Conflict early warning and early response

Brigitte Rohwerder

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Question

Identify examples of early warning systems to monitor fragile states at risk of violence/instability and cases of early/pre-emptive intervention in states at risk of descending into conflict/instability. What does the literature say about what kind of interventions have been/can be made; in what sectors have they been made effectively, and how?

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1. Overview

This rapid literature review identifies examples of conflict early warning and early response systems, with a focus where possible on cases in the Asia-Pacific. Early warning consists of data collection, risk analysis, and providing information with recommendations to targeted stakeholders. Early response systems refer to timely and appropriate prevention interventions. Early warning and early response systems have been adopted by international organisations, bi-lateral agencies, research institutions and NGOs. Until recently many conflict early warning systems have largely been gender-blind and have rarely specifically targeted the involvement of women.

Much of the literature available on examples of conflict early warning and early response systems comes from grey literature published by the organisations involved. Academic literature tends to focus on overviews and theoretical approaches to conflict early warning and early response systems rather than specific examples. Less attention has been paid to the kinds of responses and interventions that have been/can be made; in what sectors have they been made effectively, and how; and this is an area that would benefit from further research (expert comment).

Examples of conflict early warning and response are drawn from Sri Lanka; Timor-Leste; Indonesia; Kenya; Uganda; Kyrgyzstan; Mindanao; Nigeria; Myanmar; and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Lessons emerging from the literature include:

- **Linking warning and response:** The biggest challenge for conflict early warning systems is that they have not yet been effectively transformed into a preventive response. Specific response plans must be developed as part of the early warning system.

- **Preventative interventions** to reduce the potential for violence should: i) address civil society; ii) address the quality of policy-making decisions; iii) reduce inequality between groups; iv) develop legal standards; v) develop regimes for controlling destructive weaponry; and vi) develop development strategies that reduce poverty.

- **Preventative interventions** can be made in a variety of sectors including: the economy, governance, diplomacy, the military, human rights, agriculture, health, education and journalism.

- Early warning and response interventions are less effective if they fail to **address the underlying causes of conflict**. Early warning and response should be part of a wider peace infrastructure. Longer-term peacebuilding efforts are important for sustaining the peace, not just managing to avert violence.

- Using **local knowledge** is crucial for early warning and response to be successful at the community level.

- **New technology** has the potential to allow affected populations to be actively involved in data gathering and conflict prevention, although there are concerns about the digital divide and potential bias.

- **Effective conflict early warning and early response** programmes have had: i) accurate, consistent and timely information, from a wide range of sources; ii) the ability to effectively monitor the changing conflict dynamics on multiple different levels; iii) a good understanding of the local context and long-term trends; iv) participation and ownership by a range of actors across the country; v) involvement of local actors with good local knowledge leading to timely, sensitive and adequate responses to incidents, which built trust and confidence among actors involved at different levels; vi) social cohesion at the community level and a will for peace on the part of the people involved; vii) early warning linked to networks and mechanisms ready to design tailor-made response actions; and viii) flexible systems to fulfil ongoing activities and respond to emergency issues.

2. Conflict early warning and early response[1]

Conflict prevention requires careful monitoring of indicators of rising tensions and taking measures to ease them (Haider, 2014, p. 49). As Palihapitiya (2013, p. 26) notes 'most community-based violence can be prevented if the right information is delivered to the right stakeholders, at the right time, in the right format, enabling the stakeholders to take the right actions'.

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[1] More information about conflict prevention and early warning and early response systems can be found in the GSDRC Conflict Topic Guide (Haider, 2014). It is available here: http://www.gsdrc.org/go/conflict/chapter-3-preventing-and-managing-violent-conflict/preventing-violent-conflict-early-warning-direct-prevention-and-structural-prevention

Early warning consists of data collection, risk analysis, and providing information with recommendations to targeted stakeholders (Haider, 2014, p. 49). Mobile phones, social media, crowdsourcing, crisis mapping, blogging, and big data analytics are increasingly being used in early warning and early response (Mancini, 2013). Early warning systems should monitor human security indicators that include protection of gender and minority rights, as notable violations can be indicators of rising tensions and emerging conflict (Haider, 2014, p. 50).

