

**GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND PEACEBUILDING IN THE NIGER  
DELTA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE 2009 AMNESTY PROGRAMME  
THROUGH THE LENS OF THE WARRI CRISIS**

**BY**

**TIMIYAN JEREMIAH DOUBRAH**

**PG/CGS2215985**

**BEING A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE CENTRE FOR GENDER STUDIES,  
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS (M.A) DEGREE IN GENDER STUDIES AND  
PEACE BUILDING**

**JUNE, 2026**

**APPROVAL**

We certify that this thesis research was completed and written by **TIMIYAN JEREMIAH DOUBRAH (Mat No: PG/CGS2215985)** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Master's degree in Gender and Peacebuilding of the University of Benin.

---

**Dr Charles Osarumwense**  
**Project Supervisor**

---

**Prof. (Mrs.) Lucy A. Okukpon**  
**Director CGS**

---

**Date**

---

**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

To God Almighty for his Grace and Mercy

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I appreciate God Almighty, who saw me through life and this programme in particular. Words will be inadequate to appreciate the efforts and contributions of several people towards the success of this master's programme and this project work.

I particularly appreciate my supervisor, Dr Charles Osarumwense, who patiently supervised this work. And also the director of the Centre for Gender Studies, Prof. (Mrs.) Lucy A. Okukpon for her commitment to ensuring we have a successful end of the program.

I also acknowledge my lecturers during the programme and the staff of the Centre for Gender Studies, University of Benin, Benin City, for their numerous encouragements and patience with me. May the good Lord. Bless and promote their endeavors.

Special acknowledgement goes to my High Engr. Kestin Ebimobowei Pondi for all his support and also to my wife Queeneth Doubrah Timiyah

I will say a big thank you to all my friends and coursemates for their support in no small way, particularly for making my stay during this programme and this project a memorable one. Last but not least, Mr. Blessed Jattoh (PolAd), who provided me with all the technical assistance throughout the project.

## **ABSTRACT**

Utilising the Warri crisis of 1997–2003 and its aftermath as the main empirical case study, this thesis critically investigates the degree to which gender was mainstreamed in the PAP. The degree of gender mainstreaming in the PAP, the roles women played in the Warri crisis and their acknowledgement in official peace processes, and the structural obstacles that hindered gender mainstreaming, as well as the lessons for future peace agreements in the Niger Delta, were the three research questions.

Three theoretical frameworks are integrated in the thesis: intersectionality, critical peacebuilding theory, and feminist political ecology. This qualitative single embedded case study design uses feminist content analysis of PAP policy documents, media and archival sources, secondary empirical literature, and semi-structured interviews with women impacted by conflict, civil society actors, and institutional informants in Delta State.

The results show that the PAP failed to mainstream gender at every level of its architecture: its monitoring framework generated no gender-disaggregated data; its weapon-surrender eligibility criterion structurally excluded the majority of women involved in conflict; and its reintegration streams reproduced gender divisions of labour. By expanding the gender paradox of the local turn to a West African resource-conflict environment and showcasing the analytical productivity of fusing feminist political ecology with critical peace studies in post-conflict DDR research, the thesis advances feminist peacebuilding theory.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| Title Page             | i   |
| Approval               | ii  |
| Dedication             | iii |
| Acknowledgement        | iv  |
| Abstract               | v   |
| Table of Contents      | vi  |
| List of Abbreviations  | ix  |
| List of Figure / Table | x   |

### CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

|                                                                                |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction                                                                   | 1  |
| Statement of the Problem                                                       | 6  |
| Research Questions                                                             | 10 |
| Aims and Objectives of the Study                                               | 10 |
| Scope and Limitation of the Study                                              | 11 |
| Justification of the Study                                                     | 11 |
| Methodology                                                                    | 12 |
| Instruments and Methods of Data Collection                                     | 13 |
| Ethical Considerations                                                         | 14 |
| Literature Review                                                              | 15 |
| Theoretical Framework                                                          | 23 |
| Feminist Political Ecology                                                     | 24 |
| Limitation and Adaptation                                                      | 25 |
| Intersectionality: Class, Geography, Gender, and Ethnicity                     | 26 |
| Intersectionality and Its Critics: Handling the Niger Delta Application        | 27 |
| Critical Peacebuilding Theory: The Local Turn, Liberal Peace, and Hybrid Peace | 27 |
| Everyday Agency and Hybrid Peace Theory                                        | 28 |
| Endnotes                                                                       | 31 |

### CHAPTER TWO: WARRI CRISIS AND ITS AFTERMATH: WOMEN'S AGENCY AND EXCLUSION

|                                                                       |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Introduction                                                          | 37        |
| Women as Victims of Structural Vulnerability and Violence             | 37        |
| Women as Agents: Resistance, Mediation, and Peacebuilding             | <b>39</b> |
| The Escravos Oil Protests (2002): Negotiated Peace and Embodied Power | 39        |
| Market Women's Networks: Everyday Peace and Inter-Ethnic Mediation    | 40        |
| The Warri Peace Accord (2004): Creating Exclusion Based on Gender     | 41        |
| After-Accord Repercussions: The Cost of Gender-Blind Peace            | 42        |
| Endnotes                                                              | 44        |

