Gender-Sensitivity and Gender-Blindness in Conflict Early Warning Systems – with a Case Study on the Niger Delta Region (Nigeria)[1]

Since the World Conference on Women in 1995 the issue women and violent conflict is one major focal point of the international women's movement and also academic research. In the *Beijing Platform of Action* it is stated that women's „full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts … (is) essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security" (Beijing Platform of Action 1995: E, 134). In 2000, after intense lobbying by women's networks and non-governmental organizations, the United Nations Security Council adopted the Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.[2] The member countries are called to integrate a gender perspective in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts (UN Security Council 2000). In two additional resolutions – 1820 and 1888 – the Security Council particularly condemned rape and sexual violence against women (UN Security Council 2008, 2009). The adoption of the Resolution 1325 is generally regarded as a "breakthrough". Subsequently, international organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) also adopted resolutions stressing that women and men might be differently affected by conflict and crisis and also that women can make relevant contributions to peace-building (OSCE 2005, 2009; also see European Parliament 2000). The demands and recommendations of the various documents include:

- the involvement of women and their equal participation at all levels of decision-making in institutions and mechanisms for conflict prevention, conflict management and peace-building,
- the support of women's organizations and women's peace initiatives to strengthen their opportunities for participation,
- the protection of human rights of women and girls, especially from sexual violence and the ending of impunity in regard to violence against women and girls,

[1] This contribution has been written in the frame of the research project „Methods and Instruments for Civil Conflict Management and Crisis Prevention" sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Special thanks go to Rita Schäfer for her valuable hints on relevant literature and also to the participants of the seminar "Early Warning Systems for the Prevention of Conflict and Crisis in African Countries" at the Free University Berlin for interesting discussions.

[2] On the process before the adoption and the participation of different actors see for example Cohn 2008.

- the recognition of the needs and interests of women and girls in conflict resolution and reconstruction, for example in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and in measures for socio-economic development and democratization.

One precondition of the involvement of women and the recognition of their interests is a gender-sensitive conflict analysis. In this contribution it is examined in how far gender perspectives and issues are integrated into conflict early warning systems. Conflict early warning systems are defined as the systematic collection and analysis of information for:

- anticipating violent conflicts, war, genocide, massive human rights abuses, political instability and state fragility,
- the assessment of likely trends and scenarios,
- the formulation of strategic response to conflict and crises and the identification of strategies and opportunities for peace, and
- the presentation of options to critical actors (local, national, regional and international) for the purposes of decision-making and preventive or "early" action (adapted from FEWER 1999).

Especially since the mid 1990s – under the impression of the genocide in Rwanda – international organizations, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) started to establish conflict early warning systems.[3] Whereas ideally early warning should result in the prevention of violence, most adapt the principle to all stages of the conflict cycle to prevent the escalation of existing conflicts or the resurgence of violence in a post-conflict phase.[4]

In 2002, Schmeidl and Piza-Lopez developed a framework for the integration of a gender perspective into early warning systems. They present a comprehensive catalog of gender-sensitive indicators concerning the analysis of political, economic and social structures, the gender-dimensions of proximate conflict causes and of intervening factors decreasing or increasing the likelihood of conflict. The authors state that the gender-sensitive collection and analysis of data makes it possible to consider additional signs of instability and can thus ultimately contribute to a greater effectiveness of early warning systems (Schmeidl/Piza-Lopez 2002).[5]

[3] For a general overview on early warning systems see for example Nyheim 2009, Wulf/Debiel 2009.

[4] See for example OECD 2009, Anderlini/Stanski 2007: 1, Hill 2003, Schmeidl/Piza-Lopez 2002, OSCE/ODIHR 2009.

[5] See also Hill 2003, OSCE/ODIHR 2009, UNDP-UNIFEM 2006, Moser 2005, UNIFEM et al. 2005, UNIFEM 2006.

In the following it is examined how gender-based inequalities are considered in different kinds of early warning systems. Aim was to include analysis based on quantitative as well as on qualitative data, but the choice is not intended to be exhaustive. A frequent criticism on conflict early warning systems is that the link between warning and response mechanisms is weak. However, this contribution will in particular focus on the quality of analysis. At first, so-called fragility indices ranking countries according to their (lack of) stability and working mainly with quantitative data are explored. In a second step several "think-and-do tanks" with partly extensive data collections on development processes in conflict regions on their web portals are analyzed. By the example of a case study – the Niger Delta Region in Nigeria – it is explored to what extent gender relations are taken into account in their conflict analysis. In the concluding part it will be reflected in how far gender-sensitive approaches bring additional perspectives into conflict analysis.

Gender-sensitive Indicators in Fragility Indices

Especially after the attacks of 9/11/2001 it was asked, in how far fragile, failing or already collapsed states pose risks for global and regional security – for example because they are used as operational base and retreat area for transnational terrorism and organized crime. States are seen as fragile if they fail to fulfill important functions. The main criteria are: ability or willingness to provide basic needs and public goods such as health care or educational facilities (effectivity), monopoly on legitimate use of force (authority) and legitimacy from the perspective of the population (Fabra Mata/Ziaja 2009).

