6 months from the start of violence. Reintegration remains an active process until nine years after (the date this is written). While, until the submission of this work, the larger conflict in Syria has not yet been resolved, the violence in the city of Tripoli has.

The third reconsideration that the literature on DDR needs to make is that economic incentives are not the only way to ensure that the ex-combatants are not remobilized. In fact, ex-combatants have their own stories whereby they suffer emotionally and psychological and would prefer a way out at any cost. This is contrary to the literature that argues that fighters who do not receive proper economic incentives end up joining neighboring wars (Shafer, 1998; Alden, 2002; Themnér, 2016). Ultimately, reconfiguring these approaches puts the conceptualization of greed vs grievance to test as the economic situation of the ex-combatants during and post-D&R initiatives by CSOs did not significantly improve. In fact, in most cases ex-combatants were receiving higher income during the times of war. Nevertheless, the D&R initiatives that promised little or temporal salaries had a long-term demobilization ability beyond monetized support because the initiatives displayed social cohesion based on interactions between ex-combatants. This in turn, led to a political behavioral shift at the individual level that propagated into an area-based behavior change whereby the changes in the lives and beliefs of ex-combatants led to a meso-level area-based peace.

A fourth theoretical underpinning is that social capital and brokerage are two concepts that need to be considered when designing and implementing DDR programs, be it local or international. Fundamentally, social capital and brokerage become even more critical in studying the effectiveness and successes of second-generation community security mechanisms. Brokerage is vital to "enhance compliance and community participation and harness the influence of indigenous power broker and agents of change" (Coletta and Muggah, 2009, p.444). Evidently in the Lebanese case we observed that DDR implementers are stronger when they are neutral and enjoy ties with both warring parties. As a result, they positioned themselves as brokers between the two warring parties and managed through all their activities to close the gap of hatred and perceptions of fear between the two factions. The core principle of DDR is to detach combatants from their commanders. This way, there would be fewer to none mobilized individuals ready to use violence. Spear (2002) stresses the importance of DDR missions to focus on this by stating that: "peace

requires breaking the command-and-control structures operating over revel fighters…thus making it more difficult for them to return to organized rebellion [armed violence]" (p.141). The strengthening of the bridging social capital ultimately, resulted in changing the perception of the ex-combatants on the reasons of the war. Furthermore, brokerage provided ex-combatants with a different narrative from that of their commanders and the political elites. Making them less likely to be mobilized by fueled sectarian speeches.

The robustness of the social network created by the CSOs is not determined only by the collective action that the network can perform, but also by the brokerage position of the CSOs and the potential other broker positions that could arise for the ex-combatants themselves. As such, the ex-combatants can facilitate the task of reintegration and halt re-mobilization. Brokers maintain the network that builds the capacity to deal with future conflicts in a non-violent way, reducing the risks of war reversions. Additionally, brokers have the ability to disseminate information between the warring groups that have little to no contact. This proved to be invaluable in war-ridden societies where state institutions are absent (Themnér & Utas, 2016), and Lebanon is a case in point. The absence of the state institutions and security institution from Tripoli are well documented, with little trust from the citizens in the institutions to begin with. The brokerage role that the CSOs played aided in providing a communication channel between the two neighborhoods to overcome hostilities.

Despite the network's overall robustness, the network remains prone to crumbling if the economic plight is not addressed over the long term. Ex-combatants, after their participation with CSO activities know the costs and risks of war and are hence willing to be patient for the DDR programs to yield sustainable economic benefits. Nevertheless, if the situation does not improve on the long run, ex-combatants could resort back to their ex-commander and patronage networks for economic assistance (Themnér & Karlén, 2020).

CSOs prioritize relationships, reconciliation, forgiveness, and social cohesion. Ultimately, contributing to the overall long-term goal of peacebuilding. The relationship between warring groups needs to be transformed from tense and hateful relations to tolerant and understanding interactions. Official international and national DDR programs prioritize disarmament and financial renumerations instead of weaving the social ties. CSOs' contributions alone are not sufficient for Galtung's 'positive peace', but certainly establishes a strong building block.

Peacebuilding agencies could benefit from the Lebanese case by placing stronger emphasis on tools that break old combatant networks, build political and social reintegration, and create common public spaces at demarcation lines.