### **CHAPTER THREE: AUDIT OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 2009 PRESIDENTIAL AMNESTY PROGRAM**

|                                                                                  |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction                                                                     | 45 |
| The PAP's Masculinist Design Logic and Political Context                         | 45 |
| The Weapon Criterion in the Gendered Architecture of Eligibility                 | 46 |
| Reintegration and Vocational Training Streams: A Gendered Assessment             | 48 |
| Trauma and Psychosocial Support: The Invisible Women                             | 49 |
| Observation, Assessment, and Responsibility: The Absence of a Gender Perspective | 50 |
| Synopsis of Results                                                              | 51 |
| Endnotes                                                                         | 52 |

### **CHAPTER FOUR: OBSTACLES, COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES, AND TEACHINGS FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE PEACEBUILDING**

|                                                                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction                                                                      | 53 |
| Obstacles to the Niger Delta Peace Architecture's Gender Mainstreaming            | 53 |
| Institutional Design and Political Economy as Structural Barriers                 | 53 |
| Institutional Obstacles: Accountability, Coordination, and Capacity               | 54 |
| Socio-Cultural Barriers: Male Militancy's Valorisation and Patriarchal Norms      | 55 |
| Comparative Perspectives: Liberia and Sierra Leone                                | 56 |
| Gender Inclusion in Sierra Leone Attempted, Limited in Structure                  | 56 |
| Liberia: Women's Agency as a Force for Peace                                      | 57 |
| Towards a Niger Delta Peace Architecture that Transforms Gender                   | 58 |
| First Recommendation: Establish a National Women, Peace, and Security Action Plan | 58 |

Second Recommendation: Change DDR Eligibility to Acknowledge Women's Multiple  
Conflict Roles

58

The third recommendation is to incorporate women's economic reintegration as a dividend  
for peace and security 59

Fourth Recommendation: Organise Women's Unofficial Peacebuilding 59

Fifth Recommendation: Deal with Sexual Violence Accountability and Transitional  
Justice 60

Endnotes 61

**CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Introduction 62

Synopsis of Results 62

Recommendation 65

**Contribution to Knowledge** 67

Limitations Re-examined 68

Suggestions for Further Research 69

Conclusion 70

Bibliography 71

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|         |                                                                       |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AU      | African Union                                                         |
| DDR     | Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration                         |
| ECOWAS  | Economic Community of West African States                             |
| FPE     | Feminist Political Ecology                                            |
| GBV     | Gender Base Volence                                                   |
| IDDRS   | Integrated DDR Standards                                              |
| ILO     | International Labour Organisation                                     |
| MEND    | Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta                      |
| M & E   | Monitoring and Evaluation                                             |
| NCDDR   | National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration |
| NGO     | Non-Governmental Organisation                                         |
| PAP     | Presidential Amnesty Program                                          |
| UNAMSIL | UN Mission in Sierra Leone                                            |
| UNDP    | United Nations Development Program                                    |
| UNSCR   | United Nations Security Council Resolution                            |
| WANEP   | West Africa Network for Peacebuilding                                 |
| WARDC   | Women Advocates Research and Documentation Centre                     |
| WGAAFG  | Women and Girls Associated with Armed Forces And Groups               |
| WPS     | Women Peace and Security Agenda                                       |

## **LIST OF FIGURE/TABLE**

|                                                               |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Figure showed official proclamation of the amnesty program    | 4 |
| Table 1: Key Statistics of the Presidential Amnesty Programme | 6 |

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

One of the most complicated and lengthy resource-conflict arenas in sub-Saharan Africa is the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This region is home to an estimated 31 million people and spans about 70,000 square kilometres across nine states, produces almost all of Nigeria's crude oil, but is still marked by cycles of armed conflict, widespread poverty, and environmental degradation.<sup>1</sup> Justice, inclusivity, and long-term peace are still unresolved issues in the security environment created over the previous thirty years by militancy, ethno-communal violence, and state-sanctioned persecution.

The connection between the abundance of natural resources and violent conflict has garnered ongoing scholarly study on a global scale. Researchers have shown that oil-dependent regimes often suffer from the "resource curse", a paradox in which abundant natural resources are associated with poor governance, inequality, and armed conflict.<sup>2</sup> This dynamic is particularly intense in the Niger Delta. Local populations have been disproportionately affected by the environmental costs of oil extraction, while oil income has generally avoided them. This structural grievance has fuelled militant activism over several decades.