In the last decade, various indices that measure the fragility of countries by various criteria have been created. Usually annually reports with charts or maps visualizing the degree of fragility are published. Sources are primarily publicly available statistics, media reports and assessments of experts. The aim is to inform different target groups – governments, multi- and bilateral development agencies, private companies, banks and also also civil society – about the risks for planned policies, investments or human and social security. For this contribution eleven of the most cited indices were examined with the question in how far they take gender inequalities into account.[6] Only the following four are to some extent gender-sensitive.

- *Country Indicators for Foreign Policy - Fragility Index*: The index is published by the Canadian Carlton University and supported by the Canadian government. The work on the fragility index began in the late 1990s.

[6] Following other indices have been considered: Bertelsmann Transformation Index State Weakness Index, Failed State Index, Index of State Weakness in the Developing World, Political Instability Index, State Fragility Index, World Governance Indicators, Political Stability and Absence of Violence (see. Fabra Mata/Ziaja 2009).

- *Country Policy and Institutional Assessment*: The assessments are published annually by the World Bank since 2006; 75 countries are included.
- *Index of African Governance*: The index is published annually by the Harvard University since 2007, the publication is supported by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation and therefore in some sources also called *Ibrahim Index of African Governance*; 53 African countries are included.
- *Global Peace Index*: The index is produced by the Institute for Economics and Peace in Australia and the Economist Intelligence Unit since 2007 and is funded by a private person (Steve Killelea); 149 countries are assessed.

The *Country Indicators for Foreign Policy - Fragility Index* (CIFP) measures the authority, legitimacy and the capacity of states. The analysis is mainly based on data concerning political, economic and social structures but also includes development trends. 83 indicators are subsumed under six categories. Most of the total of nine women- or gender-related indicators are found under „human development"; the categories „governance", „economics" and „demography" contain one indicator each (see box 1). The two included UNDP indicators are complex and composed out of different data. The *Gender Empowerment Measure* gives information on inequality of women and men in relation to: parliamentary seats, positions as legislators, senior officials and managers, professional and technical workers and estimated earned income. The UNDP *Human Development Index* is composed of data on life expectancy, education and purchasing power per capita.The *Gender-related Development Index* disaggregates these data by gender.[7] The categories "security and crime" and „environment" have no women- or gender-related indicators.

Box 1: Gender-sensitive indicators in the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy - Fragility Index	
Governance	Percentage of female parliamentarians
Economics	Percentage of women in the labour force
Human development	Percentage of female who completed primary education Enrolment rates of girls and boys in primary schools UNDP Gender Empowerment Measure UNDP Gender Related Development Index Percentage of adult females with HIV / AIDS infection Literacy rate of women
Demography	Female life expectancy

[7] See the CIFP-homepage under http://www.carleton.ca/cifp/ (last visited 24/7/2010).

The *Country Policy and Institutional Assessment* (CPIA) measures particularly the performance of governments – criteria are for example the use of resources or the implementation of the rule of law. The rankings are considered in the design of the World Bank's country strategies and also for the allocation of funds by the International Development Association. The assessment is based on a total of 16 indicators in the categories „economic management", „structural policies", „public sector management and institutions" and "policy for social inclusion / equality". Under the last category, gender equality is one of a total of five indicators. In box 2 it is shown that the indicator is composed of a broad range of different data (African Development Bank Group 2009).

Box 2: Gender-sensitive indicators in the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment	
Human capital development opportunities	Access to primary and secondary education Access to antenatal and delivery care, and family planning services
Access for men and women to productive and economic resources	Labour force participation and remuneration Business ownership and management Land tenure and inheritance rights
Equality and protection of men and women under the law	Family law Violence against women Political participation

The *Index of African Governance* (IAG) mainly assesses good governance and the extent to which governments provide their citizens with significant "political goods" assigned to five categories: „safety and security", „rule of law, transparency and corruption", „participation and human rights", „sustainable economic opportunities", and „human development". Under these categories the IAG has a total of 57 indicators (Rotberg/Gisselquist 2009). In box 3 the five women- and gender-related indicators are shown under the respective categories.

Box 3: Gender-sensitive indicators in the Index of African Governance	
Participation and human rights	Women's economic, political and social rights
Human development	Maternal mortality Female adult literacy rate Female primary school completion rate Ratio of girls and boys in primary and secondary education

The *Global Peace Index* (GPI) seeks to determine which cultural attributes and institutions contribute to (negative and positive) peace. GPI uses 23 so-called peace indicators. They are mainly related to inter- and intra-state conflicts, social security, political stability, human rights, militarization and crime. None of them measures gender inequalities. However, also a range of “related indicators” are taken into account in the country rankings including data on the number of women in parliament, gender inequality and the gender ratio of the population. In addition, GPI is correlated with the *Gender Gap Index* of the World Economic Forum (Institute for Economics and Peace 2010).[8]

Regarding the ranking of countries, the results of all the eleven examined indices are fairly similar. Among the "top ten" of fragile or failed states are Afghanistan, Iraq and African countries such as Somalia, Zimbabwe, Sudan and the Democratic Republic Congo, Nigeria is usually among the „top twenty“; the Scandinavian countries are among the most stable and peaceful. Overall, the country lists, maps and graphs enable to gain a quick overview on the political and economic fragility or stability of countries – according to the various criteria given. However, they give little information about the background and dynamics of conflicts and current developments. As guidance for decision-making, prevention and early action additionally more detailed reports and studies on countries or regions are necessary.