Early response systems refer to timely and appropriate prevention initiatives, usually undertaken during dormant stages of perceived potential violent conflict (Haider, 2014, p. 49). Short-term conflict response tends to be more reactive, as the rapid collection and dissemination of information about violent events is used by relevant actors to stop the violence escalating (Stine, 2013, p. 7). Longer term preventative interventions, are more proactive and analyse the information gathered over time to address the causes of conflict (Stine, 2013, p. 7). Early warning and early response systems have been adopted by international organisations, bi-lateral agencies, research institutions and NGOs (Haider, 2014, p. 49).

The **biggest challenge** for conflict early warning systems is that they have not yet been effectively transformed into a preventive response (Arnado, 2012, p. 4). While making accurate predictions is challenging, it is much harder to persuade political leaders and the public to act upon warnings (Haider, 2014, p. 49). There are problems bringing the information gathered back to the communities who may be able to respond to the threat of violence (Arnado, 2012, p. 4). Often civil society organisations end up playing the dual role of warning and response, although sometimes they lack the capacity to record and respond effectively (Haider, 2014, p. 49; Amao et al, 2014, p. 90). The system is made less effective by a duplication of actions by the wide range of organisations involved in early warning and early response (Amao et al, 2014, p. 88). Recent research on regional organisations suggests that the key constraint facing early warning systems is not lack of quality data, but rather organisational weaknesses and internal political divisions (Haider, 2014, p. 50).

Responses and interventions can include direct prevention mechanisms, including preventative diplomacy[2] (diplomatic persuasion to prevent armed conflict); incentives and sanctions[3] to influence the behaviour of key conflict actors and to alter conflict dynamics; and peace-making dialogue[4] to get conflicting parties to talk, to build up trust and to transform relationships (Haider, 2014, p. 52-54). There are also proposals for early intervention through a 'new form of structured 'quiet', behind the scenes, mediation by trusted interlocutors, empowered by the international community' to prevent conflict (Rifkind et al, 2014, p. 1). Responses and interventions can also include structural prevention, which involves long term interventions that aim to transform key socioeconomic, political and institutional factors that if left unaddressed, could lead to violent conflict in the future (Haider, 2014, p. 55). They include, but are not limited to: addressing inequality, exclusion and marginalisation; developing social capital and social cohesion; promoting livelihoods, local development and economic opportunities; and promoting legitimate and equitable

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[2] More information on preventative diplomacy and conflict prevention can be found in Haider (2014, p. 52) and Strachan's (2013) GSDRC Helpdesk report: Preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention, which focuses on regional approaches to preventive diplomacy. The report is available here: http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/HDQ1047.pdf. The Asia-Pacific region has been slow to adopt concrete mechanisms for preventive diplomacy. While the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF) is supposed to engage in preventive diplomacy, progress has been slow due to the region's focus on non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states. However, informal preventive diplomacy does take place on the side-lines of ASEAN and ARF meetings, even if it is not always acknowledged as such (Strachan, 2013, p. 2).
[3] More information on incentives and sanctions can be found in Haider (2014, p. 53).
[4] More information on peace-making dialogue can be found in Haider (2014, p. 53-54).

political, justice and security institutions[5]. Early warning and response are less effective if they fail to address the underlying causes of conflict (Amao et al, 2014, p. 89).

Multi-sector preventive interventions

de Jong (2010) developed a framework, based on an extensive literature review and a public health approach, that shows how multi-sector, multi-modal and multi-level preventive interventions involving the economy, governance, diplomacy, the military, human rights, agriculture, health, education and journalism could be applied in an integrative and varied way. The framework shows how the diplomatic, political, criminal justice, human rights, military, health and rural development sectors could collaborate to promote peace and prevent the exacerbation and continuation of violence (de Jong, 2010, p. 78).

Preventive interventions to reduce the potential for violence should: i) address civil society; ii) address the quality of policy-making decisions; iii) reduce inequality between groups; iv) develop legal standards; v) develop regimes for controlling destructive weaponry; and vi) develop development strategies that reduce poverty (de Jong, 2010, p. 73). Preventive interventions in governance would involve dealing with corruption, weak and unaccountable government, secessionist movements, creating a path toward financial and political transparency, bringing an end to illicit trade by armed groups, and bettering corporate practices, for example (de Jong, 2010, p. 73). The framework is acknowledged as having limitations which would require further work to overcome (de Jong, 2010, p. 78).