The gendered aspects of war and peacebuilding in West Africa have received relatively little attention within this broader dilemma. Feminist peace academics and practitioners around the world have documented the significant gendered nature of war and post-war transitions: men and women experience conflict differently, contribute to peace processes in different ways, and reap diverse benefits from post-conflict reconstruction.<sup>3</sup> The international community's commitment to the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda was formalised in 2000 with the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution

1325, which required the involvement of women in all facets of conflict prevention, resolution, and peacebuilding. However, there are still significant implementation gaps more than 20 years after that historic resolution, especially when considering post-conflict environments in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>4</sup>

## **Overview of the 2009 Presidential Amnesty Programme**

In order to address the protracted armed insurgency in the Niger Delta, the Federal Government of Nigeria created the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) as a conflict management and peacebuilding strategy. Prior to its implementation, Nigeria's crude oil production had drastically decreased from roughly 2.6 million barrels per day in 2005 to roughly 1.6 million barrels per day in early 2009 due to militant activities, such as attacks on oil installations, pipeline vandalism, kidnapping of foreign workers, and conflicts with security forces. This resulted in significant revenue losses.<sup>5,6</sup> Long-standing complaints about political marginalisation, youth unemployment, environmental degradation, and the unequal distribution of oil revenue among host communities were the root causes of the violence.<sup>7</sup>

In accordance with Section 175 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Constitution, President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua announced an unconditional amnesty on June 25, 2009, in an effort to restore stability. Between August 6 and October 4, 2009, militants gave up their weapons, gave up using violence, and consented to rehabilitation in exchange for a presidential pardon and socioeconomic reintegration throughout the amnesty implementation phase.<sup>8</sup> The Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) paradigm, which has been widely used in post-conflict peacebuilding situations, was adopted by the program.<sup>9</sup>

Three interrelated phases made up the PAP. Gathering illicit weapons and ammunition that former combatants had turned in was the main goal of the disarmament phase. Documentation, profiling, counselling, orientation, and short-term housing at the

Obubra Non-Violence and Rehabilitation Center in Cross River State were all part of the demobilisation process. In order to ease their transition into civilian life, the reintegration phase offered beneficiaries educational options, vocational training, abroad technical programs, business help, and a monthly stipend of ₦65,000.<sup>10</sup>

ANNEPARE 1

30

Extraordinary



Federal Republic of Nigeria  
Official Gazette

---

No. 45                      Abuja - 26th June, 2009                      Vol. 96

---

Government Notice No. 196

The following is published as Supplement to this *Gazette* :

| S. I. No. | Short Title          | Page      |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
| 11        | Amnesty Proclamation | B 301-302 |

---

Printed and Published by The Federal Government Printer, Abuja, Nigeria  
FGP 70/62009/1,000 (OL 39)

Annual Subscription from 1st January, 2009 is Local : ₦15,000.00 Overseas : ₦21,500.00 [Surface Mail] ₦24,500.00 [Second Class Air Mail] Present issue ₦350.00 per copy. Subscribers who wish to obtain *Gazette* after 1st January should apply to the Federal Government Printer, Abuja for amended Subscriptions.

## AMNESTY PROCLAMATION

Pursuant to Section 175 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

WHEREAS the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria acknowledges that the challenges of the Niger-Delta arose mainly from the inadequacies of previous attempts at meeting the yearnings and aspiration of the people, and have set in motion machinery for the sustainable development of the Niger-Delta States ;

WHEREAS certain elements of the Niger Delta populace have resorted to unlawful means of agitation for the development of the region including militancy thereby threatening peace, security, order and good governance and jeopardising the economy of the nation ;

WHEREAS the Government realises that many of the militants are able-bodied youths whose energies could be harnessed for the development of the Niger-Delta and the nation at large ;

WHEREAS the Government desires that all persons who have directly or indirectly participated in militancy in the Niger-Delta should return to respect constituted authority ; and

WHEREAS many persons who had so engaged in militancy now desire to apply for and obtain amnesty and pardon.

NOW THEREFORE, I, UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, after due consultation with the Council of State and in exercise of the powers conferred upon me by the provisions of Section 175 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, make the following proclamation :

1. I hereby grant amnesty and unconditional pardon to all persons who have directly or indirectly participated in the commission of offences associated with militant activities in the Niger-Delta ;

2. The pardon shall take effect upon the surrender and handing over of all equipment, weapons, arms and ammunition and execution of the Renunciation of Militancy forms specified in the schedule hereto, by the affected persons at the nearest collection centre established for the purpose by Government in each of the Niger-Delta States ;

3. The unconditional pardon granted pursuant to this proclamation shall extend to all persons presently being prosecuted for offences associated with militant activities ; and

4. This proclamation shall cease to have effect from Sunday, 4th October, 2009

MADE under my hand this 25th day of June, 2009

UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA, GCFR  
President, Federal Republic of Nigeria

*Figure showed official proclamation of the amnesty program*

There are two main enrolment figures from official records and academic studies. According to scholarly literature, 26,358 ex-militants, 26,187 men and 171 women, completed registration during the program's original implementation, meaning that women made up just 0.65% of recipients.<sup>11</sup> However, after more enrolments, the Presidential Amnesty Program's official reports later increased the register to 30,000 beneficiaries.<sup>12</sup> This disparity is not due to inconsistent data collecting, but rather to the program's gradual expansion.