Social and economic differentiations are considered as major factors and root causes for violent conflict. Therefore, it is only logical that four of the indices include gender relations as one form of inequality. However, alone for the reason that the indices contain only a small number of gender-sensitive indicators, it is unlikely that this induces changes in the country rankings. Furthermore, part of the indicators or base data are only disaggregated by sex – such as female life expectancy or literacy rate – and thus give little information on gender inequalities. Actually, most of the indicators only show in how far women are integrated into formal political and economic structures and whether they can benefit from social welfare such as provision of health care and education. In some of the most fragile states – such as Afghanistan, Sudan or Congo – also a high degree of gender inequality can be noticed. However, from the information presented in the four indices no significant correlation between the fragility of states and gender inequality can be drawn.

[8] See also the homepage of the Global Peace Index on http://www.visionofhumanity.org/ (last visited 24/7/2010).

„Think-and-Do Tanks“ and Gender Analysis

Criteria for choosing the conflict early warning systems was that they have updated information, are publicly accessible and report on Nigeria.[9] In the following the different organizations and institutions are shortly described.

- ReliefWeb and *Integrated Regional Information Networks* (IRIN) have been established in the mid-1990s and are located at the *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs*. Financially, the web portals are supported mainly by governments of UN member states. Aim of ReliefWeb and IRIN is to provide reliable and impartial information on crises and emergencies – whether caused by conflicts or natural disasters. Target groups for the dissemination of information are decision-makers who are active in humanitarian assistance in the UN, in NGOs, international organizations and governments.[10]
- The *United States Institute of Peace* (USIP) exists since 25 years and is based in Washington. USIP is funded by the United States Congress. The aim is to prevent and resolve violent conflict and to contribute to post-conflict stability and development. USIP describes itself as a "think-and-do tank", the activities include the preparation of studies on various crisis and conflict regions, and advising policy makers, in some cases the institute offers mediation.[11]
- The *International Crisis Group* (ICG) was founded as an NGO in 1995 and now has five main offices in Brussels, Paris, London, New York and Washington. ICG is financed by funds from governments, foundations and donations by individuals. ICG describes as one of its main tasks "ringing early warning alarm bells" and sees itself as "generally recognised as the world's leading independent, non-partisan, source of analysis and advice to governments, and intergovernmental bodies like the United Nations, European Union and World Bank, on the prevention and resolution of deadly conflict ".[12]
- The *West Africa Network for Peacebuilding* (WANEP) was founded as NGO in 1998 and is since 2002 part of the *West Africa Early Warning Network* (ECOWARN) of the *Economic Community of West African States* (ECOWAS), which is being established in the frame of the *Common African Defence and*

[9] Therefore, for example FAST (*Early Recognition and Analysis of Tensions*) of Swisspeace, the *Internet-Based Early Warning Indicators System for Preventive Policy* of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and *Minorities at Risk* of the University of Maryland are not included.

[10] See the web pages http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc100?OpenForm and http://www.irinnews.org/ (last visited 25/7/2010).

[11] See the Website of the *United States Institute of Peace* in http://www.usip.org/ (last visited 25/7/2010).

[12] See the websites of the *International Crisis Group* http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm (last visited 25/7/2010).

Security Policy of the African Union. ECOWARN has an *Observation and Monitoring Centre* in Abuja and four regional offices. Originally it was planned that ECOWARN itself gathers information, then it was decided to connect the structure with existing networks and enter into a partnership with WANEP. WANEP has a regional head office in Accra and branches in twelve West African countries, more than 450 NGOs are affiliated. Among WANEP's primary objectives is the „development of a conflict prevention network" and „to increase the awareness on the use of nonviolent strategies in responding to conflict".[13] As ECOWARN has yet not released any data, the following analysis is based on the work of WANEP.

The web portals of these organizations and institutions provide information on countries and regions and on specific topics. Reliefweb and IRIN, have each a thematic focus „gender". Reliefweb presents a whole library of reports, IRIN rather shorter articles, on issues relevant for the integration of a gender perspective in conflict prevention and management and reconstruction in post-conflict phases. Topics are for example human and women's rights, violence against women, the situation of women and girls in refugee camps, health and HIV/AIDS etc.

USIP has a thematic focus „women", it contains some country studies and reports with recommendations for integrating women and gender perspectives in the stabilization and reconstruction (Pampell Conaway 2005, 2006, Ramsey Marshall 2000). In October 2009, a *Gender and Peacebuilding Initiative* was established to coordinate USIP's gender-related work. Until recently, ICG had a thematic focus on "gender and conflict", it still can be found through the search function. It includes some reports on countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America in which some aspects of gender relations are mentioned. In addition, the focus contains press statements, articles and lectures by ICG members and links to other resources on the Internet.

Whereas Reliefweb, IRIN, USIP and ICG treat gender as one of several focal points WANEP's explicit goals are to „engender peacebuilding policy and practices in West Africa and enhance women leadership in peacebuilding practice" (WANEP 2008). Part of the NGOs, which are affiliated to the network are organized in the WANEP program *Women in Peace Building Network* (WIPNET) and are in contact with other international NGOs, such as the *Africa Desk of the Women Peacemakers Program*.[14] The activities of WANEP / WIPNET include: gender mainstreaming in the work of WANEP, lobbying for the implementation of the UN Resolution 1325, the development of gender-sensitive training materials and training of women as conflict monitors.

[13] See the WANEP website at http://www.wanep.org/wanep/ and the ECOWARN website at http://www.ecowarn.org/ (last visited 24/7/2010), see also Kinzel, 2007, Engel 2008, Bergholm 2009.

