

Gender and Conflict Transformation in the Field: An Analytical Framework to Monitor Gender-Related Needs and Impacts of Development Programs in Internal Conflicts on the Basis of Case Studies in Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines

Norbert Frieters-Reermann

Abstract The article deals with gender and conflict sensitive planning and monitoring of development programs. The text is based on experiences and research in Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. These countries are affected by ongoing or past violent conflicts, which are challenging development actors and activities on the ground. The guiding questions for the article are: 1. Why a gender perspective is important for peace and conflict related research and monitoring? 2. What are the minimum standards for gender-sensitive planning and monitoring of development measures in conflict environments? 3. What are the conclusion and possible consequences for development organizations, partner organizations researchers and consultants in the field?

The author's experiences and the reflections in the three selected countries lead to an analytical framework and a certain participatory monitoring approach which is suitable for gender and conflict sensitive planning and monitoring in the field. The main conclusions are: participatory gender and conflict planning and monitoring of development measures is not a question of political correctness, but a question of accurate peace and conflict related planning and monitoring. Women and men experience war and violent conflict in different ways. Both are important actors and change agents for peace, however, women especially play an important role at the micro-level. As development cooperation strongly focuses at the micro-level, it is important to integrate a gender and conflict specific perspective while working in war and conflict affected countries. Thus, it is a question of effective and sustainable development management and a question of professionalism to ensure participatory gender and conflict sensitive approaches.

Key Words: Conflict Transformation, Gender and Conflict Sensitive Planning and Monitoring, Peace and Conflict Assessment, Impact Monitoring

INTRODUCTION

Around forty countries worldwide are affected by civil wars or internal violent conflicts. To obtain a deeper understanding of these conflicts and their root causes, actors and dynamics, several instruments for conflict analysis were developed (Anderson 1999; Leonhardt 2001; Austin et al 2003; Paffenholz & Reyhler 2007). But most of these instruments do not take into account the different roles, experiences, needs, vulnerabilities and interests of women or men. Therefore, a lot of conflict related analyzes do not cover a gender specific perspective. But in order to learn more about the gender specific aspects and dynamics of violent conflicts, it is important to include men and women from all levels of society in a participatory way in the analyzes and monitoring of war and peace processes. Therefore, development and use of participatory and gender-sensitive instruments is necessary. Such instruments and tools provide the opportunity to analyze the root causes of violent conflicts and civil wars from a gender perspective; to assess different roles of men and women in conflict escalation and conflict transformation; and to develop indicators of successful gender-sensitive peace-building interventions and processes.

This article will sum up and discuss experiences and observations with such participatory and gender-sensitive instruments in three conflict-affected countries: Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. All these three countries were or are still affected by civil wars or the challenges of so called post-conflict-situations, which are still dominated by several violent conflict dynamics. The research focuses on peace and conflict related development programs undertaken on behalf of the German Government in these countries. For the context of development cooperation on behalf of the German Government; Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA) is a compulsory tool for conflict sensitive planning and monitoring of programs in war or conflict affected countries (Leonhardt et al 2008). But the PCA tool or method is also limited in regard of gender specific questions and does not explicitly cover gender related aspects. This article deals with the question, how gender and conflict sensitivity could be linked in practice. The observations and results are based on action research, participant observation, group discussions (with beneficiaries, and target groups), semi-structured interviews (with staff members, partners and external experts) and testing of planning and monitoring tools and instruments (within structures at different levels) in or around development projects funded by the German Government dealing with conflict transformation and peace-building in these countries. The author of the paper was involved as researcher and consultant

in the development of these instruments. The guiding questions for this article are:

1. Why a gender perspective is important for peace and conflict related research?
2. What are the minimum standards for gender-sensitive planning and monitoring of measures in conflict environments?
3. What are the conclusions and possible consequences for development organizations, partner organizations researchers and consultants in the field?

GENDER AND CONFLICT IN THE VIEW OF RESEARCH

In 2000, the UN Security Council adopted the Resolution 1325 with the title “Women, Peace and Security.” The Resolution deals with the relevance of the category of sex/gender and the relevance of sex ratio and gender identity in the development, dynamics and management of violent crises and armed conflicts (UN Security Council 2000). The Resolution urges Member States to consider the special needs of women and girls in the training of civilian and military personnel and in mine clearance, demobilization and refugee programs. Moreover, the representation of women at all decision making levels of national, military and civilian actors involved in peacekeeping and conflict management should be increased significantly.

Since the adoption of the Resolution, advancing gender awareness in terms of research, analysis and management of armed conflicts can be observed in international and German context. Nonetheless, especially in Germany, the category of gender still plays a minor role, regarding peacekeeping and conflict management in scientific, political and, particularly, in military context (Apelt et al 2005; Dittmer 2007b). However, a gender specific perspective on conflict dynamics, escalation and transformation is important, because even if both women and men experience violent conflicts as heavy human tragedies, the gender specific roles and needs are different (Reimann 2002, 2008; Capriolio 2003; El Jack 2003; Zarkow 2006; Stern & Malin 2006). Men and women are involved in military operations but still the majority of soldiers are men. During wars, while men are fighting, women often take over former male-dominated duties in addition to their traditional female roles. In violent conflict men tend to be injured and killed mostly by firearms. Women are often victims of rape, domestic violence and displacement. And further, more often the roles and capacities of men and women in conflict transformation processes and peace negotiations are different. Both women and men can act as change agents and promoter of peace, but mostly they act on different levels. While men are operating usually on the macro-level and get involved in official peace talks, women are strongly participating in local or regional peace-building activities. So women often play a very important,

but frequently neglected role on the micro-level, as the initiative “1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize,” has demonstrated. All these aspects are often ignored by conflict-related analyzes.