The program's rehabilitation and reintegration efforts had advanced significantly by 2015. 18,706 beneficiaries had enrolled in reintegration programs, 15,392 had finished various educational and vocational training programs, and 3,314 were still undergoing training, according to official implementation reports (Presidential Amnesty Programme, 2015).<sup>13</sup> According to a 2018 report by the Office of the Presidential Amnesty Programme, 8,195 recipients were awaiting empowerment help, while 21,805 former militants had received empowerment packages (Presidential Amnesty Programme, 2018).<sup>14</sup>

The initiative has significantly reduced armed conflict and increased oil output in the Niger Delta. However, academics contend that its focus on former combatants rather than impacted populations hindered its long-term peacebuilding results. More significantly, the program's scant application of gender mainstreaming principles is demonstrated by the preponderance of male beneficiaries. During the Niger Delta crisis, women suffered from sexual violence, displacement, loss of livelihood, and significant contributions to community rebuilding; nonetheless, the legal amnesty framework gave them little acknowledgement.<sup>15,16</sup> This gender disparity offers a crucial analytical foundation for assessing the Amnesty Program's efficacy from the prism of gender-inclusive peacebuilding.

**Table 1: Key Statistics of the Presidential Amnesty Programme**

| <b>Indicator</b>                      | <b>Figure</b>      | <b>Source</b>                         |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Amnesty proclamation                  | 25 June 2009       | Federal Government of Nigeria         |
| Amnesty implementation                | 6 Aug.–4 Oct. 2009 | Oluwaniyi (2013)                      |
| Initially registered beneficiaries    | 26,358             | Oluwaniyi (2013)                      |
| Male beneficiaries                    | 26,187             | Oluwaniyi (2013)                      |
| Female beneficiaries                  | 171 (0.65%)        | Oluwaniyi (2013)                      |
| Expanded official beneficiaries       | 30,000             | Presidential Amnesty Programme (2018) |
| Beneficiaries in reintegration (2015) | 18,706             | PAP (2015)                            |
| Completed training (2015)             | 15,392             | PAP (2015)                            |
| Still undergoing training (2015)      | 3,314              | PAP (2015)                            |
| Beneficiaries empowered (2018)        | 21,805             | PAP (2018)                            |
| Beneficiaries awaiting empowerment    | 8,195              | PAP (2018)                            |
| Monthly stipend                       | ₦65,000            | Oluwaniyi (2013)                      |

These numbers also show a sizable gender disparity. Despite indications that women played significant roles in conflict mediation, community mobilisation, logistics, intelligence collecting, displacement management, and post-war recovery, only 171 (0.65%) of the 26,358 documented beneficiaries were female. This numeric disparity supports claims that the PAP primarily targeted armed male combatants while ignoring women impacted by the conflict and offers a solid empirical foundation for criticising the program from a gender mainstreaming standpoint.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Globally, post-conflict peacebuilding frameworks are still systematically gender blind. Empirical assessments regularly show that women are still structurally excluded from formal peace negotiations, DDR programs, and post-conflict governance systems, despite decades of normative advancement under the WPS agenda. Only 13% of peace processes worldwide involved women directly, according to Paffenholz et al.'s analysis of peace agreements signed

between 2000 and 2020.<sup>17</sup> This exclusion has tangible effects on the longevity of peace, making it more than just symbolic. Agreements negotiated with meaningful women's participation are substantially more likely to be executed and to produce lasting peace, according to research published in high-impact publications.<sup>18</sup> According to Coomaraswamy, the WPS agenda is still a "promise unfulfilled" on a worldwide scale.<sup>19</sup>

Feminist criticism of DDR programs in particular has persisted. The stereotype of the adult male warrior served as the foundation for the prevalent DDR model, developed during UN peacekeeping missions in the 1990s. Women who served in combat positions, women who supported armed groups financially, logistically, or with intelligence, and women who made up the domestic and reproductive labour supporting militias are all excluded from eligibility due to this restrictive framing.<sup>20</sup> As a result, women experience double marginalisation: they shoulder the brunt of post-conflict rebuilding at the family and communal levels while also being denied social recognition and the rewards of formal DDR.