[14] See the website at http://www.ifor.org/WPP/index.html (last visited 25/7/2010).

Conflicts over "Blood Oil" in the Niger Delta Region

USIP and especially ICG report in some detail about the situation in the Niger Delta Region. USIP has since 2005, ICG since 2006 published several conflict analysis; WANEP has a total of three reports accessible via the regional website. In addition, ICG presents a "Crisis Watch Database" with short reports on current developments. IRIN publishes short articles on recent events. Reliefweb puts together a selection of articles and reports from various sources, for example from IRIN, UN organizations and news agencies such as Reuters or Agence France-Press. The depth of the analysis is different, however, the assessment of structural problems and development trends as well as the recommendations are broadly similar. In the following the main features of the conflict are summarized.[15]

In nine of the 36 Nigerian states crude oil is produced – the main part in Rivers, Delta and Bayelsa. Since the 1970s, the federal government generates approximately 90 percent of the export earnings and 70-80 percent of the total revenue with the production and export of mineral oil. Big multinationals such as Shell, BP and Chevron are involved, however, the Nigerian government has a major share in all enterprises. The oil production caused serious water and air pollution and affects work and income opportunities in agriculture and fisheries to a considerable extent.

Since decades, inhabitants of the Niger Delta Region protest against the federal government's neglect of the area. They demand a higher share of the proceeds from oil exports and the reparation of environmental damage. About 40 ethnic groups live in the region, the Ijaw being the largest (ICG 2006:26). In the course of the protests, these groups – particularly in the main production areas – organized themselves to „ethnic nations" to defend their interests against the government and oil companies. The ethnic nations lay claim to the exclusive disposal of land and natural resources in their respective residential areas. As the first group the *Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People* (MOSOP) of the Ogoni, a minority with about half a million people, gained international attention. With largely non-violent campaigns and demonstrations, they achieved that Shell withdrew from the Ogoni territory in 1993.

Especially the military government under Abacha (1993-1998) tried to oppress protests in the Niger Delta Region violently, the regime was responsible for massive human rights abuses. In military actions whole villages were destroyed; it is estimated that thousands of people were killed. As a reaction, within the ethnic nations militant wings

[15] The presentation is based on the following reports: ICG 2006, 2006a, 2007, 2009, Campbell 2008, Smock 2009, Bekoe 2005, Burdin Asuni, 2009, Ekiyor (d.u.), Eze et al. (2008), Eze et al. (2009), reporting of IRIN and Reliefweb.

have been established. At first, they served as a protection for communities from attacks by the military. Increasingly, they also tried to enforce claims against the oil companies and threatened to destroy pipelines and other installations, for example when the companies refused to pay compensation for environmental damage. To avoid disruptions in the oil production, companies started to pay militant groups for the guarding of industrial facilities. Through this co-option, they helped to arm militias and also fuelled conflicts between militant groups competing for contracts for security services.

The oil companies also contributed to the emergence and escalation of conflicts between and within communities. They pay compensation to so-called host communities for the use of land for exploration, drilling and refinery. However, in many areas user rights are overlapping; land ownership is often not clearly defined and in most cases not documented in writing. Therefore, numerous disputes over land rights and compensation claims within and in neighboring communities emerged. In recent years, resource conflicts between different groups resulted in hundreds of deaths and thousands of refugees.

With the return to civilian rule in 1999 many inhabitants of the Niger Delta Region hoped for improvements in the economic and social situation. After taking office, President Obasanjo began reforms to mitigate conflicts. This included increasing the share of oil revenues for the Niger Delta Region from three to 13 percent. In 2000, the Niger Delta Development Commission was set up with additional resources for the development of the region partly financed by the oil companies. Until 2004, the *Niger Delta Development Master Plan* was created – a regional development plan for infrastructure, health, education, agriculture and other sectors. However, the government increasingly lost its legitimacy. During the 2003 elections – where Obasanjo was reelected for a second term – and also in 2007 it came to massive ballot rigging especially in Rivers and Delta. Politicians further armed militant groups and used them to intimidate opponents. Before and during the elections fighting between rival parties and militias resulted in death and injury.

After the inauguration of President Yar'Adua in 2007, the new government promoted the improvement of the situation in the Niger Delta Region as a priority. A *Technical Committee on the Niger Delta* was established to work out a long-term strategy and recommended among others a further increase in the share of the oil revenues for the region and the improvement of the social and physical infrastructure. In 2008, a new ministry – Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs – was set up responsible mainly for the construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure. In April 2009, Yar'Adua offered amnesty to militias who hand in their weapons. The negotiations on the conditions of amnesty and disarmament were delayed as Yar'Adua fell ill and died in May 2010. The former Vice President Jonathan who stems from the Niger Delta Region overtook office. In

future, up to 20,000 militias shall be addressed with the amnesty and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration program (DDR). In June 2010, the first 2000 received a monthly stipend (equivalent to approximately 430 U.S. dollars) and training courses.