Hence, it is important to point out that after the detailed reports of sexual violence against women in camps during the civil war in former Yugoslavia (1991-1995) and more than ten years after the adoption of UN Resolution 1325 the category of gender gained more and more importance in peace and conflict related science and research. But nevertheless gender-oriented and gender-related research is quite a new but dynamic field of development in peace and conflict science which is reflected in different research priorities and institutional and regional focusing. The following works out of a range of studies, analyzes, expertise and research works covering the interface of conflict and gender research should be emphasized:

- Feminist founded analyzes (Harders 2004; Feminist Institute of the Heinrich-Böll-Foundation 2003, 2006)
- Theoretical foundations and debates (Goldstein 2001; Reimann 2002; Engels 2008)
- Studies about the interrelation between gender, identity and conflict (Seifert 2004; Engels & Chojnacki 2007)
- Research contributions about sexual violence and rape in context of war and conflict (Hromadži, 2004; Carpenter 2006)
- Analyzes of a gender perspective in civilian conflict management (Stanley 2002; Müller 2006; Reimann 2008)
- Contributions to the role of development cooperation (Dittmer 2007a; Stern & Malin 2006)
- Expertise about the interrelation between education, dynamics of conflict and gender relations (Davies 2004)
- Regional gender-specific analyzes of conflict, e.g. regarding former Yugoslavia (Seifert 2004), the Middle East conflict (Brunner 2006) or the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (Ospina 2006)

In this regard, there are several studies dealing specifically with UN peace missions and therefore directly linked to UN Resolution 1325. In these studies, the role of women in UN peacekeeping operations and associated impacts are analyzed. In these studies, the following positive aspects are named prevalently:

- Increased commitment of women in UN peacekeeping operations can function as a signal effect to the local community, indicating equal opportunities, gender equality, and participation—especially in case of women holding professional and leadership positions within missions (Hudson 2000, 2005; Seifert 2003; Ospina 2006; Conaway & Shoemaker 2008; Bertalozzi 2010).

- There are stereotyped feminine social, communicative, and emotional qualities attributed to women that are classified as significant for mediating and negotiating activities within peacekeeping operations (DeGroot 2002; Hudson 2000; Bertalozzi 2010; Bridges & Horsfall 2009).
- Women succeed a better approach to the local women of the theater of operations (Hudson 2000, 2005; Bridges & Horsfall 2009; Bertalozzi 2010).
- The presence of women can decrease the number of sexual assaults committed by male soldiers against civilians (DeGroot 2002; Hudson 2000) and the prevalence of illegal prostitution (Bertalozzi 2010).
- Women enable an intensified consideration of women's rights, e.g. within political, legal, and administrative reformations or within peace agreements in post-conflict contexts (Hebst 2010).
- Women have the ability to integrate relevant new perspectives and experiential backgrounds into UN peacekeeping operations—particularly in terms of the association with female civilians and questions related to women and family (Conaway & Shoemaker 2008; Bertalozzi 2010).
- Women's style of leadership within peacekeeping operations is described as more open, more sympathetic, and more holistic (Conaway & Shoemaker 2008; Bertalozzi 2010; Bridges & Horsfall 2009).

Furthermore, an UN study of 2000 based on the evaluations of several UN missions showed that those peacekeeping operations were particularly successful, which involved a relative high percentage of women. Likewise, the willingness of local civilian women to participate in peace initiatives and peace processes increased significantly, in case of women representing at least 30% of the mission members. These peacekeeping operations often are far less hierarchically structured, a lot more gender-sensitive and much more active regarding the treatment and consideration of gender-specific peace matters and security concerns (UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations 2000).

These research results underline the importance of a gender specific perspective, but still the theoretical-conceptual basis is limited.

In this regard Reimann underlined the importance of a gender-sensitive approach by introducing the gender triangle for conflict research and conflict transformation in practice (2002, 2004, 2008). The triangle could be used as a kind of reflection and orientation tool for gender sensible planning and monitoring in the field.