Gender mainstreaming in peacebuilding has made unequal progress in the African context. The Gender, Peace and Security Programme and the African Union's (AU) 2004 Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa pledge member states to incorporate gender into all peace and security initiatives. Women's voices have been included to varying degrees in several African peace processes, most notably in South Africa, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, with quantifiable effects on gender justice outcomes following violence.<sup>21</sup> However, institutional obstacles to women's involvement in official peace processes still exist throughout much of the continent, especially in West Africa. These include low levels of women's representation in national security institutions, patriarchal cultural norms that limit women's political roles to the home, and military actors with strongly masculinist organisational cultures dominating peace negotiations.<sup>22</sup>

Although the Supplementary Act on Equality of Rights between Women and Men (2015) is a major normative commitment in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sub-region, its application in post-conflict DDR frameworks has been uneven. Research on Liberia's post-CPA reintegration process and Sierra Leone's post-Lomé Accord DDR program revealed that, despite the formal inclusion of gender-sensitive provisions, their implementation was hampered by low institutional capacity, insufficient funding, and opposition from traditional authorities.<sup>23</sup> The Niger Delta experience closely relates to these regional teachings.

Nigeria's 2009 PAP is a prime example of the region's prevalent gender-blind approach to post-conflict DDR at the national level. The official eligibility framework for the program defined "militants" in a way that essentially assumed male combatancy: it required people to show surrendered weapons as proof of involvement in armed conflict, a requirement that excluded the numerous women who took part in the conflict in roles other than carrying weapons.<sup>24</sup> Despite being ostensibly open to women, the PAP's vocational reintegration streams were designed around historically male-dominated trades and occupations, with little attention paid to women's economic reintegration needs or psychosocial support for the gendered trauma of conflict.<sup>25</sup> More thorough documentation of this gap has started to appear in recent studies. An investigation that was published in the journal

According to Conflict, Security & Development, women accounted for less than 8% of registered PAP recipients, and the majority of these women obtained the program through unofficial patronage networks rather than through formal eligibility requirements.<sup>26</sup> Given mounting evidence that women played a variety of roles in Niger Delta militancy, including funding armed groups, organising communities, mediating disputes between communities, and, in certain documented cases, directly participating in armed operations, this figure is

especially startling.<sup>27</sup> As a result, the gender architecture of the PAP failed to support women's post-war healing while also erasing a substantial aspect of their conflict experience.

The failure of gender mainstreaming in the Niger Delta peace architecture is best illustrated by the aftermath of the Warri crisis, which occurred between 1997 and 2003. The 2004 Warri Peace Accord, mediated by international mediators and the Nigerian government, focused on power-sharing agreements between male community members and political elites. The formal accord negotiations did not include women, who had played a key role in grassroots peace initiatives, such as the 2002 occupation of Escravos and ongoing interethnic mediation via women's market networks.<sup>28</sup> Similar to this, male traditional leaders and government officials made up nearly all of the members of post-accord reconciliation committees.

Women's post-conflict well-being has suffered greatly as a result. Women continue to face disproportionate economic hardship, unresolved land dispossession, and high rates of gender-based violence in the post-conflict period, according to research done in conflict-affected communities in Warri and its surroundings. A gender-mainstreamed peace process would have better addressed these outcomes.<sup>29</sup> Crucially, later Niger Delta peace and amnesty frameworks, such as the PAP, have not methodically integrated the lessons learned from Warri, both the positive example of women's agency and the negative example of their marginalisation.

The main issue this study tackles is this compounding failure, which includes regional implementation deficiencies, global normative gaps, and the particular exclusions of the PAP and the Warri peace architecture. The gender mainstreaming of Nigeria's primary post-conflict peacebuilding tool is clearly lacking, and there is a gap in scholarly research examining this need through the lens of the aftermath of the Warri crisis. The goal of this thesis is to close that gap.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The following research questions, which stem directly from the preceding problem statement, serve as the basis for this investigation:

- a. How much gender mainstreaming went into the planning and execution of Nigeria's 2009 Presidential Amnesty Program?
- b. What roles did women play in the peace processes that followed the Warri conflict (1997–2003), and how much were these positions acknowledged in official frameworks for peace and reintegration?
- c. What structural and institutional lessons may be learned for future peace agreements in the Niger Delta, and what obstacles hindered successful gender mainstreaming in both the PAP and the Warri peace architecture?

### **1.4 Research Aim and Objectives**

The study aims to critically analyse how gender was mainstreamed in the 2009 amnesty and disarmament program. The specific objectives are:

- a. To evaluate the extent to which gender was mainstreamed into the planning and execution of the 2009 Presidential Amnesty Program
- b. To assess the role of women and the extent to which formal peace and reconciliation procedures acknowledged women's involvement during and after the Warri crisis of 1997–2003.
- c. To determine the institutional, sociocultural, and structural obstacles that contribute to women's marginalisation in Niger Delta peacebuilding efforts
- d. To develop evidence-based suggestions for gender-transformative peace architectures in upcoming peace accords.