The impact of the present amnesty and DDR program is difficult to assess. Various militias with a total of several thousand mostly young men with considerable weapon arsenals still exist. The presumably largest group is the *Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta* (MEND) in the Ijaw area. MEND threatens with the destruction of industrial facilities until the Nigerian government grants a greater degree of resource control to the local population and compensates for environmental damage. Since 2006, MEND took responsibility for several attacks and kidnappings. Whereas organizations such as MEND justify their activities with a social justice-oriented rhetoric and have at least some support in the communities, increasingly groups who are solely interested in making money are operating in the Niger Delta Region. Kidnappings have become a lucrative business. While in the past mainly employees of the oil companies have been taken as hostages, now also local politicians or their relatives are kidnapped to extort ransom money.

Another increasingly lucrative income for militias and other groups is "oil bunkering" – the theft of petroleum products. The term *bunkering* originally means filling a tanker with oil (Burdin Asuni, 2009: 2). The main part of the illegally tapped pipelines or oil wells is exported. Militias – and also soldiers are said to be involved – operate at the lower end of the trade chain. They transport petroleum products on the numerous waterways of the Niger Delta to the coast where they are loaded on large ships. Customers are distributors from Europe, Russia and Australia. Militias are paid with money and arms. It is assumed that high-ranking politicians, representatives of oil companies as well as upper ranks of the police and military are involved in the illegal oil business (for details see Burdin Asuni 2009: 4 ff).

"Oil bunkering" and the permanent or temporary suspension of oil production because of attacks on industrial facilities led to significant losses for the Nigerian economy and the oil companies. It is estimated that the current production is between two-thirds and a half of the capacity (Burdin Asuni, 2009, Smock 2009). In analogy to the blood diamonds campaign particularly Burdin Assuni (2009) points out, that the theft of "blood oil" contributes to the emergence and escalation of conflicts in the Niger Delta Region. Meanwhile, different militias fight for the control of the *bunkering* business. It is feared that insecurity and conflicts will be extended to the entire coastal zone of the Gulf of Guinea, in recent years also offshore facilities and merchant ships have been attacked.

In summary, it is assessed that after more than ten years of civilian government, the social and economic situation of the population of the Niger Delta has not improved distinctly. Also ecological problems still persist. It is hardly transparent how the funds

allocated additionally since 2003 have been used. In particular, in Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta the security situation has worsened steadily. Since 2003, the Joint Task Force (JTC) with a few thousand soldiers and policemen was stationed in the area to ensure safety. However, many inhabitants perceive the JTC as an occupation army. Also under the civilian government the population was massively affected by punitive action against militias.

ICG, USIP and WANEP give detailed recommendations for the transformation and resolution of conflicts in the Niger Delta Region. In general, there is a broad consensus that peace can only be achieved through political negotiations, as any attempt at military solutions could result in catastrophic consequences for the population and unpredictable risks for the upkeep of oil production. Main recommendations to various levels of the Nigerian government are:

- A further increase of the share of revenue from oil production for the Niger Delta Region, the allocation of part of the funds directly to communities who can decide on the use,
- rapid improvement of the physical and social infrastructure, the provision of education and training facilities and the creation of employment opportunities especially for young people,
- action against corruption and crime, especially illegal arms trafficking, oil theft, prosecution and conviction of high-ranking key figures in the bunkering business,
- reduction of violence and insecurity by amnesty to militias and a DDR program.

Main recommendations to the oil companies are to create transparency on all kinds of payments – both to the Nigerian government and to the communities. Furthermore, all commitments to the communities such as compensation for environmental damage should be met. For cases of dispute independent mechanisms for mediation are to be built up. Policies contributing to inter- and intra-communal conflicts – such as the "host-community“ system – should be abandoned and payments to militias stopped.

Recommendations to the international community and development agencies are to promote dialogue and negotiation on resource control and to support the Nigerian government in tackling corruption, illegal arms and oil trade. Development cooperation should be conditional on the transparency of budgets and expenditure. In addition, resources and expertise to conduct an independent study on the environmental situation in the Niger Delta Region should be provided.

Particularly ICG provides a comprehensive analysis on the causes and development of conflicts in the Niger Delta Region. Sources are the evaluation of literature and media and a large number of qualitative interviews in the region. However, just as the reports and articles of USIP, IRIN and Reliefweb it is nearly completely “gender blind”.

Unsystematic and sporadic reference to violence against women is found in few reports: for example that young women were harassed by the military or that women were raped, killed or injured during military action (Burdin Asuni, 2009: 4, 7, ICG 2006, IRIN-articles). In particular, IRIN and Reliefweb point out in a few sentences that in the wake of various military operations to combat militias thousands were internally displaced and mainly women and children stay in provisional refugee camps. Only in one ICG report of 2006 a slightly more detailed reporting is found and women are shown not only as victims of violence but as actors. It is pointed out that they are organized in a variety of local and ethnic groups such as the *Federation of Ogoni Women's Association* and are also active across ethnic lines in organizations such as the *Niger Delta Women for Justice, Women's Development Association Ijo Arogbo* and *Ogbakiri Women Peace Forum,* however, no conclusions are drawn from this. As in short articles of IRIN and Reliefweb large demonstrations of women against Chevron in 2002 are mentioned (ICG 2006: 14 ff).

In the ICG report of 2006 it is recommended that women and girls are included in DDR programs because they "may not carry guns but have roles within those bodies (such as forced wives or cooks)" (ICG 2006: ii). It is also recommended that the oil companies work together with civil society organizations including women's groups that "have played significant roles in mediating among various ethnic groups and actors in the past decade" (ICG 2006: ii). Otherwise, only in this and one other ICG report it is explicitly recommended that women or women's organizations should be included in dialogues about resource control and in processes of peace building (ICG 2006, ICG 2007: i, 14).