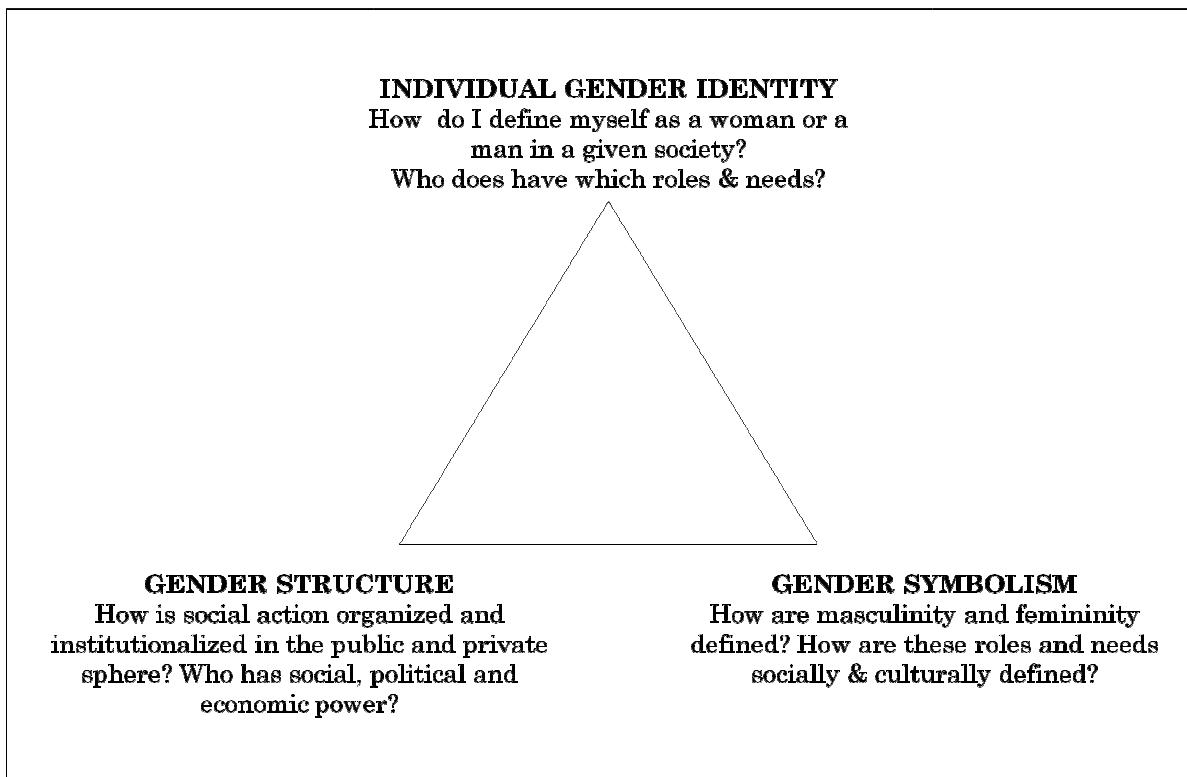


Figure 1: The Gender Triangle. Based on Reimann 2002, 2008

The gender triangle points out that the three gender dimensions (individual gender identity, gender symbolism and gender structure) are directly interlinked and interwoven perspectives. Therefore, according to Reimann these three perspectives would only make sense, if they are seen and used together. The perspective of gender structure for example in the form of the gendered division of roles and responsibilities in the field of military has only little, if any, theoretical and political meaning without taking into account the perspective of gender symbolism and the perspective of individual gender identity which permanently (re)produce these gender structure. By the same token, a change of any of the three perspectives or dimensions will lead to a significant change of the entire gender triangle: an illustrative example may be here a change in the gender structure like more women entering male-dominated military leading positions or areas of peace and security related policy-making institutions. Such a shift will slowly but surely deconstruct stereotypical understandings of gender symbolism and socially expected behavior of a man or a woman in the whole security and military sector and even beyond. On the other hand the gender triangle is, according to Reimann, not a fixed structure but a flexible dynamic model. So, individual gender identity, gender symbolism and gender structure are factors which could differ in different social, economic, political and cultural settings. As such, the definition and understanding of gender may vary from class to class, from

Gender and Conflict Transformation in the Field

culture to culture, from age group to age group and for sure from peace to wartime.

Therefore, the gender triangle could be used as a suitable tool to analyze conflict dynamics, and to observe gender related relations, identities, structures and symbolisms in conflict affected societies and to draw gender specific conclusion in the field.

But what exactly does a gender perspective related to practical conflict transformation and peace building involves and what does it not involve. The following overview by Reimann (2008) enables a clearer picture and questions certain prejudices (Table 1).

TABLE 1
THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

What a gender perspective does involve	What a gender perspective does not involve
Conflict analysis	
Conducting a gender-sensitive conflict analysis, i.e. asking what different and same needs, fears and interests do women and men have, and who has the power among the conflict parties.	Conducting a conflict analysis mentioning the roles of women in a separate section or focusing only on women as "victims."
Different roles	
Looking at the inequalities and different roles between and among women and men. Designing interventions that take inequalities and differences between women and men into account.	Treating women and men as the same or focusing exclusively on women.
Actors for change	
Recognizing that both women and men are actors for change, conflict and peace.	Treating women only as a "vulnerable group."
Different needs	
Recognizing that men and women have different needs. E.g. men may be the prime victims of direct violence and women may be survivors of gender specific violence, and therefore they have specific psycho-social and health needs.	Ignoring gender-specific dimensions of violence against men and women.
Quotas	
Including women in the negotiation process: Moving beyond counting the number of participants to looking at impacts of initiatives. However, generally a "critical mass" of 30% participation is required to have an impact.	Striving for equal or 50/50 (men/women) participation. "Enforce" quotas and affirmative action to ensure an equal – politically correct – participation of women as mediators or representatives of conflict parties.
Cultural specifics	
"Conservative" cultures: Working with men as tribal leaders or elders and negotiating the rights and public resources for women by appealing to the men's self-interest.	Working with local authorities and accepting the gender-specific asymmetries as "culture-specific," given and unchangeable.

Group differences	
Understanding the differences among different groups of women and men.	Assuming that all women or all men will have the same interests.
Context-specific analysis	
Understanding the specific situation and documenting actual conditions and priorities.	Assuming and generalizing who does what work and who has which responsibilities.
Indicators	
Coming up with indicators for a successful application of a gender-sensitive negotiation process, e.g. increased gender awareness of men and women participating in mediation processes.	Assuming that as soon as there are women in the negotiating team and/or at the "peace table," the negotiation will automatically be gender-sensitive and conflict issues will be dealt with in a gender-sensitive way.

Source: Reimann, 2008

PEACE AND CONFLICT ASSESSMENT FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

In almost all countries which are affected by violent and armed conflicts international development cooperation is one important actor. More than fifty cooperation countries of German development cooperation are affected by violent conflicts and wars. Therefore, peace and security are important challenges and key issues of development cooperation measures in these countries. By working with certain groups within this conflict affected societies, development cooperation itself becomes an actor in the conflict. This situation requires development organizations to remain particularly sensitive to the possible impacts of their work on the respective peace or conflict situation and also on impacts of the conflict on their work. This sensitivity is termed as the "do no harm"-principle (DNH), which has gained international recognition (see Anderson 1999).

Conflict sensitivity therefore, is quite a new challenge for the German and the international donor community. Conflict sensitivity means taking into account the interrelationship between the conflict on the one side and the development programs and measures on the other side, with the aim to avoid any negative, escalating and conflict-aggravating impacts but strengthening positive, deescalating and peace-promoting impacts. In addition to that it is important to ensure the safety and the security of national and international staff and to minimize the risks of partners and beneficiaries of development organizations in violent conflicts.

To assess the necessary conflict sensitivity in war and conflict affected countries, a specific methodology was developed for the German development cooperation: the Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA) (Leonhardt et al 2008; Paffenholz & Rychler 2007). The PCA method includes the following steps:

Step 1: Peace and Conflict Analysis (1a) and the Assessment of Peace Building Needs (1b)

The peace and conflict analysis is the analytical basis of PCA. This analysis should not only concentrate on negative factors and conflict related problems but also on positive factors, conflict related capacities and potentials for peace. The analysis should be development-oriented and therefore include those social and political conflicts that impair a country's development and that have led (or might potentially lead) to unintended conflicts and violence. The results of a peace and conflict analysis are always subjective and are usually momentary snapshots. Even the agreement on a common perspective on a specific conflict analyzes among different actors and stakeholder can already turn into a very conflictive and critical process. There are many different approaches, methods and instruments for a peace and conflict analysis and often it makes sense to use a mix of them. On the basis of the peace and conflict analysis the peace building needs (PBN) are developed. The PBN are developed by comparing the peace and conflict analysis (current state) with the vision for peace (desired state). Determining PBN is a creative process, trying to generate new and unusual ideas and visions for the future. PBN underline that there are in every conflict specific needs, which, if addressed, could have a significant influence on the peace and conflict situation.