Women's involvement in conflict early warning systems

Until recently many conflict early warning systems have largely been gender-blind and have rarely specifically targeted the involvement of women (Arnado, 2012, p. 4). This means early warning systems miss out on information provided by women, as well as the potential contribution of women in conflict prevention processes (Arnado, 2012, p. 4). In 2012, in the Asia Pacific region, only three National Action Plans on the participation of women in peace and security processes have been agreed (in the Philippines, Nepal and Australia) (Arnado, 2012, p. 5), although they do not mention participation in early warning systems. Women tend to be more involved at the community level than in prevailing formal structures (Arnado, 2012, p. 9).

New technology and early warning and response

New technologies have the **potential** to allow affected populations to be actively involved in data gathering and conflict prevention, although its impact varies depending on the context in which they are applied (Pham and Vinck, 2012; Mancini, 2013). They should be used as part of a holistic response (Mancini, 2013, p. iii). Crowdsourcing platforms could give individuals the ability to act upon warnings and work to build resilience within their community (Pham and Vinck, 2012). Using technology for early warning relies on much greater levels of community involvement and local input needs to be integrated throughout (Pham and Vinck, 2012; Mancini, 2013, p. iv). It also requires a rethink of conflict response to include their involvement in the response (Pham and Vinck, 2012). It is important that a specific response plan is part of the early warning system for it to be effective (Pham and Vinck, 2012). Using technology in early response also creates new roles, relationships, and responsibilities for affected populations, civil society,

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[5] Many of these interventions are similar to those undertaken to promote peacebuilding (Haider, 2014, p. 55). More information about peacebuilding can be found here: http://www.gsdrc.org/go/chapter-4-recovering-from-violent-conflict/conflict/peacebuilding-peacebuilding-models-and-state-building

governments, multilateral organisations, and even perpetrators of violence, which raise some new major concerns and ethical challenges (Pham and Vinck, 2012).

There are **concerns** about the quality and reliability of the information collected, and a possible trade-off between speed and accuracy (Pham and Vinck, 2012). Not everyone has access to this new technology, which disparities existing in relation to gender and education especially, which may introduce biases into the data collected (Pham and Vinck, 2012). Disparities in access to technology may reinforce structural inequalities at the root of conflicts (Pham and Vinck, 2012). Using inaccurate and biased data has the potential to increase risks (Pham and Vinck, 2012). The ability to gather data locally and communicate information globally in near real-time has exposed sources to more danger as repressive regimes can monitor internet and mobile phone traffic, as well as social networking sites, to identify and target activists who volunteer potentially sensitive information (Pham and Vinck, 2012). Sometimes security forces shut down mobile phone networks in order to prevent rumour mongering and conflict escalation, which means an SMS based early warning and response system is unable to function (Stine, 2013, p. 22).

3. Cases of conflict early warning leading to early response[6]

Sri Lanka: citizen-based conflict early warning system

The Foundation for Co-Existence (FCE) implemented a citizen-based conflict early warning system in eastern Sri Lanka (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 27). It is a 'third-generation early warning system' which relies on local expertise and local actors to monitor, evaluate and implement activities, rather than originating outside the conflict zone (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 27). Statistical indicators of violence and peace were developed by local communities to analyse and predict the tendency for violence (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 27). They monitored newspapers, websites, other public media, handbills, hate speech, and other highly localized events while also relying on daily situation reports from highly trained field officers (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 27). The FCE early warning system emphasised early intervention, with an early response unit alongside an information centre and field staff, including youth leaders, journalists, local politicians, and community mobilisers (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 27). Data was gathered and coded and entered into the FCE Early Warning (FCEWARN) database for analysis and forecasting (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 27).

An appropriate response mechanism was selected for each early warning signal and the relevant stakeholders were informed (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 28). The FCE identified the resources needed for the response and coordinated it with other stakeholders (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 28). The early response system is based on the application of multi-track diplomacy with relevant citizens (Rupesinghe, 2009, p. 18). The effectiveness of each response was evaluated to identify potential areas for improvement and the process concluded with a staff debriefing and reflective practice (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 28).