As far as potential brokerage positions of ex-combatants are concerned, the data collected in this research elucidated that the involved ex-combatants belonged to 'Box C' (Table 3.1). Interviews with the participants confirmed that the number of ties they had with the opposing community were scarce while amongst their groups it was at a highly prevalent. Hence, their characteristics reinforce the understanding that combatants are highly bonded into their own ethnic/sectarian based community and could be easily mobilized. The broker CSOs' interventions that created ties between ex-combatants from both sides allowed highly bonded ex-combatants to build bridging bonds too. As such, their characteristics were reshaped to belong in Box B or Box D. To recall, the categorizations in Chapter 3, Box B includes an individual that is not likely to join fighting factions because they have low bonding ties and high bridging ties. Box D includes individuals who have high bonding and bridging ties, that the conceptualization in this research indicates that they could possibly become brokers. Ex-combatants who underwent CSOs' D&R activities could lose some of their strong ties the hardliners within their group, while others may manage to maintain them. If linkages are maintained with the belonging group and ties with the opposing groups have already been built through CSO initiatives, maintained, ex-combatants can become future brokers too if tensions between group rises again. This was evident with Tahir, who during my participant observation phase, I noted his involvement in dealing with a number of small brawls between individuals at the Café or during the times they were working on a project together. He was swift to act dealing with the situation through dialogue and decreasing the tension. In every time, Tahir made sure that not only the scuffle is stopped but that also the relationship is resolved, frequently stating that "we need to work as a team".

7.3   Methodological contributions

This research proposes significant methodological contributions. Firstly, SNA is an extremely helpful method to determine the roles that CSOs, or any DDR implementer for that matter, plays within the DDR program activities. It also goes hand in hand in conceptually detecting the bridging social capital of ex-combatants. SNA provides us with tools to determine various essential elements that explore the effectiveness of the program on the combatants, and on

the possible supporting role of DDR in peacebuilding processes. The most important of these measurements is the brokerage measurements. This is because DDR programs were not simply designed on the basis of linear mechanism whereby arms are collected and camps set-up to host the demobilized. Crucially, it signals that reintegration was not limited to the distribution of stipends and economic bolsters, but also focused on elements of social cohesion. Reintegration is about building relationships and fostering new social contract between fighters in the aftermath of the war, and rebuilding social capital is a necessary step for social reconstruction in postwar contexts (Coletta, 1999). Nevertheless, the literature surveyed clearly points out to the fact that reintegration phase has been heavily reliant on socio-economic reenactment and measured by the absence of violent relapses and peace spoilers (see Baaré, 2006; Caramés and Sanz, 2008; Muggah and Bennet, 2008, Bensahel et. al., 2009; Coletta et. al, 2009). Thinking of the potential peaceful social networks for the ex-combatants as an outcome of DDR in and by itself, goes a long way in uniting the broken ties between the neighborhoods and adding bridging social capital to the already existing bonding social capital. In that, not only can the CSOs intervene if relapses of violence occur, but also ex-combatants who have developed bridging communication channels to stop emerging violence. Ultimately, in small cities and towns like Tripoli, where combatants were part-timers who fought and lived in the same areas, reintegration overlaps reconciliation, and ex-combatants cannot truly reintegrate unless they rebuild ties with members of both communities setting a path to move beyond the existing divisions.

Other SNA measurements are also helpful in determining the implementer's abilities to employ DDR phases. For example, betweenness centrality can be measured rather quickly and gives insights on whether the implementer is the 'person' to go to, who is maintains shortest paths, meaning they can reach more ex-combatants at a relatively short time. It also signals the DDR implementer as a reference to the combatants in case of problems and challenges. This goes to show how embedded the DDR implementer is in the operational context, and whether they are capable of executing the necessary phases of the program or need further support.

This research also explores the ways bridging social capital can improve the effectiveness of demobilization and reintegration generally, and that even modest local actors can be effective if they perform brokerage. Previous studies that focused on the role of CSOs in peace studies concluded that their role is less effective because they are mostly constrained by their own security, unable to disarm and are merely supportive in later stages such as social cohesion and conflict

resolution activities. As such, local CSOs were never considered when designing DDR programs by scholars. Such approaches have crucially missed the appropriate measurements and strategies that CSOs need to do in the first place. It has become more evidential from this research that CSOs with bonding social capital and strong ties with one warring party instead of all involved, are less likely to succeed. However, instances where CSOs with only high bonding social capital are studies does not serve justice to the role that CSOs can actually play and, hence, skews the results in favor of disregarding them as effective actors. Academic research needs to utilize complex methodological tools and bring them to the forefront of policy, whereby efforts that go under the radar, like in Tripoli, are shed light on.