Step 2: Peace and Conflict -Related Relevance Assessment

The peace and conflict related relevance assessment enables the link between the conflict analysis and the PBN on the one hand and the planned or existing development measures in the country on the other hand. The core element of the relevance assessment is a comparison of the existing or planned measures with the previously identified PBN.

Step 3: Conflict-Related Risk Management

This step is necessary to review the feasibility of measures in the conflict context and to develop a security strategy plan. Risk management on the one side is an ongoing process that assesses risks, security problems and sensitive issues for national and international staff, for partners and beneficiaries involved. It also focuses on danger for the investments and the achievements of the goals of measures. On the other side risk management includes concrete activities on how to minimize all risk, dangers and hazards.

Step 4: Peace and Conflict-Related Impact Monitoring

Peace and conflict-related impact monitoring is the last PCA element. It involves not only monitoring the expected positive impacts, related to the overall objective of the project or program. It also includes the monitoring of unintended positive impacts on the conflict and furthermore the monitoring of possible unintended negative impacts and escalating factors on the conflict. On the basis of conflict-sensitive impact monitoring, recommendations are

developed how to reduce negative impacts of DC on the conflict as a minimum standard of conflict-sensitive DC. Furthermore new opportunities are developed, how the project or program could contribute to the conflict transformation and peace process in the country. So this step is important in order to avoid negative impacts that exacerbate the conflict and in order to strengthen positive deescalating impacts.

Depending on the context, a PCA can be carried out at country level or at project and program level. At country level the result of a PCA is the review and adjustment of the definition of priority areas, and/or of strategies of existing priority areas.

PCA is a compulsory tool for planning and monitoring of governmental German development measures and therefore, is an important instrument having significant influence on the strategy and the management of development programs. However, it is characterized by one blind spot that is gender. The PCA method does not explicitly take into account the different roles, experiences, needs, vulnerabilities and interests of women or men in conflict environments and hence a gender specific perspective is not integrated. The author's experience and research in Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines suggests that it is important and possible to include a gender specific perspective within PCA processes. Including gender dimensions within PCA enables development programs and actors in the field to assess:

- root causes of conflicts from a gender perspective
- the linkage between conflicts and gender inequality
- different problems and potentials of men and women
- gender specific roles in conflict escalation
- gender specific roles in conflict transformation
- indicators for successful gender-sensitive peace-building
- unintended negative gender related impacts of conflict transformation and development measures

Therefore, including a gender lens into PCA will lead to certain minimum standards for planning and monitoring of development corporation programs in the field as evidenced in the case studies of Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines.

In this regard gender and conflict sensitive planning will contribute to:

- peace and conflict analysis including a gender perspective
- needs assessment including the security and the peace building needs from men and women
- definition of gender specific goals and objectives of measures and programs

And on the other side gender and conflict sensitive monitoring includes:

- Monitoring positive, conflict-deescalating impacts from a gender perspective
- Monitoring negative, conflict-escalating referring to gender specific aspects
- Monitoring risks and security aspects for men and women

Furthermore, it becomes clear that it is important to distinguish between different level of operations for program planning and monitoring, because development programs especially the larger ones worked at three levels. And, at all of these levels certain impacts are expected.

At the macro or national/country level, programs often have national partners like ministries and governmental institutions, and intend to address national country-wide conflict lines. At the meso-level, the programs mainly cooperate with provincial governments and structures or regional institutions and NGOs mainly focusing on regional conflict dynamics, more often than not. At the micro-level, the programs support community based organizations; small groups; unofficial and self-help groups and other local actors; and therefore, address local conflict or the local impacts of national and regional conflict lines.

As already mentioned above often the roles and capacities of men and women in conflict dynamics, conflict transformation and peace negotiations are different at certain levels of society. Both women and men act as important agents for constructive conflict resolution or peace-building, but mostly they are operating at different levels. While men are mainly engaged at the macro-level and take part in official peace negotiations and national political decision making, women are stronger participating in local or regional peace-building activities. Thus, women often play a very strong and important, but frequently neglected role at the micro-level, because for almost all internal violent conflicts official peace talks and processes are only lasting and sustainable, if they take into account local and regional peace building needs and integrate the perspectives of the meso and micro level. The knowledge about these levels and gender specific aspects has a significant influence for development organizations in the field.

Based on these minimum standards the following analytical framework (Table 2) which includes these different levels on the one side and different steps and perspectives of the planning and monitoring process on the other side was developed.

TABLE 2
ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER AND CONFLICT SENSITIVE PLANNING AND MONITORING

	Planning			Monitoring		
	Conflict Analysis	Needs Assessment	Goals and Objectives	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Risks and Security Aspects
Macro Level						
Meso Level						
Micro Level						

For actors, partners and target groups at each level specific planning and monitoring methods, tools and instruments are suitable and gender specific approaches are necessary. And for sure, a conflict analysis or a conflict related needs assessment or an impact monitoring looks completely different, if you work with key persons and actors at the national level or if you work with beneficiaries at the local level. For each field in the matrix, specific guiding questions incorporating a gender perspective could be developed. E.g. for conflict analysis you could ask for each level, how men and women are affected by the conflict(s) and which role they play in regard to conflict escalation or transformation. Related to the needs assessment you could ask how the peace and security needs of men and women differ at each level. Or during monitoring positive impacts for each level you could ask how the situation changed for men and women influenced by the development measure. In the next section, a case study of Nepal will illustrate how gender sensitive monitoring at the micro-level in an environment of armed conflict could look like.

CASE STUDY OF NEPAL: MONITORING POSITIVE IMPACTS

The case study refers to development projects in Nepal which mainly worked on rural development and food security but also on gender and conflict related issues as gender inequality was identified as one important root cause for the main conflict and several local conflict lines. The main focus of the case study is dealing with challenges of monitoring positive impacts.