The FCE early warning system was **able to prevent conflict** from intensifying in the area (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 28). For example, FCE early interventions, including face-to-face negotiations, convinced military leaders to refrain from escalating communal violence and also quickly defused catalysts for communal violence, through appeals for calm from relevant community leaders and agreements to enforce law and order

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[6] A brief overview of the Early Warning Systems and Early Response Mechanisms surveyed for the OECD's report on 'Preventing violence, war and state collapse: The future of conflict early warning and response' are provided in its Annex. The report is available here: http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download/4309141e.pdf?expires=1423004397&id=id&accname=id9780&checksum=2D58A7066F94E45310348C1BADA1AFD7

(Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 27-28; see also Nyheim, 2009, p. 78). By October 2008 the system had intervened in 156 cases of conflict and a variety of independent evaluations had found that the system had prevented, mitigated, and contributed to resolving conflict (Rupesinghe, 2009, p. 18).

Working in an ethnically/religiously mixed environment was **challenging**, until the FCE gained enough accurate information and credibility to mobilise interventions by hiring and training locals from different villages (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 29). A bigger challenge to the community based early warning system came from the escalation of the war which displaced communities and disturbed the cohesion and integrity crucial for early warning and early action (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 29). Information gathering became highly sensitive as the warring parties considered it intelligence gathering (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 29). The warring parties' interest in military victory and less reliable information made preventative responses more difficult (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 29). The fluid nature of the conflict in Sri Lanka also meant that a considerable amount of information collected became inaccurate by the time it was written into reports for formal dissemination (Palihapitiya, 2013, p. 27).

This early warning and early response system can be applied to inter-communal conflict, rather than to military confrontations or factional conflict around the competing interests or power struggles of political or criminal factions (Rupesinghe, 2009, p. 25-26). For it to be effective, there also needs to be a will for peace on the part of important stakeholders and the people in the area (Rupesinghe, 2009, p. 27).

Timor-Leste: Belun/CICR – Early Warning and Early Response Project

Belun, a Timor-Leste NGO, and Columbia University's Center for International Conflict Resolution (CICR) set up an early warning and early response system in Timor-Leste (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010). It was designed to increase early responses to conflict and to prevent isolated instances of violence from escalating (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 1). The system is a 'third-generation early warning and response system', where data gathering and analysis are field-based, and early warning is accompanied by response to both macro and micro conflicts (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 1). It has established networks at the national and community level to identify conflict factors and design context appropriate response activities through a people-to-people approach (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 1-2). It responds to conflicts between families, ethnic groups, and communities (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 1). Ongoing concerns such as domestic violence and underlying tensions that increase vulnerability to future conflict are also addressed (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 1). The system has also tried to respond to concerns around Timor-Leste and Indonesia's unresolved border agreements (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 1).

Effective early warning depends on the ability to **effectively monitor the changing conflict dynamics** on multiple different levels (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 2). The programme collects ongoing data that provides situational analysis and incident mapping, displays ongoing trends and particular issues of concern and compares it with other external monitoring (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 2). The system uses new technology in gathering, analysing and sharing of data, although it depends largely on traditional approaches of communication (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 3). The programme is committed to thorough verification practice which involves a detailed process of manually checking reports and re-confirming indicators with monitors and stakeholders (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 4).

Effective early warning also depends on the **linking of warning and response** (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 2). There may be a risk that publishing information may highlight and exacerbate the issue, so the data published is always verifiable and linked to recommendations and mobilisation for response (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 4). Early response is provided by effective networks with forums that

can distribute alerts and flash reports to a broad audience through various forms of media and effective distribution lists (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 2). In addition it is important that these extensive conflict prevention networks are able to convene to discuss the findings and promote response activities with national actors (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 2). These community Conflict Prevention and Response Networks are made up of monitors and targeted local government, security, and civil society actors, including motivated individual citizens with a capacity to promote peace in their communities (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 2). The aim is to work together, alongside other conflict prevention efforts, to address the various concerns affecting the conflict dynamics in communities to reduce tensions and resolve disputes before they escalate into violence (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 2). A conflict prevention and response fund is available for these networks (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 2). The system is linked into the Interagency Contingency Plans for Response to crisis at the national level and provides the only consistent data gathering tracking conflict risks in the country (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 3). By working together and accumulating practice, local and national actors should be better prepared to prevent and respond to conflict (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 3).