In comparison to this, the short reports of WANEP are much more gender-sensitive (Ekiyor o.D., Eze et al. 2009). In all reports it is criticized, that in previous approaches to solve or transform the conflicts in the Niger Delta Region, the vulnerabilities and interests of women as well as their potential for non-violent conflict management has not been sufficiently considered. A number of recommendations refers explicitly to a greater involvement of women, for example:

- The Nigerian government should implement the UN resolutions 1325 and 1820; women and women's organizations should be involved in dialogue platforms. In addition, economic disadvantages for women should be reduced by specific programs.
- The media and the international community should emphasize the particular problems faced by women in conflict as well as their positive potential in building peace.
- To avoid further disadvantages for women, the transnational oil companies should design their policies gender-sensitive.

- NGOs should offer training for conflict resolution, mediation and early warning for women and women's organizations (Eze et al. 2009).

Involvement of Women in Conflict Analysis: "Nicety or Necessity“?

Considering the conflict analysis of the Niger Delta Region, only WANEP has an explicit and comprehensive women's rights approach (nicety). Both ICG and USIP emphasize in all reports the need for an inclusive peace process, however, their recommendations include a systematic "male-bias". As negotiators in peace processes primarily (male) actors who can disrupt or ensure the production and the export of mineral oil are named – politicians, militants, representatives of oil companies, military and security personnel. In addition, it is recommended that communities and civil society – in particular representatives of churches and ethnic associations – should be involved. Since few women are in leading positions in churches and ethnic organizations mainly men will be included in this group. With the recommendations to create jobs either directly or indirectly largely (potential) militants are considered. In general, the creation of employment opportunities in the frame of the proposed improvement of infrastructure – such as road construction, transport, telecommunications, water and electricity – generally affect sectors where mainly men work.

One reason because gender-dimensions of conflicts are overseen is because analysis with the aim to make recommendations for early action is often oriented to a quick resolution of tensions. Therefore, the main players who can influence peace processes positively or negatively are considered. At first sight women seem not to belong to these groups. This leads to the question whether the integration of women in conflict analysis, prevention and management and peace-building is a "nicety or necessity“ (Potter 2008); or as as Ramsey Marshall (2000: 9) asks: What is the "value added"?

In the case of the example Niger Delta the omission of women as victims of violence and as actors bars the view from the fact that both the Nigerian government‘s attempt to suppress protests with military means as well as recent concessions have been by no means gender-neutral. Already in the ICG report of 2006, policies to maintain the oil production are criticized because „only those groups that obstruct operations (or threatened to) are ‚compensated‘. Communities observe that ... violent, not peaceful behaviour is rewarded" (ICG 2006: 11). Indirectly the Nigerian government and the oil companies reward not only violence as such, but violent men. It can be assumed that for quite a number of the militants aggressive masculinity has become a “way of life” and one question is how and to what extent this contributes to the prolongation or escalation of violent conflicts (see also Jacob et al. 2008, Schäfer 2009).

Taking the Niger Delta Region as an example the main “value added” of the integration of gender perspectives is that they call attention to the inclusion and exclusion of specific groups and to local and micro-level factors that may lead to the prolongation of conflicts. In one of the WANEP-reports Ekiyor (d.u.) describes for example from a very personal perspective the discontent of young people with the politics of oil companies and the Nigerian government, but also reflects on generation conflicts and the declining legitimacy of traditional elites and elders who are seen as „benefit captors". Overall, there is no reason to assume that with further financial concessions by the Nigerian government – even in case part of the resources are allocated directly to the communities – there is no guarantee that distribution will be perceived as more just and may not induce further dissatisfaction and conflict potential. Another value added is that a gender-sensitive analysis may direct the glance towards potential peace constituencies such as the women’s organizations and networks mentioned only shortly in a few reports and articles.

Conclusion

It is difficult to assess in how far the existing early warning systems actually can contribute to the prevention of violent conflicts. Nyheim (2009: 13) skeptically states that “today it cannot be said … that the international community is in a position to prevent another Rwandan genocide”. However, in any case the different information collections can be useful for the monitoring of conflicts and guidance for the design of interventions and short- and long-term planning. The fragility indices provide “watch lists” to assess structural (in)stabilities of states. IRIN and Reliefweb disseminate actual news and also background information relevant for humanitarian aid. USIP and especially ICG provide in-depth conflict analysis. WANEP is still building up capacities for early warning. Specifically its approach to establish response options to violent conflict on the micro-level could have potentials. From experience to date it can be said that in general a „good“ early warning system is one that:

- uses multiple sources of information and both qualitative and quantitative analytical methods,
- includes data on macro-, meso- and micro-level and works with local monitors,
- uses new communication and information technology,
- provides regular reports and updates on conflict regions and dynamics, and
- has a strong link to responders or response mechanisms (adapted from Nyheim 2009: 59).

IRIN, Reliefweb, USIP and ICG show similar patterns of gender-sensitivity and gender-blindness. In their gender focal points awareness on gender is expressed, however, this is not necessarily transferred into their conflict analysis in countries and regions. The nearly complete absence of women and gender perspectives in conflict analysis is not unique for the Niger Delta Region and could also be shown by other examples. This has definitely consequences for the implementation of 1325 and other resolutions. If women are hardly mentioned in conflict analysis, it is unlikely that processes for preventing and resolving conflicts and peace-building will be designed gender-sensitive.