Nepal is considered one of the least-developed and poorest countries in the world. This situation is compounded by high rates of malnutrition and widespread poverty as furthermore the deep impacts of the violent military conflict between the Maoist Peoples Liberation Army and the then Government of Nepal, which lasted from 1996 to 2006. The case study is based on a development program on behalf of German Technical Cooperation

(GTZ), the German governmental lead agency in technical development cooperation. The GTZ program was implemented from 2004 to 2008, hence partly during the civil war and it was mainly operating in thirty-one selected communities in Rolpa and Rukum districts. The program region was a very remote mountain area (no roads, no vehicles), characterized by a very traditional culture, with traditional gender roles, low living standards, high illiteracy and a strong out-migration because of these circumstances. These two districts Rukum and Rolpa were generally considered as the heartland of the Maoists movement and one of the sources of the insurgency. As a result, these districts and their population were strongly affected by the violent conflict and its impacts, which led to high food insecurity, poverty and security problems for the local population. Therefore, the main objectives of the program were to contribute to food security and income opportunities for the local population as well as to contribute to the security in conflict affected areas and the transformation of local conflicts. Another focus area was addressing gender related questions and gender discrimination. Thus furthering gender equality was an important objective for the program as gender discrimination was identified as root cause of the national conflict. During the planning of the program it became clear that working on peace, conflict and security related issues has to include a gender specific strategy and gender specific impact indicators. The general approach of the program was based on empowerment of the local population, capacity development of beneficiary groups and participatory planning and implementation. In this regard, the program initiated and supported local action groups, self-help groups, planning committees and learning centre in all of the thirty-one communities.

The case study is based on the experiences and the research during the process of implementing a suitable participatory conflict sensitive impact monitoring system for the program. The system should mainly focus at the micro-level, should be able to analyze conflict and gender specific impacts, changes and outcomes of the program and should be state-of-the-art. In addition, should follow a participatory approach meaning that the perspectives of the beneficiaries should be directly included in the monitoring in a group based and interactive way. Therefore, suitable monitoring levels (e.g. self-help groups, planning committees and learning centers, which were initiated or supported by the program) were identified at the local or the beneficiary-level. Furthermore, the main focus of the monitoring was to observe impacts as changes at the beneficiary-level. These changes could be observed when the project activities led to certain outputs, which were used by the beneficiaries. These changes could be positive or negative, expected or unexpected, direct or indirect, intended or unintended. But the intended positive impacts should address both the root causes and the effects of the main conflict in the country.

Intended positive impacts of the program on the root causes of the violent conflict lines were identified as:

- addressing poverty and the poorest of the poor, reducing the gap between poor and rich, and secure their livelihood by short-term and long-term income generation
- enhancing access to resources for the poorest people
- training and raising awareness concerning caste and gender based discrimination through learning centers, self-help groups and planning committees
- focus on gender and caste equality through special targeting in all project activities accompanied by awareness raising measures
- orientation of staff and beneficiaries in transparency and accountability measures (e.g. with project books, public audit) to check misuse of resources and corruption

Intended positive impacts of the program on the effects of the conflict were mentioned as:

- reduction in proportion of conflict-affected and extremely economically affected population of the districts by targeting poverty
- strengthening of local, social and family relations by reduction in out-migration
- inclusion of special conflict-affected groups like widows with small children, orphans or disabled in the project activities as victims of the conflict
- strengthening of the beneficiaries' self-help capacity through empowerment and economic independence
- strengthening of community activities to build trust among people
- provision of platforms to raise awareness for solving local problems

In doing so the program tried to provide the beneficiaries the capacity and opportunity to cope with the conflict situation and to prepare the ground for the post-conflict situation.

The following example of the monitoring procedure of monitoring positive impacts at micro-level illustrates how monitoring took place in consonance with the objective and the indicator of increasing gender equality. This specific procedure of group-based monitoring is one of several elements of the participatory conflict sensitive impact monitoring system of the program. The whole monitoring system, which also covers the other fields of the matrix above (Table 2), was developed on an action research oriented field visit in 2005. During the field-visits, different monitoring approaches were adapted or newly developed and pilot-tested, before a final system for the whole program region was developed.

Gender and Conflict Transformation in the Field

Monitoring of intended positive impacts was done in all groups, committees and initiatives which were founded, initiated, supported or facilitated by the program. Monitoring was not only done related to gender specific questions, but also to other aspects which were linked to the root causes of the conflict and which were addressed by the program, e.g. the question of caste discrimination and the intended impact of the program to increase caste equality at the local level. Furthermore, it is important to point out that these monitoring procedures took place in all groups every six months in order to compare the results and to identify changes and impacts over the whole program duration.

The monitoring of each indicator started with a discussion in the group. The key questions for the discussion related to gender related questions were: What has changed in terms of gender equality in the last six months? Which changes can you describe? In addition to these key questions further guiding questions were asked, e.g.: What do you understand by gender equality? Can you give some examples? If you look at the examples from the last monitoring period: What has changed? How was it before? How is it now? What exactly did change? Who benefited from these changes? What has changed on personal/individual level? What has changed in the family level? What has changed on community/neighborhood level? How can you describe or measure these changes?

The main results of the discussions were written on white board, wall or brown paper. After the group discussion the participants of the groups proceeded to scale the described changes on a scale. Because of the high levels of illiteracy amongst beneficiary group members, a visual scaling approach was applied. The scaling of the described changes tried to compile the assessment of all changes and impacts on one scale.

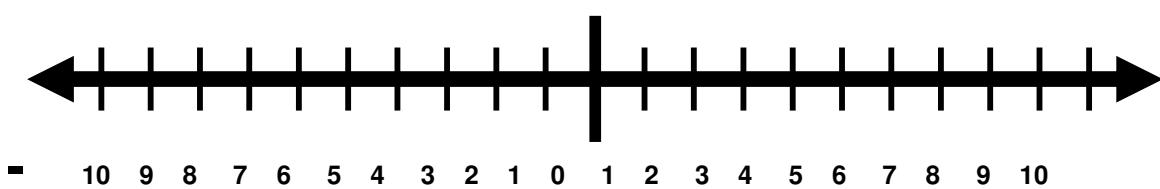


Figure 2: Scaling Tool for Monitoring Positive Impacts

The key question for the scaling was: How much did the situation regarding this indicator change in the last six months? In the first step every participant had put a mark on the scale. If the changes were important and significant in the positive direction, the participants should put their mark on the positive side, on the right side of the scale. If they think, that there are no

changes (neither positive nor negative), they should put their mark to zero in the middle. And if they have observed all in all more negative changes, they should put their mark on the left side of the scale. The number represented the intensity of the change.