Some **lessons** which have emerged through the implementation of the early warning and early response programme include (Dewhurst and da Costa, 2010, p. 3-6):

- Changing conflict dynamics need to be monitored on multiple different levels, including the impact of national issues on grassroots perceptions.

- Accurate, consistent and timely information is essential.

- Long-term data sets are needed to provide insights about situational and social change.

- Early warning needs to be linked to networks and mechanisms ready to design tailor-made response actions.

- Response requires networks which are able to convene to discuss the findings and promote response activities. Strong and resilient networks need time to develop.

- Systems need to be flexible to fulfil ongoing activities and respond to emergency issues.

Indonesia: community based conflict early warning and early response

An independent evaluation of UNDP's 'Peace Through Development' (PTD) programme in Indonesia found that the community based Conflict Early Warning and Early Response System (CEWERS) and conflict prevention framework have resulted in early warning forums being established and actively functioning (CSPS, 2012, p. 45). In some areas, such as Poso, women's forums also play an active role in early warning activities (CSPS, 2012, p. 45). Their strong focus on community involvement allowed room for local ways of resolving and preventing violent conflict (CSPS, 2012, p. 44). In the CEWERS Module initiated by the PTD programme, police and military are responsible for the early warning and early response systems (CSPS, 2012, p. 46). However, the effective functioning of the programme depends to a large extent on the better performance of the security and justice actors/institutions (CSPS, 2012, p. 76).

The Institut Titian Perdamaian (ITP) based in Jakarta, Indonesia, is also running a CEWERS in five pilot areas: Poso; Ambon; Masohi; Ternate; and Jailolo (Arnado, 2012, p. 5). It promotes developing a synergy between early warning and peacebuilding programmes (Arnado, 2012, p. 5). While progress has been made on setting the system up, there is a critical need for collaboration among various stakeholders in order to generate an early response (Arnado, 2012, p. 5).

Another CEWERS programme run by Kemitraan, a well-known governance reform foundation, is working closely with ex-Internally Displaced People in Eastern Indonesia who had been affected by the communal violence (Arnado, 2012, p. 6). The objective is to identify, and respond to, the potential cause of conflicts as well as to mitigate the negative effects of violent conflict (Arnado, 2012, p. 6). An important part of what makes this early warning system effective is the active participation of women because they can easily relate to other women and build bridges between communities (Arnado, 2012, p. 6).

Kenya: Uwiano peacebuilding platform

After the 2008 election violence in Kenya, extensive efforts were made to prevent another outbreak of violence during subsequent elections (Nderitu, 2013, p. 9). Many Kenyans had said that they knew violence would break out in 2007–08 but did not know whom to tell (Nderitu, 2013, p. 10). In the build-up to the referendum in 2010, Uwiano, a peacebuilding platform bringing together the National Cohesion and Integration Commission, the United Nations Development Programme, the National Steering Committee on Conflict Management, the police, and PEACE-NET, a civil society network of more than 500 NGOs, created an early warning and early response mechanism (Nderitu, 2013, p. 10). Kenyans were able to report threats of violence and receive help, which prevented an outbreak of mass violence (Nderitu, 2013, p. 10).

In the build-up to the 2013 election, Uwiano also involved humanitarian agencies and the Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission and UN Women (Nderitu, 2013, p. 10). Uwiano's key strategies included deploying peace monitors throughout the country and running a free text-messaging platform to report tensions and incidents, as 90 per cent of Kenyans have mobile phones or know someone who does (Nderitu, 2013, p. 10). Uwiano ran a twenty four hour desk, where text messages were received, analysed, verified, and disseminated for urgent action (Nderitu, 2013, p. 10). Responses included: i) radio messages directed at specific issues or locations; or ii) mediation; or iii) security measures (Nderitu, 2013, p. 10). A rapid response grant provided funds through the mobile phone system for intra- and interethnic meetings between elders, to ensure quick interventions to stop a conflict before it became violent (Nderitu, 2013, p. 10). The respected elders, including women, were trained by Uwiano as inter- and intraethnic mediators to mediate any tensions at the local level (Nderitu, 2013, p. 10). At its peak, it received an average of 5,000 messages per day averting violent incidents and reducing tensions (Nderitu, 2013, p. 10).