Therefore, conflict analysis should provide information on: the impact of conflict and crisis on women and men, the (potential) contribution of women's organizations in peace-building, the participation of girls and women in militant groups, the degree of sexual violence and women's and girl's practical and strategic needs in regard to measures of socio-economic development and improvement of infrastructure. Furthermore, "good practice" examples for the integration of women in conflict prevention and management and in measures for reconstruction should be documented. Whether this contributes in the end to more participation of women in political negotiations and to inclusiveness, effectiveness and sustainability of peace processes depends on a numerous factors.

Literature

African Development Bank Group (2009): The 2009 Country Policy and Institutional Assessments (CPIA). 2009 CPIA Questionnaire. October 2009/ORPC.2 http://www.afdb.org/en/documents/project-operations/country-performance-assessment-cpa/country-policy-and-institutional-assessment-cpia/ (last visited 14/4/2010)

Anderlini, Sanam Naraghi / Stanski, Victoria (2007): Conflict Prevention. In: International Alert / Women Waging Peace (Hg.): Inclusive Security, Sustainable peace. A Toolkit for Advocacy and Action. London, Washington http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/87_inclusive_security_toolkit.cfm (last visited 10/3/2010)

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/ (last visited 10/3/10)

Bekoe, Dorina (2007): Building Blocks for a Peaceful Transition Workshop Report. Washington: United States Institute of Peace http://www.usip.org/resources/nigeria-2007-building-blocks-peaceful-transition-workshop-report (last visited 14/3/10)

Bergholm, Linnea (2009): Heikle Beziehungen: Vereinte Nationen, Afrikanische Union und Friedensmissionen in Afrika. GIGA (German Institute of Global and Area Studies) Focus, Nr. 10 http://www.giga-hamburg.de/dl/download.php?d=/content/publikationen/pdf/gf_afrika_0910.pdf (last visited 8/5/2010)

Burdin Asuni, Judith (2009): Blood Oil in the Niger Delta. Washington: United States Institute of Peace, Special Report 229 http://www.usip.org/resources/blood-oil-in-the-niger-delta (last visited 11/3/2010)

Campbell, Kelly (2008): Bringing Peace to the Niger Delta. Washington: United States Institute of Peace http://www.usip.org/resources/bringing-peace-niger-delta (last visited 14/3/10)

Cohn, Carol (2008): Mainstreaming Gender in UN Security Policy: A Path to Political Transformation? In: Rai, Shirin M. / Waylen, Georgina (Hg.): Global Governance: Feminist perspectives. Houndmills, Basingtoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan: 185-206

Ekiyor, Thelma (o.D.): Women in Peacebuilding. An Account of the Niger Delta Women. WANEP http://www.wanep.org/wanep/attachments/article/107/tp_women_in_peacebuilding.pdf (last visited 14/8/2010)

Engel, Ulf (2008): Mühseliger Aufbau: Frieden und Sicherheit in der AU. GIGA (German Institute of Global and Area Studies) Focus, Nr. 10 http://www.giga-hamburg.de/dl/download.php?d=/content/publikationen/pdf/gf_afrika_0810.pdf (last visited 8/5/2010)

European Parliament (2000): European Parliament Resolution on Participation of Women in Peaceful Conflict Resolution (2000/2025(INI)) http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P5-TA-2000-0541+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN (last visited 10/3/2010)

Eze, Chukwuemeka, Okechukwu, Ifeanyi / Mere, Evelyn (2008): Niger Delta Crisis and Yar'Adua's Administration: Critical Issues and Hurdles. WANEP, WARN Policy Brief http://www.wanep.org/wanep/attachments/article/88/pb_nigeria_feb08.pdf (last visited 14/8/2010)

Eze, Chukwuemeka, Osagwe, Bridget / Akosile, Bukola / Mere, Evelyn (2009): Ending the Niger Delta Crisis: Exploring Women's Participation in Peace Processes. WANEP, WARN Policy Brief Ending the Niger Delta Crisis: Exploring Women's Participation in Peace Processes. WANEP http://www.wanep.org/wanep/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=83&Itemid=7 (last visited 14/8/2010)

Fabra Mata, Javier / Ziaja, Sebastian (2009): Users' guide on measuring fragility. Bonn, Oslo: Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik, United Nations Development Programme http://www.die-gdi.de/CMS-Homepage/openwebcms3.nsf/(ynDK_contentByKey)/ANES-7W89TW?Open&nav=expand:Publikationen%5CExterne%20Publikationen;active:Publikationen%5CExterne%20Publikationen%5CANES-7W89TW (last visited 1/5/2010)

FEWER – Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (1999): Conflict and Peace Analysis and Response Manual. London http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/studman2.pdf (last visited 8/5/2010)

Hill, Felicity (2003): Women's Contribution to Conflict Prevention, Early Warning and Disarmament. In: Disarmament Forum, Women, men, peace and security, No. 4, UNIDIR: 17-24 http://www.unidir.org/pdf/articles/pdf-art1994.pdf (last visited 5/8/2010)

Institute for Economics and Peace (2010) Global Peace Index. 2010 Methodology, Results and Findings http://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/2010-GPI-Results-and-Methodology-Report1.pdf (last visited 14/8/2010)