Another major methodological contribution put forth is life course analysis as a necessary approach to understanding the motivations and long-term outcomes of ex-combatants' lives post-DDR programs. In order to answer the question; what happens to the ex-combatants after DDR programs end, we need to follow the lives of the ex-combatants - life course analysis is one way to go about it. The DDR assessment research and program evaluations should follow the lives of the ex-combatants as individuals as a methodological tool that gives confidence in assessing whether the ex-combatants were fully demobilized and reintegrated. As Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) argue, "the advantage of a micro-level approach is that it can increase our confidence that the mechanisms attributed to work in a given case indeed function as believed. By exploiting subnational variation, we can work out with greater confidence whether a program is effective but also for whom a program is failing" (p.563). However, implementing a micro-level approach by using same metrics and measurements of that of the meso and macro-level approaches does not give a full picture on the situation and may also reproduce the results of the analysis conducted on data collected at the meso and macro-level. Stavrou et. al, (2003) conducted a "Tracer Study" (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2005, p.8) whereby they followed the trajectory of 250 ex-combatants. Nevertheless, their measurement focused on variables of economic and social reintegration, and in the latter, they focus was on family and community acceptance rather than social cohesion per se. This is another prime example how the conflict context impacts assessment and measurement tools. In conflicts, such as Tripoli, where the fighters are already embedded and accepted in their community as 'defenders', the real social reintegration question to be addressed is on social cohesion between the warring factions.

LCA is an available tool that allows for an accurate scientific method to follow and make sense of the livelihoods of the ex-combatants. Ultimately, giving a clear indication to the successes of the program. As such, it is no guarantee that by conglomerating combatants' arms, enrolling them in workshops and transferring them stipends will stop ex-fighters from returning to violence. The demobilization and reintegration phase must also include the detachment of the ex-combatants from their commanders and from the ideology of annihilating the other. LCA aids in exploring that by unpacking the narratives and perceptions of the ex-combatants, testing the validity that once ex-combatants are on a better socio-economic level that the benefits of joining military groups ceases to exist. Life course analysis reveals further, through retrospective biographical data, the turning and transition points that drove the combatants into violence. More importantly, these turning points also explain the reason behind demobilization, signaling what motivated and convinced ex-combatants to demobilize. Additionally, LCA answers the question if the ex-combatant joined the demobilization and reintegration for the obvious short-term benefits DDR programs offer or whether there is a new conviction symbolized by efforts to overcome their fears and hatred that were demonstrated during the armed conflict.

The LCA conducted in this research goes hand in hand with the argument put forth by Levy and Buhlmann (2016) that individual journeys do not occur in a vacuum and that there is a social landscape surrounding it that enables the enactment of certain choices. Individuals are contextually embedded within social fabrics. Bronfenbrenner (1979) goes a step further by differentiating sociological settings according micro- meso and macro- levels. In deeply divided societies, joining military groups cannot be understood as an incident isolated from the environment in which it is occurring. More so, if the conflict is of a very specific nature in specific areas within a country. Therefore, life course analytical framework places these lives in how they developed as agents, what sort of surrounding variables impacted their choices by analyzing the choices against the relations with family and friends, history narratives and culture of the location and the temporal time period. Research on international DDR programs, however, will not be able to attest to that because the implementers of DDR normally leave the field after the completion of the assignment. Thus, the strength of local organizations rests in their ability and position to stay longer in the field, giving themselves a clear advantage by providing needs-based D&R activities. Certainly, the CSOs long-run presence is not sufficient to argue in favor for their advantage in DDR programs, which the literature often does, but coupled with brokerage, increased cross-communal social

capital and innovative projects – the belonging of the CSOs to the area of conflict truly becomes beneficial.

Thematic sub-sessions	Description
Impartiality and Social Capital	CSOs need to be impartial to the conflict and enjoy bridging social capital with all warring groups
Joint efforts and Network Governance	Joining efforts forming a governing group of all CSO representatives in the field is imperative to aiding collective action and consolidating funding
Move away from linear DDR planning	Dropping disarmament as a condition to move into demobilization and reintegration or reconciliation could be necessary to avoid mistrust in potential security aggression
Commit to building the capacities of ex-combatants	It is not enough to demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatant with basic financial dispensations or a training. A continuous capacity building is required in order to ensure the ex-combatants can achieve long term sustainable civilian jobs.
Commit to building the capacities of CSOs	CSOs need to build their capacity and strengthen their skill sets to cater to larger number of combatants. International community can contribute significantly to this aspect.
Advocacy	CSOs prioritize advocating for SSR and fair justice system as integral steps towards national security, capitalizing on ex-combatants' military skills and serving justice or amnesties where needed.
Trauma and Psychosocial support	CSOs need to provide initiatives that address psychosocial support to overcome trauma and guild in order to prevent ex-combatants from resorting to drug abuse.