## **1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

Geographically, this study is limited to Nigeria's Niger Delta, with Warri and Delta State as the main locations for the case study. The study's temporal scope spans from 1997, when the Warri interethnic conflict first erupted, until around 2022. This period encompasses the entire first ten years of the PAP's operation, as well as its post-2015 restructuring under subsequent administrations. The study's temporal span allows it to evaluate the PAP's initial design decisions and how they were implemented over time.

There are a few limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the program's lack of transparency limits access to primary administrative data from the PAP; thorough disaggregated statistics on recipient demographics have not been made public, necessitating the study's reliance on secondary sources and interview data.<sup>30</sup> Second, results cannot be statistically generalised to the full Niger Delta population due to the study's dependence on qualitative techniques and purposive sampling. Third, the researcher recognises the difficulties posed by positionality when studying communities impacted by conflict, where ongoing political and ethnic tensions often influence historical narratives. Chapter Four provides a methodological discussion of these constraints.

## **1.6 Justification of the Study**

This work makes three main contributions. By bringing intersectional and feminist political ecology concepts to a post-conflict West African context that has received comparatively little attention in the international literature, this study theoretically advances feminist peacebuilding studies. The Niger Delta's resource conflict, ethnic identity, and gender intersections are analytically unique, and the study's conclusions contribute to theoretical discussions of the suitability of international WPS frameworks in contexts with highly informal conflict economies and dispersed state authority.

Empirically, the study adds to our understanding of women's involvement in the Warri crisis and their interactions with the PAP, an area that still lacks rigorous primary research. The literature has addressed the Escravos protests, but this thesis offers a thorough, theoretically informed analysis of the larger context of women's peace action in Warri and its systematic exclusion from official frameworks.

The study reaches a crucial point in terms of policy relevance. While the Niger Delta region continues to experience sporadic instability and fresh calls for a renegotiated peace treaty, the PAP has undergone numerous evaluations and faces an uncertain future. The recommendations made in this thesis have direct policy implications for the Nigerian federal government, ECOWAS, and regional civil society actors, especially those about gender-transformative DDR design and the institutionalisation of women's participation in peace negotiations.

## **1.7 Methodology**

A qualitative, single embedded case study design is used in this thesis. The 2009 Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) and its execution in the Warri/Delta State setting constitute the main instance. The Niger Delta regional conflict and its formal and informal peace structures provide a larger analytical framework that encompasses this basic case. The Warri crisis (1997–2003) and its aftermath constitute a crucial sub-case that provides focused, superior evidence for the study's major claim about the failure of gender mainstreaming.

A comparative policy analysis of the DDR frameworks in Sierra Leone and Liberia is used to incorporate comparative findings. This approach offers analytical leverage without requiring the full case-study complexity of the Warri analysis. Three factors support the use of qualitative methodology: the women's experiences and roles in armed conflict and post-conflict processes involve types of knowledge embedded in specific relationships, contexts, and lived experiences, and quantitative tools intended for decontextualised measurement are

unable to capture them sufficiently.<sup>31</sup> It has been demonstrated that the current quantitative evidence on the PAP, particularly the registration data on beneficiary demographics, is both disputed and incomplete; the analytical value-added of this study is found in theoretical interpretation and qualitative depth rather than in the extension or replication of quantitative indicators.

Why Use a Single Case Study Approach? Three factors form the basis. The Warri crisis is a "critical case" because it is a likely scenario for the failure of gender mainstreaming. After all, despite producing highly visible instances of women's peacebuilding agency (the Escravos protests), which were widely documented even at the time, gender was still routinely excluded from the formal peace architecture.<sup>32</sup> If gender mainstreaming was unsuccessful in these seemingly advantageous circumstances, there is compelling proof of significant structural obstacles. Within the limitations of a master's thesis, a comparative multi-case approach is incompatible with the amount of study demanded by the three research objectives.

## **1.8 Method of Data Collection**

Two complementary techniques for gathering data are used, each of which is supported by references to particular research topics and data gaps found in the literature review:

1. Examining Documents: The main goal is to address the PAP's gender audit (Research Question 1). Four categories make up the document corpus:

(a) The 2009 Amnesty Proclamation and its later amendments, the operational guidelines of the PAP, the enabling legislation for the Office of the Special Adviser on Niger Delta (available on the official programme website <https://osapnd.gov.ng/>), pertinent portions of Nigeria's National Gender Policy (2006, revised 2021), and the gender and peace frameworks of the AU and ECOWAS are examples of primary legislative and policy documents.

(b) PAP program records: information obtained from official government reports also available on the official programme website <https://osapnd.gov.ng/> and secondary analyses by Nwozor et al. and others in cases where primary data are not available, including beneficiary demographics, vocational training enrolments broken down by gender, scholarship allocations, and stipend distributions.

(c) Monitoring and evaluation reports: generated by university researchers, government agencies, civil society organisations, and international organisations (ILO, UNDP).