The **effectiveness** of Uwiano in preventing violence from breaking out and providing rapid responses where needed was linked to (Babaud and Ndung'u, 2012, p.25):

- Good complementarity among actors in the coalition.

- Preparatory engagement and collective ownership by actors across the country of their conflict-prevention, early earning and response strategies.

- Good knowledge of the local context.

- The involvement of local actors with good local knowledge leading to timely, sensitive and adequate responses to incidents, which built trust and confidence among actors involved at different levels.

- Using a wide range of resources to gather its information (Amao et al, 2014, p. 86).

Kenya: early warning and conflict prevention by the EU

A report looking at how EU actors acted upon conflict early warning in Kenya before, during and after the post-election violence at the end of 2007-beginning 2008, found that there was no shared understanding

of, or sense of belonging to, an EU early warning system (Babaud and Ndung'u, 2012, p. 7). They were much better at monitoring the broad country level situation rather than local level conflict dynamics and struggled to respond to the local level conflicts (Babaud and Ndung'u, 2012, p. 8). A successful initiative was the Uwaino initiative (described above) which built on national and local capabilities and empowered local people to identify their own security issues and to address them through track II mediation and community security types of projects (Babaud and Ndung'u, 2012, p. 8). EU instruments such as the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and Non-State Actors and Local Authorities (NSA LA) are useful to provide a complementary response to the crisis, and to anticipate and prevent forthcoming conflict risks (Babaud and Ndung'u, 2012, p. 8).

Kenya/Uganda: IGAD's Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism

The Inter-Government Authority on Development (IGAD) has set up a Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism/Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Unit (CEWARN/CEWERU) to cover the Karamoja Cluster (Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda) and Somali Cluster (Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia) (Nyheim, 2009, p. 75). It is organised at the national level and involves state and non-state representatives at local and national levels responding to early warnings (Nyheim, 2009, p. 75)

In 2007, IGAD's CEWARN/CEWERU was able to prevent an attack by Pokot warriors from Kenya on the Bukwo Barracks where the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) were holding their cattle (Nyheim, 2009, p. 76). The CEWARN Field Monitor for Pokot (Kenya) received an alert from the field about the imminent attack and contacted the relevant IGAD CEWARN counterparts in Uganda, who in turn alerted the UPDF and local authorities, as well as the relevant IGAD CEWARN counterparts in Kenya (Nyheim, 2009, p. 76). The UPDF and Bukwo local authorities also got in touch with their counterparts on the Kenyan side, who quickly passed on information to the Pokot leaders, warning them not to cross the border as their attack was expected (Nyheim, 2009, p. 76). They were assured that authorities on both sides of the border were trying to resolve the issue of the cattle peacefully (Nyheim, 2009, p. 76).

Kyrgyzstan: preventing election violence

UNDP and the European Commission worked together to reduce potentially violent inter-ethnic tensions before and during the parliamentary elections in October 2010 (UNDP, 2010, p. 31). Six Oblast[7] Advisory committees were established and early warning telephone hotlines installed at national and Oblast levels to address potential conflict triggers that could have caused electoral violence (UNDP, 2010, p. 31). UNDP helped create space for dialogue by enhancing collaboration between civil society, law enforcement agencies and the Central Electoral Commission (UNDP, 2010, p. 31). UNDP and the UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia coordinated to facilitate the signing and implementation of a memorandum of understanding among the political parties (UNDP, 2010, p. 31).

4. Cases of early warning[8]

Mindanao: indigenous conflict early warning systems

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[7] Administrative region

[8] Further examples of governmental, inter-governmental, and NGO early warning systems, some of which are linked with response can be found in Nyheim (2009, p. 110-126).

Conflict early warning systems for indigenous peoples in Mindanao also have a spiritual aspect (Arnado, 2012, p. 10). When asked how they can detect early signs of conflict, a woman leader from the Matigsalug tribe and the Chair of the Council of Elders of the tribe described how they sensed early signs of conflict through their dreams and that this was 'a proven and tested indigenous knowledge system' (Arnado, 2012, p. 10).