Table 7.1: Summary of CSO strategies

7.4 Further Research

The take from this project is that the research demonstrated that the phenomenon of CSOs intervention as designers and implementers of DDR programs is realistic and feasible. The research provides significant data of their actual effectiveness and capacities to perform community-based security. Furthermore, the study highlights that the DDR process should not be a bureaucratic process but rather one that creates a new social fabric that reaches ex-combatants and community members from both warring parties. CSOs, as designers and implementer of DDR, become the first point of contact for the ex-combatants creating a channel of communication based on a newly formed social network. The network prohibits incidents from recurring or tensions that could lead to relapses into escalated violence. The research also confirms that second generation

security promotion that are designed based on the political, economic, and social norms of the field of operation, have a higher chance of success. When CSOs initiatives are bolstered by the supporting role of multilateral and bilateral security and peace agencies, hybrid area-based security promotion can be seen. In so doing, local champions of change and peace brokers are created and can hold the torch for a longer period of time.

Further research must consider in-depth studies that add a comparative perspective on the role of CSOs in designing and implementing DDR programs. As such, research on cases where CSOs intervened but had different outcomes is vital to form a more holistic understanding of the extent to which CSOs can be designers and implementers of DDR programs. Moreover, comparative analysis of sub-national cases could also provide insights on whether area-based violence where limited by CSO DDR interventions or to other political and social factors. Additionally, ex-combatants network comparison between a set of ex-combatants who underwent DDR programs by CSOs and those who remained intact with their commanders, would shed light on the factors that encourage ex-combatants to move or remain in the networks. Likewise, research needs to investigate if cases can be found where ex-combatants participation in D&R programs by CSO were effective for some but not for others.

Using the suggested conceptually framework of brokers (conduit brokerage or *tertius iungens*), future research can explore the roles of networks on the life development of ex-combatants. First, while this research collects network data at a single point in time, exploring social network measures at different timeframes is an important next step. Tracing how ex-combatants' network structure changes over time and measure the network's strength and brokerage at predetermined time intervals is quintessential to understanding how these networks evolve vis-à-vis CSO interventions. These intervals could possibly be right after the ceasefire, during the DDR programs and few years down the line.

Another issue to explore further is whether different ex-combatants respond differently to DDR processes by CSOs. Some ex-combatants may purposefully disregard DDR programs for political reasons and pursue their own activities. Others may not trust the authority of CSOs. Such subjective conditions and factors are worthy of being explored further. The life course analysis approach presented in this research is certainly a suitable method to be used in such studies. Moreover, future research needs to address a vital question; whether the brokerage argument

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presented in this research holds true to other types of area-based or nation-wide violent conflict where state institutions are present and are highly active. In such cases, further emphasis on the role of the security sector as possible brokers could be deduced. Additionally, in the absence of state institutions, questions must be asked on the negative future prospects the strong CSOs hold in the process of state-building and/or relations between the ex-combatants and the state.

DDR is primarily concerned with eradicating militant groups. Breaking down the solidified military ties and detaching commanders' hierarchies is an important stage in the process that DDR designers and implementers are not often successful in or do not give it the necessary attention. As such, CSOs are considered secondary supporters, and only essential in social cohesion activities. However, for the ex-combatants and innovative CSOs, social bridging across warring factions proves to be more important and sometimes *a priori* to breaking the chains of command. This further evidence suggests that the association between social capital and potential peace and conflict has become ever stronger. With the increased number of civil wars witnessed in the last decade, debating DDR processes needs to be reconsidered. There is a picture on one of the Arabic language teaching institutes in Beirut that says, "Yalla Habibi (come on *my love in Arabic*) won't get you far in conflict resolution." While this quote may hint that foreigners assisting in conflict resolution need to know the local language, it could also be meant to inspire us to dig deeper into the context in order to better the design and implementation of DDR programs. As the violent conflicts in Syria, Yemen, Libya, Ethiopia, and Nigeria are ongoing, and violent breakouts in divided societies threaten to resurface, it is time to enter the debate on the major roles CSOs can perform during various phases of conflict life cycles.