In a second step each group discussed the results of then scaling and tried to agree on one common mark on the scale. If there was no time or it was not possible to come to a common agreement the average group result was calculated. After the first scaling the participants were asked to discuss and scale the contribution of the GTZ program related to the described changes.

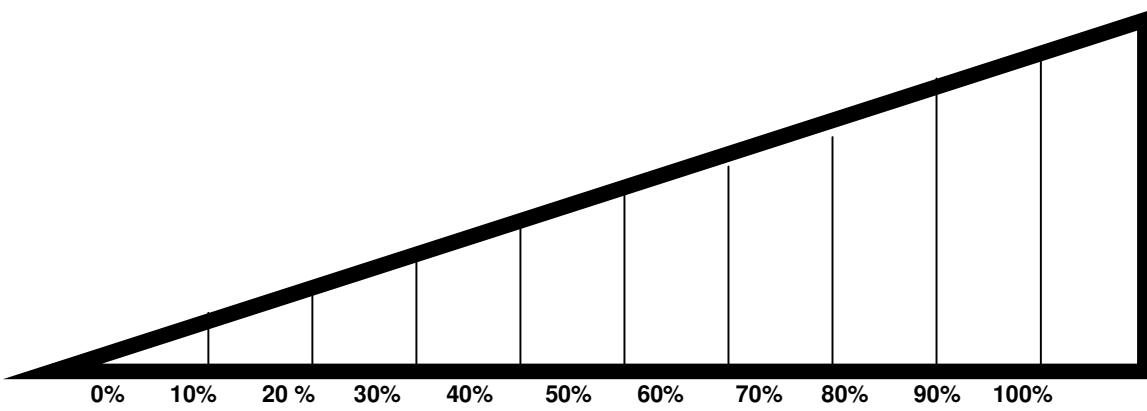


Figure 3: Scaling Tool for Monitoring the Contribution of the Program Related to Positive Impacts

The key question was: How much did the GTZ program contribute to the described changes (in percentages)? As there are always other influences on changes, it is important for the monitoring to find out, how much a development measure contributed to these changes. Especially in the case study of Nepal related to the gender related indicators this was very important as the Maoists had similar gender related objectives in their campaigns. So some participants considered additional not program related factors as important for certain changes as well.

Gender and Conflict Transformation in the Field

<p>Brief description of the monitoring procedure at local level in beneficiary groups related to the objective/indicator: Gender equality has increased.</p> <p>1. Discussion</p> <p><u>Key Question for the Discussion:</u></p> <p>Which changes in terms of gender equality in your community can you describe (observed during the last six months)?</p> <p><u>Further Guiding Questions for the Discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is equality for you? What is gender equality? • Can you describe changes regarding gender equality? • What has changed on your personal/individual level? • What has changed on your family level? • What has changed on your community/neighborhood level? • What has changed on the side of women and on the side of men? • Did the attitude, awareness and behavior of women and men change? • Did the role and responsibility in decision making of women and men change? • Did the access of women and men to resources change? • Did the social and economic participation of women change? Do the women feel stronger? • Can you give some examples? How can you describe or measure these changes? <p>2. Scaling of the changes</p>  <p><u>Key question:</u></p> <p>How much did gender equality increase in your community (in the last six months)?</p> <p><u>First Step:</u></p> <p>In the first step every participant puts a mark on the scale.</p> <p><u>Second Step:</u></p> <p>In a second step the group should discuss the result and try to agree on one common mark on the scale. If there is no time to come to a common agreement you can calculate or estimate the average group result.</p> <p>3. Scaling of the GTZ-Food Security Research Project (FSRP) Contribution</p>  <p><u>Key Question:</u></p> <p>How much did GTZ-FSRP contribute to the described changes (in percentages)?</p> <p>Every participant puts a mark on the scale.</p>

Figure 4: Brief Description of Participatory Monitoring Procedure at Local Level

The results of the monitoring sessions in all groups were compiled, analyzed and discussed among each district management team and later in the overall management team. The results were then compared with previous findings to provide the overall trend and progress. During the comparison of new and existing data the following questions were frequently used to guide and enhance the comparison: Which examples of positive and negative changes were collected and discussed during the monitoring workshops? How many

positive and negative changes (on average) occurred in the communities during the reporting period? Are there any examples of unintended positive or negative impacts? How much did the GTZ program contribute to the changes (in percentage terms)? Are there any differences in the findings from the monitoring process between various groups, communities or the two districts? If so, why did these results and differences occur?

Due to the participatory conflict sensitive impact monitoring, conflict sensitivity of the program activities was ensured not only through a process of continuous evaluation and reflection on the interactions between the project activities and the dynamics of conflict, but also through effective project steering while working in and on conflict. Therefore, the conflicting parties appreciated this approach of monitoring and reporting, thus further increasing the acceptance of the project in Rukum and Rolpa districts. This strengthened the projects political impartiality, which was an important side effect an important basis for the further cooperation even after the conflict.

Further, active participation of the beneficiaries ensured that concerns and perspectives of the populace at local and community level were analyzed by people themselves. It also furthered their right to know about project activity outputs and impacts at the same time facilitating analyzes thereof. As participatory monitoring approach does not require external involvement, it also helped the community to develop confidence and a feeling of ownership over the initiatives. This led to increased participation of beneficiaries, especially of women in the project activities overtime and ensured continued monitoring even during periods of escalating conflicts and increasing violence. This ownership enabled the participating communities to advocate for the activities of the project to the conflicting parties, is a strong sign for empowerment of beneficiaries.

The participatory approach also increased the mutual respect between the project staff and the communities and became an effective tool for communication and feedback between the beneficiaries and the project. Gender specific approach enabled a deeper understanding of gender dynamics and gender specific conflict related needs, roles and capacities on both sides the beneficiaries and the program staff. In this regard after several monitoring sessions it turned out that the program in almost all communities had significant impacts related to gender equality and gender cooperation, community problem solving and conflict transformation at the local level.