International Crisis Group (2006): The Swamps of Insurgency: Nigeria's Delta Unrest. Africa Report No. 115 http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4310&l=1 (last visited 10/3/2010)

International Crisis Group (2006a): Fuelling the Niger Delta Crisis. Africa Report No. 118 http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4394&l=1 (last visited 8/3/2010)

International Crisis Group (2007): Nigeria: Ending Unrest in the Niger Delta. Africa Report No. 135 http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5186&l=1 (last visited 10/3/2010)

International Crisis Group (2009): Nigeria: Seizing the Moment in the Niger Delta. Abuja, Dakar, Brüssel: Africa Briefing No. 60 http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=6080&l=1 (last visited 11/3/2010)

Jacob, Margarete / Bendix, Daniel / Stanley, Ruth (Hg.): Engendering Security Sector Reform. Berlin: Workshop report Engendering SSR, Freie Universität Berlin 7.11.2008

Kinzel, Wolf (2007): Afrikanische Sicherheitsarchitektur – ein aktueller Überblick. http://www.giga-hamburg.de/dl/download.php?d=/content/publikationen/pdf/gf_afrika_0701.pdf (last visited 8/5/2010)

Moser, Annalise (2005): Peace and Conflict Gender Analysis. Community-Level Data from the Solomon Islands. UNIFEM

Nyheim, David (2009): Can Violence, War and State Collapse be Prevented? The Future of Operational Conflict Early Warning and Response Systems. Paris OECD

OECD (2009): Preventing violence, war and state collapse: The future of conflict early warning and response http://browse.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/pdfs/browseit/4309141E.PDF (last visited 10/3/2010)

OSCE (2005): Women in Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation, Ljubljana, Decision No. 14/05 http://www.osce.org/documents/mcs/2005/12/17432_en.pdf (last visited 10/3/2010)

OSCE / ODIHR (2009): Gender and Early Warning Systems http://www.osce.org/publications/odihr/2009/11/41377_1387_en.pdf (last visited 14/8/2010)

Pampell Conaway, Camille (2005): Charting Progress: The Role of Women in Reconstruction and Stabilization Operations. Washington: United States Institute of Peace

Pampell Conaway, Camille (2006): The Role of Women in Stabilization and Reconstruction. Washington: United Institute of Peace http://www.usip.org/files/resources/srs_three.pdf (last visited 14/8/2010)

Potter, Antonia (2008): Gender Sensitivity: Nicety or Necessity in Peace-Process Management? In: The Oslo Forum Network of Mediators http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/SHIG-7L5DGN/$file/HD_Jun2008.pdf?openelement (last visited 11/3/2010)

Ramsey Marshall, Donna (2000): Women in War and Peace. Grassroots Peacebuilding. Washington: United States Institute of Peace

Rotberg, Robert, I. / Gisselquist, Rachel M. (2009): Strengthening African Governance: Index of African Governance – Results and Rankings 2009. Cambridge, MA: Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, World Peace Foundation http://www.worldpeacefoundation.org/africangovernance.html (last visited 3/3/2010)

Schäfer, Rita (2009): Männlichkeit und Bürgerkriege in Afrika – neue Ansätze zur Überwindung sexueller Kriegsgewalt. Eschborn: GTZ

Schmeidl, Susanne / Piza-Lopez, Eugenia (2002): Gender and conflict early warning: A framework for action. London, Bern: International Alert / Swiss Peace Foundation http://www.international-alert.org/pdf/EWGEN.pdf (last visited 10/3/2010)

Smock, David (2009): Crisis in the Niger Delta. Washington. United States Institute of Peace http://www.usip.org/resources/crisis-in-the-niger-delta (last visited 11/3/2010)

UNDP-UNIFEM (2006): Consultation on Gender, Early Warning and Conflict Analysis. New York

UNIFEM (2006): Engendering Conflict Early Warning. Lessons from UNIFEM's Solomon Islands Gendered Conflict Early Warning Project http://www.siyanda.org/static/UNIFEM_solomon_conflict.htm?em=0707&tag=QG (last visited 14/8/2010)

UNIFEM et al. (2005): Monitoring Peace and Conflict in the Solomon Islands: Gendered Early Warning Report No. 1 http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/showRecord.php?RecordId=6221 (last visited 14/8/2010)

United Nations Security Council (2000): Resolution 1325, adopted at its 4213th Meeting on 31 October 2000, S/RES/1325 http://www.un.org/events/res_1325e.pdf (last visited 10/3/2010)

United Nations Security Council (2008): Resolution 1820, adopted at its 5916th Meeting on 19. Juni 2008 http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/391/44/PDF/N0839144.pdf?OpenElement (last visited 10/3/2010)

United Nations Security Council (2009): Resolution 1888, adopted at its 6195th Meeting on 30 September 2009, S/RES/1888 http://www.un.org/Depts/german/sr/sr_09/sr1888.pdf (last visited 10/3/10)

Wulf, Herbert / Debiel, Tobias (2009): Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanisms: Tools for Enhancing the Effectiveness of Regional Organisation? A Comparative Study of the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, ASEAN/ARF and PIF. London: Development Studies Institute (DESTIN) / Crisis States Working Papers Series No.2 http://www.crisisstates.com/download/wp/wpSeries2/WP49.2.pdf (last visited 8/5/2010)

WANEP – West African Network for Peacebuilding (2008): Annual Report 2008. Accra (Ghana)