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Newspaper Articles

Protesters in Beirut Demand Syria Ouster, The Washington Times, Tuesday February 22, 2005.

Appendix I

<u>**Tahir: [FF6 ID NR4]**</u>

<u>Upbringing and mobilization</u>: When the 2011 war started, I was just a kid, a 12-year-old boy. I used to see my father and elder brothers going to the demarcation street for the battle and sometimes I used to join them. They believed they were protecting our houses and lands. I held weapons towards the end of the conflict in 2013, I was 15 years old. As a kid it was very easy to brainwash me and convince me that I should follow the steps of my father and elder brothers. I was dragged into it. I saw death in front of my eyes, he was a little older than me and he got shot in the head. I was 13 years old, and he was only 15. I really liked him, and I felt that there is something that does not make sense. He died for nothing, and I just would never want that to my or other friends and future kids. It got worse in that summer. My brother died in the explosion of the Takwa and Salam Mosques on Aug 23, 2013. I asked my father and grandfather since when do we do this [fight the Alawiites]? They said it has been going on for decades. At this moment I realized this will never end. I wanted to change this mindset. On another occasion, I had met a girl that I really liked but she was an Alawiite. My family told me that I cannot meet her because we do not get into relationships with those people, we only kill them.

<u>Demobilization and Reintegration</u>: I just wanted to do something different, I was not motivated by revenge because I knew that I will only lose people. I sought the NGO, who had not invited me before because I was only 15 and they were more concerned with older young men who were fighting 24/7. I started with Utopia in 2013 on some projects and dialogue conferences with young men and teenagers from Jabal Mohsen. In 2015, I tried out at the advertised theatrical play that MARCH NGO organized. It was a great experience and I loved acting. I met so many similar guys from Jabal Mohsen and built so many strong friendships lasting till now. It was a huge benefit for us to grow to love each other and to see that we are really the same and we are both victims of political manipulation. We will never go to fighting, at least the group that participated with Utopia and MARCH. We are really aware that only the innocents died. I also was able to build an argument that I learned in the workshops to convince my family away from fighting. I can confidently say it worked now and my father and cousins will never fight again and now have a different perspective on the Alawiites in Jabal Mohsen. After the play, we asked MARCH NGO not to just leave the area and to work on something else. Together we suggested opening a coffee shop on the demarcated Syria street this way we can also create jobs. The plan worked and MARCH NGO secured the funding. I worked there till 2017. Since then, I was working at an attorney's office in Beirut. I am an administrative assistant, and it is helping me to learn and connect with people who work in law. I want to continue my education and get law degree. I stopped at the end of middle school, and I could not sit for the official exams because it was the same year that my brother died. I also want to open my own NGO. I plan to have the NGO focus on being a platform for daily news from the individual citizens as well as opinion pieces and research.

Whenever you hear of relapse of violence in the area is not due to sectarian conflicts anymore. These are individual cases of people who are drug addicts. The CSOs need to also focus on this and help with this. Many young men are dealing and taking drugs specially when they are unemployed. The just work on getting and selling scrap metal.

Hadi: [ID NR9)

Upbringing and mobilization: I was born in Jabal Mohsen. I remember my grandparents, particularly my grandma moved in the late 1970s to Lebanon from Syria. My parents could only afford teaching me until grade 5th, which was the level to which the state provided free education. I left school when I was 12 years old and began working immediately in order to support my parents. I worked as a blacksmith since then. I had nowhere to go, taking several jobs and gigs. Things were normal in the 1990s and early 2000s, but we would hear stories from our parents about how the days of the Lebanese civil war impacted Bab el Tabbaneh and Jabal Mohsen. I went along my days back then if I remember correctly, normally. I go to work in the morning till the evening, if I am lucky, I get to play with friends form my neighborhood some football on the streets, then back to home to have my meal and go to bed. I would not say we were very poor, we all worked in the family except mom, and we did have the basic needs, particularly food. But of course, I never had any possibility or opportunity to buy more lavish things like brand new clothes and shoes. I was around 15 years old when Rafiq El Harriri was assassinated and the demands for the expulsion of the Syrian troops started to become serious. I remember my father was worried that we would become very vulnerable as a neighborhood, and I only understood why in 2007-2008 when the first rounds of conflicts between Jabal Mohsen and Bab el Tabbeneh started. I was 18 years old and at the time I was unemployed. These clashes were in response to a more national level violence that also occurred in Beirut and Mount Lebanon on May 8, 2008. When we were recruited to fight was because the Future Movement had invaded and killed a group of people from the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party in Halba (a town close by). He moved in protection for our neighborhood and our sect, we feared that we will be cleansed. In this conflict we were not paid, or maybe we were, and they were sent to my dad, I cannot remember nor be assertive about it. After the Doha accord that put an end to these clashes of May 2008, I tried to go back to work. I worked briefly at National Electricity Company of the North, and some work at a company called SAKR for generators. But then, this was already 2011 when the second batch of rounds started, and it became very risky to leave the neighborhood because I would have to pass by Bab el Tabbaneh. SAKR corporation forced me to go, but I could not fear my death, so they fired me. But at least I was safer at home. Between 2011-2014 we were getting paid, and I was personally receiving money and aid.