OPEN QUESTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Though the presented analytical framework for conflict and gender sensitive planning and monitoring was tested and developed during intensive and participatory processes certain blind spots, questions and possible limitations

should be considered. This critical reflection leads us to at least five perspectives and selected related open questions:

- 1. Actor related perspective:** In general, the whole monitoring procedure has to be critically reflected under the perspective of development cooperation and development actors. The questions are: How strong is the direct or indirect influence of development organizations on the results of evaluation and monitoring processes. How much are the described changes and impacts in monitoring sessions driven by donor opinions and expectations and how free are participants of group discussions to express their real thoughts towards technical staff of the development organizations?
- 2. Conflict related perspective:** The project area was the territory of the Maoists. They have observed and controlled the local population in a massive way during the civil war. Hence the question is: How usable are monitoring results, if it can be assumed that the population is basically under massive control and observation of a party to the conflict?
- 3. Gender related perspective:** During the program planning gender inequality was defined as an important root cause of the conflict, and hence one objective of the development measure was to support gender equality. For sure gender equality never is an easy concept. But the related indicators were not clearly specified and concretized. Gender equality was discussed and assessed in participatory group discussions. How difficult it is to conduct these discussions in the field? How can the different concepts and understandings of gender equality be exchanged and merged in order to support productive change processes?
- 4. Methodological perspective:** The whole methodology is based on a radical participatory planning and monitoring approach, as used in many other development-related projects and contexts. But from a methodological perspective we should ask if group discussions are sufficient in order to measure changes, impacts and effects at the micro-level. How can we be sure that these changes have really occurred? Should the participatory group discussions also be supplemented by objective observations and analysis?
- 5. Regional and historic perspective:** And finally it has to be mentioned that the case study of Nepal is based on a specific local and historic context in a remote mountain area during Maoist hegemony. So, how relevant are the developed tools, approaches and methods for other regions in Nepal, for the current period after the Civil War and also for other countries and contexts?

Despite all these legitimate requests and possible blind spots the author of this paper is convinced that the developed planning and monitoring approach

is appropriate and also compatible and applicable in other contexts and areas. In Nepal, for example, the development project is still operating (as of July 2012) and accompanied very successful in other parts of local participatory development processes. In the original project area of Rukum and Rolpa, the project is no more operating, but the developed participatory structures and procedures are still used by local working groups and committees.

CONCLUSION

Women and men experience war and violent conflict in a different way. And both are important actors and change agents for peace, but especially women play an important role at the micro-level. As development cooperation strongly focuses at the micro-level it is important to integrate a gender and conflict specific perspective while working in war and conflict affected countries. In this regard, gender awareness in the field of development cooperation in conflict environments is not a question of political correctness, but a question of accurate peace and conflict related planning and monitoring. And therefore it is a question of effective and sustainable development management and a question of professionalism.

Thus it is important to consult as early as possible local gender experts and resources, e.g. individual women or women's organizations but also others, who work on questions of gender, conflict and peace building in order to integrate their knowledge and experiences in the planning and monitoring of development measures in conflict situations.

On such a basis the integration of gender and conflict specific perspectives within development programs is possible at all levels (macro, meso, micro). Especially, working at the micro-level requires a very culture sensitive approach, flexibility, creativity and improvisation by the international and national actors.

The experiences in Nepal demonstrate that following a gender sensitive approach especially at the micro-level could lead to enhance community based self-organization and cooperation, better local conflict transformation and improve local problem-solving in general. It also strengthens collaboration between men and women and enhances participation of women. It also results in, men and women showing awareness of gender-specific questions and perspectives at the family, neighborhood and community-level. There is also reduction in local and domestic violence.

Even if these impacts are only focusing at the micro-level, they are directly linked to the national conflict line where gender discrimination was identified as one of the root causes of the conflict. The case study thus, underlines the

Gender and Conflict Transformation in the Field

importance of a gender and conflict perspective in planning and monitoring, especially at the local-level, as this level often is linked with conflict dynamics at higher levels.

However, some questions (e.g. related to the concept of gender equality, approach of using participatory methods or specific regional and historic situation of the project area in Nepal) still remain open and are not fully answered. Further research in this field would be necessary.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, M. B. (1999). *Do No Harm: How Aid Support Peace—or War*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Apelt, M. et al (2005). 'Die Bundeswehr auf dem Weg zur Gleichstellung der Geschlechter?' in Ahrens, J. R. et al ed., *Frauen im Militär - Empirische Befunde und Perspektiven zur Integration von Frauen in die Bundeswehr*, Wiesbaden.
- Austin, A. et al (2003). *Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment. Critical Views on Theory and Practice*, Berlin: Bergh of Foundation for Conflict Transformation.
- Bertolazzi, F. (2010). 'Women with a Blue Helmet: The Integration of Women and Gender Issues in UN Peacekeeping Missions' in UN-INSTRAW Working Paper Series.
- Bridges, D. & Horsfall, D. (2009). 'Increasing operational effectiveness in UN peacekeeping: Towards a gender balanced force' in *Armed Forces & Society* 36:1.
- Brunner, C. (2006). 'Hegemonic Discourse on Palestinian Women Suicide Bombers and the Logic of Gender' in Auga, U. & von Braun, C. ed., *Gender in Conflicts. Palestine - Israel – Germany, Berlin*. 171-182.
- Caprioli, M. (2003). 'Gender Equality and Civil Wars' in CPR Working Papers 8, September:<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTCPR/214578-111996036679/20482367/WP8trxtsep3.pdf>, accessed on 30 June 2009.
- Carpenter, C. R. (2006). 'Recognizing Gender-Based Violence against Civilian Men and Boys in Conflict Situations' in *Security Dialogue* 37: 83-103.
- Conaway, C. P. & Shoemaker, J. (2008). 'Women in United Nations Peace Operations: Increasing the Leadership Opportunities' in *Women in International Security*, June.
- DeGroot, G. (2002). 'Wanted: A Few Good Women. Gender Stereotypes and their Implications for Peacekeeping', University of St. Andrews, Women in NATO Forces 26th Annual Meeting, 26-31 May 2002.
- Dittmer, C. (2007a). *Gender Mainstreaming in der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit. Eine feministische Kritik*, Saarbrücken.
- Dittmer, C. (2007b). 'Gender, Konflikt, Konfliktbearbeitung. Zivile und Militärische Ansätze, Forderungen und Probleme' in Working Paper No. 6, November, Universität Marburg.
- Engels, B. (2008). *Gender und Konflikt. Die Kategorie Geschlecht in der Friedens- und Konfliktforschung*, Saarbrücken.
- Engels, B. & Chojnacki, S. (2007). 'Krieg, Identität und die Konstruktion von Geschlecht' in Gender politik online, November: http://web.fu-berlin.de/gpo/pdf/en_choj/eng_chojn_fragen_lit.pdf, accessed on 9 July 2009.
- Feministisches Institut der Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (2003). Feministische Theorieansätze in der Friedens- und Sicherheitspolitik, Berlin: http://www.glowboell.de/media/de/txt_rubrik_1/DokuFriedensundSicherheitspolitik.pdf accessed on 18 September 2009.