Nigeria: pilot SMS-based conflict early warning system

Search for Common Ground and Community Action for Popular Participation received funding from the US Institute for Peace to conduct a pilot project to test the use of an SMS-based conflict early warning system in the Jos region of Nigeria (Stine, 2013, p. 4). 109 focal points were trained to send SMS messages of conflict early warning signs, and to encourage others in their community to send SMSs, to a centralised system (Stine, 2013, p. 4). Halfway through the project, people could also submit incident reports through the project's Crowdmap website (Stine, 2013, p. 4). The validity of each alert was verified and key stakeholders (security, government, and NGO partners) notified of the incident via SMS (it urgent) or in a daily email report (Stine, 2013, p. 4). The security sector stakeholders and NGO partners met every other month to analyse the messages that had been received (Stine, 2013, p. 4).

An evaluation found that there were some issues with training as some focal points initially were not reporting incidents which had occurred in their area (Stine, 2013, p. 5). SMS Blasts from the programme to citizens were one of the most successful components of the programme because they helped keep the public alert and engaged in the programme (Stine, 2013, p. 5). Problems with mobile phone connectivity and lack of sufficient public outreach and training of focal points impacted on the number of incidents reported (Stine, 2013, p. 5). Not all the information sent in was relevant as some of it consisted of requests for further information or greetings (Stine, 2013, p. 5). However, the focal points and general public felt sufficient ownership of the project to spend their own money sending in SMS reports (Stine, 2013, p. 5). Stakeholders preferred SMS based communication and the monthly trend reports were infrequently used (Stine, 2013, p. 6). There were some technological difficulties with the software used to receive, store, and send SMS messages and none of the focal points, members of the public, or bimonthly stakeholders used the website or seemed interested in using it in the future (Stine, 2013, p. 6). The system worked more to respond to incidences of violence than to provide information about long-term conflict dynamics that trigger violence (Stine, 2013, p. 7).

5. Cases of early/pre-emptive intervention[9]

Myanmar: EU preventative diplomacy

The EU's preventative diplomacy in Myanmar is designed to help pre-empt violence by building structures which can withstand any tensions in its complex political transition (Banim, 2014, p. 4). It has worked with the government to assist in the reform process as the government engaged in unprecedented talks with both the army and the opposition, to help address and prevent intercommunal violence (Banim, 2014). It aimed to maximise the chances of a successful shift towards democracy and stability by focusing its development assistance (€688 million for 2014-2020) on rural development, agriculture and food security; education; good governance, rule of law and capacity building; and peacebuilding support (Banim, 2014,

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[9] Further examples of governmental, inter-governmental, and NGO response mechanisms and instruments can be found in Nyheim (2009, p. 127-133).

p. 2). It has engaged in diplomacy with the government, opposition and civic leaders to increase efforts to prevent intercommunal violence and address the root causes of social instability (Banim, 2014, p. 3). It has also provided advice and funding to the government and local and international NGOs and UN agencies (Banim, 2014, p. 3-4).

Democratic Republic of the Congo: EU support to the elections in 2006

The EU helped to prevent the anticipated outbreak of violence during the 2006 election in the Democratic Republic of Congo (EEAS, 2014, p. 2). The EU pre-emptive intervention encompassed a wide set of actions, including: support to the electoral organisation; an EU electoral observation mission; and deployment of a Common Security Defence Policy (CSDP) operation (EEAS, 2014, p. 2). In addition, EU preventive diplomacy helped protect one of the key candidates from being arrested by Kabila loyalists in the midst of the electoral process (EEAS, 2014, p. 2).

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Key websites

- GPPAC - Regional Response Capacity for Conflict Prevention:
  http://www.gppac.net/en_GB/news/-/asset_publisher/fHv91YcOz0CI/content/regional-response-capacity-for-conflict-prevention/

- Initiative for Peacebuilding – Early warning:
  http://www.ifp-ew.eu/publications/index.php?c=3

- Liberia: early warning and early response collaboration:
  http://www.insightonconflict.org/2013/04/liberia-early-warning/

Expert contributors

Bridget Moix, George Mason University
Gabrielle Rifkind, Oxford Research Group
Chas Morrison, Coventry University

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