Demobilization and reintegration: When the fights were ongoing, I was making more money, but I was also at life threating situations. March NGO started to work with former fighters and my friends in 2012, and in 2013 I was asked to work on the project "Bab El Dahab" to use my blacksmith skills to fix metal doors of the shops, their signs, and the gates of markets. That experience was so essential to my life, it was very interesting, and I got in touch the skills that have developed well over the years. Crucially in introduced me, like other friends, to young men from Bab el Tabbeneh where we could sit down and work together as well as learn about each other's lives and why we are all here and what have we done to our neighborhoods. Until now, we are still good acquaintances and if we meet in Bab el Tabbaneh or Jabal Mohsen we of course stop and speak to each other. We sometimes seek to check on each other and how we are doing and have a good conversation. Now we do not meet or call every day, but we did when we were working on Bab el Dahab for almost 6 consecutive months. This experience taught me a lot, I will certainly not go back to fighting, I will never participate in this again even if the parties pay me loads of money. We now see that the commanders were paid much more than us and became super rich. But they never participated in the actual fight they just

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recruited us and got paid for that. We were at risk every minute of every hour and they were just getting richer and richer. We now call them the "traders of war" (*tujjar harb*). I still believe that the political elites in government are not launching any developmental projects so that people from both sides of the neighborhood remain poor. Poverty will give them power to try and recruit more to mobilize to fight again at times where it suits them to score political points. Because they are poor, they will just try to pay them. But from my conversations, many people are now aware of this, and many of us who participated with MARCH NGO or FFP or the others we feel that we were manipulated.

I just wish that the CSOs can get more funding to do the stuff they were doing to support us, and similar people like me. I would not do it [the war] because I am now aware of it. But I am not sure that the very poor people would forgo a chance for money if they were asked to fight. But if CSOs can give them something, even less money than what the commanders would I am pretty sure they would take a wage cut and not participate. Now the difference [in perception] is huge. We go to each other's neighborhoods like we are one. We really, and I personally, do no longer fear the Sunni's at all. They are absolutely like us.

Shadi [FF2 ID NR8]:

Upbringing and mobilization: I went to school up until the 6th class, I am now 34 years old. I am originally from Latakia in Syria. My grandparents moved to Jabal Mohsen when my father was born, and we have been living here ever since. My parents could no longer pay the tuition and thus I had to go and start working. I started working in everything that needed younger men to help in building. Car mechanics, tile installations, and plumbing. Then I found myself more in construction, and everything related to construction stuff. At the end I enjoyed the most and became best at electricity installations for construction projects. I pursued this vocation till today, I am still working in that at the moment. Luckily, everyone needs electricity maintenance, so there has been some continuity in my work.

I participated in the conflict based because I felt I want to protect my sect and my neighborhood. We were told that they [Sunnis] will invade us and cleanse us out of Jabal Mohsen. Around 80% of the fighters participated because we are a minority sect, and if we do not participate as young men, it means that we are not ready to defend our sect and are thus committing treason. There was a social cost.