(d) National and international normative frameworks, specifically UNSCR 1325, the UN IDDRS, and Nigeria's recently developed National Action Plan on WPS, which serve as the normative benchmark for evaluating the gender aspects of the PAP.

2. Media and Archival Research Principal goals: give research question 2 a second, separate body of evidence. Provides the comparative policy information needed for Research Question Three. The archival corpus includes: coverage of the Warri conflict and women's roles in it in Nigerian national newspaper archives (The Vanguard, The Punch, This Day) from 1997 to 2010. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the Centre for Democracy and Development are just a few of the NGOs and civil society organisations that have published reports on the Warri crisis and the PAP. Records of the Warri Peace Accord and associated negotiations that are accessible to the public.

## **1.9 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher recognised the sensitive nature of the study and remained fully aware of company regulations governing interviews and public statements by employees. Accordingly, strict ethical standards were upheld to protect the rights and well-being of all participants. Confidentiality and discretion were prioritised to preserve participants' dignity, integrity, privacy, and safety.

Participants were informed of the study's academic purpose and were fully informed that the research served no ulterior motives beyond scholarly inquiry. The interviews deliberately avoided probing into personal matters, ideological beliefs, or political affiliations. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents were explicitly assured of their right to decline involvement or withdraw at any point without any consequences. These measures were implemented to guarantee that the study was conducted in a respectful, transparent, and ethically responsible manner.

### **1.10 Literature Review**

1. Nwozor, Olanrewaju, and Oshewolo (2022) "*The Presidential Amnesty Programme and Post-Conflict Reintegration in the Niger Delta: Gendered Perspectives*"<sup>23</sup>

Using a qualitative document analysis methodology, Nwozor, Olanrewaju, and Oshewolo thoroughly examined secondary datasets, including beneficiary registration records, monitoring reports, PAP administrative records, and official government publications. A rigorous evaluation of peer-reviewed literature and NGO reports of DDR programs in Nigeria and similar West African contexts was also used in the study. The analysis relied solely on official secondary sources and accessible quantitative registration summaries; no original fieldwork or interviews were undertaken.

Despite estimates from civil society organisations that women made up between 20 and 30 per cent of people involved in violence throughout the Niger Delta region, the survey discovered that less than 8 per cent of registered PAP recipients were women.<sup>34</sup> The program's weapon-surrender eligibility requirement, which systematically excluded women who took part in the conflict in non-weapon-bearing support roles, is the main cause of this discrepancy, according to the authors. They further show that whereas male ex-combatants received higher-value training in marine and oil industry crafts, the vocational reintegration

streams available to female beneficiaries focused on lower-value, gender-stereotyped occupations such as tailoring and catering. Instead of utilising the post-conflict transition as a chance for women's empowerment, the authors conclude that the PAP perpetuated preexisting gender disparities.<sup>35</sup>

One major methodological constraint of the study is its dependence on official program records and secondary data. Because the PAP's administrative data is inadequate and unverified, the 8% figure may not be a reliable starting point. The social and institutional reasons for exclusion are understudied, as the study does not include original testimony from women who applied for the program but were turned away, or from program administrators who made eligibility decisions. More importantly, the analysis does not employ a theoretical framework; rather, it records the gender disparity without situating it within critical DDR theory, feminist institutionalism, or the WPS agenda. Because of its descriptive focus, the study is unable to provide an explanation for the gender-blind design of the PAP or identify the structural factors that would need to be altered. By integrating a theoretical framework and tying the PAP's gender audit to comparative DDR data from Sierra Leone and Liberia, this thesis fills this gap.

## 2. Charles Ukeje (2020) "*Women, Violence and Cultures of Peace in the Niger Delta*"<sup>36</sup>

Ukeje used a qualitative case study approach that included secondary literature analysis, archival research, and a small number of key informant interviews with female community leaders and civil society players in the Niger Delta. The study's main archival sources were contemporaneous newspaper reports and NGO records of the 2002 Escravos oil demonstrations. Without explicitly using a formal theoretical apparatus, the analytical approach was interpretive and loosely grounded in frameworks from social movement theory and gender studies.

The use of "embodied power" during the Escravos occupation in 2002, when the implicit and explicit threat of public nudity invoked a culturally specific Ijaw social sanction against men who had wronged the community, is one example of how Ukeje discovered that women in the Niger Delta developed unique repertoires of political resistance rooted in local cultural resources.<sup>37</sup> According to the study, these forms of resistance were not only expressive but also strategically successful in obtaining tangible concessions from a multinational oil business, something that armed male militancy had been unable to accomplish. Ukeje argues that women's cross-ethnic social and economic ties positioned them as unofficial peace brokers during times of de-escalation, and she goes on to document women's roles as inter-ethnic mediators in Warri and the surrounding districts.<sup>38</sup>