Gender and Conflict Transformation in the Field

- Feministisches Institut der Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung (2006). Frieden und Sicherheit für alle. Eine feministische Kritik der gegenwärtigen Sicherheitspolitik, Berlin:http://www.glowboell.de/media/de/txt_rubrik_2/Positionspapier_2006_deutsch.pdf, accessed on 28 January 2011.
- Frieters, N. & Vorwerk, S. (2005). 'Participatory Conflict Sensitive Impact Monitoring'. unpublished study, Kathmandu: GTZ (German Technical Cooperation).
- Goldstein, J. S. (2001). *War and Gender. How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa*. Cambridge.
- Harders, C. (2004). 'Krieg und Frieden: Feministische Positionen' in Becker, R. & Kortendieck, B. ed., Handbuch Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung, Wiesbaden: 461-466.
- Herbst, A. (2010). 'Frauen an die Front' in Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit 05:51.
- HIIK (Heidelberg Institut for International Conflict Research) (2008). Conflict Barometer 2002, Heidelberg: http://hiik.de/de/konfliktbarometer/pdf/Conflict_Barometer_2008.pdf, (Date of access 15.10.2009)
- Hromadžic, A. (2004). 'Kriegsvergewaltigungen in Bosnien: alte und neue Erklärungsansätze' in Seifert, R. ed., *Gender, Identität und kriegerischer Konflikt. Das Beispiel des ehemaligen Jugoslawien*. Münster: 112-130.
- Hudson, H. (2000). 'Mainstreaming Gender in Peacekeeping Operations: Can Africa Learn from International Experience?' in *African Security Review* 9: 18-33.
- Hudson, H. (2005). 'Peacekeeping Trends and their Gender Implications for Regional Peacekeeping Forces in Africa: Progress and Challenges' in Mazurana, D. et al ed., *Gender, Conflict and Peacekeeping*, Lanham, Boulder. New York: 111-133.
- Jack El, A. (2003). *Gender and Armed Conflict*. Overview Report, Institute of Development Studies: <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports/cep-conflict-report.pdf>, accessed on 30 June 2009.
- Leonhardt, M.(2001). *Conflict Analyzes for Project Management. A practical Manual*. Eschborn: GTZ (German Technical Cooperation).
- Leonhardt, M. et al (2008). *Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA): A methodological framework for the conflict-and peace-oriented alignment of development programmes*. Eschborn: GTZ (German Technical Cooperation).
- Müller, B. (2006). 'Konflikt und Gender' in Friedens Forum 1: <http://www.friedenskooperative.de/ff/ff06/1-62.htm>, accessed on 3 September 2009.
- Ospina, S. (2006). *A Review and Evaluation of Gender-Related Activities of UN Peacekeeping Operations on Gender Relations in Timor Leste*. New York.
- Paffenholz, T./Reychler, L. (2007). *Aid for Peace. A Guide to Planning and Evaluation for Conflict Zones*. Baden-Baden.
- Reimann, C. (2004). *Roles of Women and Men in Violent Conflicts*. http://www.swisspeace.ch/typo3/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/InfoSheet1_RolesOf.pdf (date of access: 30.06.2009).

- Reimann, C. (2008): *Gender and Peace Mediation*. http://www.swisspeace.ch/typo3/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/KOFF/InfoSheet_inkl_MSP/msp-essentials_Gender.pdf (date of access: 30.6.2009).
- Reimann, C. (2002). "All You Need Is Love" ... and What About Gender? Engendering Burton's Human Needs Theory. Centre for Conflict Resolution, Department of Peace Studies Working Paper 10. <http://www.brad.ac.uk/acad/confres/assets/CCR10.pdf> (date of access: 16.09.2009).
- Seifert, R. (2003). Plädoyer für eine Subjekt- und Genderperspektive in der Friedens- und Konfliktforschung. Bonn.
- Seifert, R. (Hrsg.) (2004). *Gender, Identität und kriegerischer Konflikt. Das Beispiel des ehemaligen Jugoslawien*. Münster.
- Stanley, R. (2002). *Gender in der Zivilen Konfliktbearbeitung*. <http://www.konfliktbearbeitung.net/downloads/file77.pdf?PHPSESSID=9233d7ec00dd4d8813cc24df1c1e494c> (date of access: 18.09.2009).
- Stern, M./Nystrand, M (2006). *Gender and Armed Conflict*. SIDA April 2006.http://www.sida.se/shared/jsp/download.jsp?f=SIDA28381_Gender+A5+web.pdf&a=23381 (date of access: 04.09.2009).
- UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Lessons Learned Unit/United Nations (2000). *Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Operations*. New York.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2003). *Gender Approaches in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations*.
- United Nations Security Council (2000). Resolution 1325.http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1325%282000%29 (date of access: 1.11.2010)
- Zarkov, D. (2006). *On Militarism, Economy and Gender: Working in a Global Context*.http://www.glow-boell.de/media/de/txt_rubrik_2/DubravkaZarkov_FGmai06.pdf (date of access: 21.09.2009).

Norbert Frieters-Reermann is Professor for Social Work at the Catholic University of Aachen. He is a post-doctoral educationalist and Master of International Humanitarian Assistance. He was Scientific Assistant at the Rhine-Westphalian Technical University (RWTH) Aachen in the Department of Sociology with the Specialty Gender and Life Course Research. His research work focuses on problems related to peace and conflict education, intergenerational and global education and on the category of sex in the context of conflict. Besides he is working as a consultant and trainer in the context of civil conflict management and development cooperation.
E-mail: n.frieters-reermann@katho-nrw.de