Demobilization and reintegration: When MARCH and Utopia came in with their projects, I was asked to work with them. I was employed on two full projects to install electricity systems to the markets they were rebuilding. While I worked with them together with young men from Bab el Tabbaneh (I had no idea that they were also fighters back then) I realized that we are more similar than I thought, and they are not really after us. They were told that we were after them. I think we together we realized we need to ask ourselves why we are fighting? What did we do to each other? For what? The socio-economic situation is all the same for both of us, development and humanity is all the same. The ideas previously being told to us were all wrong. We were brainwashed for sure. After working with the NGOs, I realized truly that they are just like us. Now, we have friends from Bab el Tabbeneh, and we spend some time together playing and watching football and having nights out smoking *Argeeleh*. As for the work, it was good not but for a long enough time, it feels that the projects are short term and transitional. Fighters need to go afterwards and find other long-term jobs. But we understood that they are not private companies anyway, but they did support us no doubt. The friendship ties with the

men from Bab el Tabbaneh will last longer than the jobs, we knew that. I met people who I thought were monsters before. At the NGOs we used to have dialogues and discussion and we now see that we were both told the same, and both are not the truth. It has been years, but really no one was aware of how much we were being manipulated. Commanders became super rich, they were recruiting and giving ammunition and per diems, we now call them "traders of war" (*tujjar harb*). These commanders were never held accountable, and they just benefitted at our expense and security. When I reflect now, I wonder how did I not see these things before? And why did I see them late? Even the political stance of the individuals in our sect has changed and there is now only a minority that still want to kill for politics. There are of course still some extremists in our neighborhood. Only those that are officially employed by the party and are directly paid are still calling for it but the masses and the "street" no longer believes in their political platform. There was absolutely no problem between us now, nor before, they just created it story and threw it to us so that we believe it and act on it. When I used to visit my grandparents in Latakia, I saw them living on the same street with all other sects. Only when we moved to Tripoli was the hatred instilled in my parents and cousins. I will never participate again anymore in any conflict if they are to be renewed. Previously I was blinded, now I know that the political elites and commanders mobilize and make us fight for their own political benefit and it does not serve the benefit of the sect or the neighborhood.

Sami [FF3 ID NR7]:

<u>Upbringing and mobilization:</u> I left school at 16 years old, my parents did not afford the tuition afterwards. I always had a feel for painting and drawing so I became a painter. I was learning the apprenticeship at a car body shop, but the use of thinners hurts my lungs. So, I had to move to become a painter for houses and walls. I have participated and I have a kid who was shot. When it started in 2008, we were mobilized to defend our sect. I had a kid who was 8 years who was shot I was living in Jabal, but I had to relocate to Bab el Tabbeneh because I am a Sunni. It was dangerous for me there, and I can fight from the lower neighborhood. I used to work as a painter. The commanders that used to give us money to buy ammunition, food, and clothes. We were also provided with so much food. We were given on the nights we spend together extravagant sweets, all the food we want and lots of Argeeleh. We then took many of it back to our family. Now these people are not even giving us food for survival. They used us as political messengers. We fought to strengthen or weaken someone's negotiation strategy. <u>Demobilization and Reintegration:</u> The NGOs came to the neighborhoods they were very nice and gave us some work, but it did not last super long. I was an employed as painter in all the projects for MARCH, Utopia and another organization called *Farah el Ataa* (the joy of giving). I first did projects for around 3 months with Utopia and MARCH and then I was also given a similar project after 4 months with Farah el Ataa for wall painting and graffiti for around 2 months. My daily allowance was 25,000 Lebanese pounds per day (back then equivalent to US$16). I was living at 100,000 Lebanese pounds (back then equivalent to US$ 66) per week. After 2014, there was random arrests by the Lebanese Army, I think they were looking for one of the commanders that fled Lebanon. I was put in jail for three months and then I waited for my trial for around another 3 months. During that time, I was not allowed to work, no one wanted to employ someone who might get a prison sentence.
Additionally, now between the two neighborhoods everything has been painted, so now what am I going to do with them? There were many NGOs doing work like painting walls and reconstruction that do not actually create further job opportunities. When projects are done, we

go back home. Some NGOs go home themselves all together like Utopia. Their executive director disappeared after we ran for local elections and lost. We no longer seem him around. He also made us not trust every CSO. Now because the NGOs no longer have money; we sit jobless. When we find work outside what the NGOs can bring to our neighborhood, they ask us for documentation such as ID and other papers that require money to get from the authorities.

We learned a lot in the experiences that put us together though. I was living in Jabal Mohsen, and I knew part of it, but I thought they were really going after me. It then turned out that we were both victims of the commanders and political elites. Our commanders lied to us and theirs lied to them. They sat made tons of money. My commander bought a big Opel car, built a water generator and distribution facility, and accumulated a wealth of around US$ 100,000 without lifting a finger or risking his life like us. On judgement day we will be punished both of us. Us for being bought by inhuman political elites. And them by actually doing it.
I will never go back to fighting, I learned and saw how nice and how we are all similar and that we were very much deceived. I just fear going hungry, if I go hungry, I might steal. Might others accept being mobilized again? Maybe, I hope not though, and we have the responsibility now to make them aware. I worry most about the younger generation that a lot of them are on drugs, they are able to afford it from finding and selling metal scraps. A 10kilogram of scrap metal is sold for 30,000 Lebanese pounds.

Fadi [FF4 ID NR6]:

<u>Upbringing and mobilization:</u> I went to school until the 6th grade. I am currently unemployed. I participated with the guys, I was armed and tasked to protect the streets and the houses. It is known to everyone that we had 21 rounds of violent conflict, and every time someone instigates it as a result of a political decision to do so. From Bab el Tabbaneh or Jabal Mohsen, it was enough for a few bullets to be shot and a violent round would start despite, up until that point, everyone going about their everyday living normally. The whole neighborhoods are locked down and workers, kids, and shoppers rush home. Out of nowhere we would be asked to stop. The starters of the shooting were, of course, getting paid regularly, and foot soldiers were paid per rounds that you participate in. At the beginning of the intense series of conflicts that started in 2011, I was working in Amchit (a city north of Lebanon just south of Tripoli) at a company called Metalic. I needed to leave my house at 5:00 am in order to avoid the snipers that would start around 7:00 am. The most dangerous part on the way was Abou Ali Roundabout (see map). During the daylight, you cannot pass from Jabal Mohsen to any area behind Bab El Tabbaneh and Qoubeh. I believe that every political leader had a group in each neighborhood to instigate it, otherwise he might risk that the shooting will not be reciprocated. To ensure it will, politicians must have had Sunnis and Alawiites groups from both sides. I think the reasons for launching a round of violence were mostly because of external issues. We got to a point where we know if something happens in Syria, any group feeling that they lost the gains they made, we will have to respond here.
<u>Demobilization and reintegration:</u> Once I was on my way to pharmacy to buy milk for my kids, someone from Jabal Mohsen shot me three times, two shots got me in the waist, and one missed me, but it hit a signpost and I got the shrapnel of it. Luckily, I survived. I noticed that I would lose my life like this, I went to MARCH and asked them to help me and to participate in their workshops because I was hearing from a friend of mine that they were providing that. I worked

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as a painter with MARCH and then they found me a job later in Jbeil as a Chef "De Rang". Which was also a job I had experience in growing up.

I will never return to fighting; I just want to improve my skills and work. I will never return, if I died no one was going to take care of my family and it was never going to improve our lives. These conflicts do not amount to anything even those who "win". They will just gain a little bit more power than the other. Everyone who participated gained financial returns, but the commanders (Z.A./S.A.) became super rich. It became a trade process.

I want the CSOs to try give us more training sessions on vocational skills so we can improve our skill sets to find a sustainable job. Reconstruction and rebuilding jobs are good for creating med-term job opportunities but has little future prospects. The people are too tired fighting, we feel it was a big mistake for no particular reason, and it certainly did not improve our lives.

Habib [FF5 ID NR5]:

Upbringing and mobilization: I went to school until the 4th grade. It was free until then, but I was also very bad at school my parents did not see it very worth it to continue if I am going to fail and they will spend all this money on me. Then I started working in painting and construction. I am now 26 years old, and I became a fighter at the age of 17 and participated in the conflicts, all of them, because I saw it as a group of people attacking us and wanting to kill us or take our lands.

Demobilization and reintegration: I worked with MARCH and she [executive director] put us together and build friendships. I worked as a painter and installing large metal doors for the old market we call "Sikkeh". I worked around or less than a year with them. But I sense that the executive director started to favor some ex-fighters over the other.

After I worked with MARCH, now I know that they were attacking and cursing us not because they hated us but because their leaders and politicians asked them to do so. Through MARCH I did build friendships with people from Jabal Mohsen and now I go up to see them and they come visit me. I did have friends before the conflict, but now I have more. I even found some very old friends of mine who I went to school with years ago. They are also very disgusted and bored from risking their lives for the politicians for nothing. The events I attended that were organized by MARCH made me realize how similar we both are.

I am currently jobless, and the war led me to not get a job, because the perception is that we are thugs. We are stereotyped now as fighters are not able to create a proper life for them. We are not stereotyped by the community but by the companies we apply for work at. Of course, in Bab el Tabbeneh there is no work, we are a very small neighborhood with limited opportunities.

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