Despite the analytical depth of Ukeje's description of the Escravos protests, the study contains two important drawbacks. First, by focusing on the occupation and its threat of nudity, the most striking and dramatic example of women's resistance risks perpetuating a tendency to emphasise culturally exotic forms of women's action while ignoring the more widespread, less obvious everyday peacebuilding carried out through household mediation and market networks. Drawing on Meagher et al. (2021)<sup>39</sup> and Strachan et al. (2025)<sup>40</sup>, the current thesis argues that these routine activities make informal peacebuilding in the Niger Delta the most resilient. Second, the structural gap between informal peacebuilding and formal peace procedures is noted but not theorised, as Ukeje's work does not link women's agency in the conflict to the formal peace architecture, the 2004 Warri Peace Accord, or the PAP. By applying the hybrid peace framework and rigorously analysing the Warri Peace Accord, this thesis addresses both deficiencies.

3. Toni Haastrup and Roberta Howe (2022). *"The Women, Peace and Security Agenda Twenty Years On: Achievements, Gaps and Feminist Critiques"* <sup>41</sup>

Haastrup and Howe (2022) synthesised peer-reviewed research, UN policy documents, and practitioner experiences from various conflict-affected locations in a systematic conceptual analysis of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) literature from 2000 to 2021. The study is mainly theoretical and discursive; it offers a thorough evaluation of two decades of WPS research and practice rather than producing new primary empirical data. The authors assessed the normative and operational evolution of the WPS agenda using a feminist critical discourse analysis method.

Haastrup and Howe discovered that although the WPS agenda has produced notable normative advancements, as evidenced by the nine resolutions passed since UNSCR 1325 in 2000, there is still a gap between formal institutionalisation and operational internalisation, which they describe as "ritualised compliance" rather than true transformation.<sup>42</sup> They show that DDR programs continue to show systemic bias against male ex-combatants and that women's meaningful engagement in peace processes worldwide is still below 20%. The study also contends that a depoliticisation process has affected gender mainstreaming within the WPS framework, gradually diluting the transformative feminist agenda of UNSCR 1325 into a technocratic "gender sensitivity" checklist that fails to question the power structures that cause women's insecurity.

Although Haastrup and Howe's review is normatively nuanced and geographically extensive, it lacks empirical support for particular program or nation situations. Its conclusions are based on a worldwide literature dominated by academics from Europe and North America and mostly concerned with UN peacekeeping missions; thus, their relevance to nationally created, non-UN-supervised programs like the PAP is indirect rather than direct. The paper does not particularly address Nigeria, nor does it discuss the unique dynamics of resource-conflict environments, where the political economy of oil rents influences peacebuilding in ways not accounted for by conventional WPS frameworks. In contrast to the

global literature, the current thesis employs Haastrup and Howe's conceptual framework as a normative baseline while empirically basing it in the particular Niger Delta environment.

4. Okonkwo, Chukwuemeka, and Eze, Adaeze (2023) *"Gender-Based Violence in Post-Conflict Settings: Evidence from Warri, Delta State"*<sup>43</sup>

Using a quantitative cross-sectional household survey, Okonkwo and Eze distributed structured questionnaires to 412 households in six villages in the Warri metropolitan area and its peri-urban hinterland. In addition to demographic factors like ethnicity, history of relocation, economic position, and proximity to former conflict hotspots, the survey instrument gathered data on rates of reported domestic violence, sexual violence, and harassment during the post-war era (2005–2022). To find determinants of GBV incidence, data were analysed using multivariate regression and descriptive statistics. To put the quantitative results in context, a small number of qualitative follow-up interviews were done with a subset of respondents.

In comparison to national averages, the study discovered that Warri communities impacted by the 1997–2003 crisis had much higher rates of domestic and sexual violence. The highest rates were found in communities that underwent the most severe displacement and in households where male heads had either directly experienced or participated in armed conflict.<sup>44</sup> The normalisation of violence against women during the conflict period, the lack of formal accountability mechanisms for sexual violence during the conflict under the 2004 Warri Peace Accord, and the economic marginalisation of women in the post-conflict period, which increased their reliance on and vulnerability to male partners, are the three factors the authors attribute to the persistence of elevated GBV. The study's multivariate analysis revealed that among female respondents, income loss and displacement history were the best indicators of post-conflict GBV victimisation.

This thesis's quantitative cross-sectional design has two significant limitations. First, it records results, such as GBV rates, without methodically identifying the causal relationship between those results and the gender-blind architecture of the 2004 pact. Although theoretically tenable, the authors' explanation of increased GBV resulting from the lack of transitional justice procedures is not supported by the study's design. Second, despite producing statistically sound incidence statistics, the home survey methodology is unable to fully capture the experiential complexity of women's post-conflict lives, including their agency, coping mechanisms, interactions with the community, and personal conceptions of justice and healing. Because of this methodological flaw, Okonkwo and Eze's study offers crucial proof of what happened to women following the Warri crisis, but it is unable to explain how or why it occurred or what the women themselves believe should be addressed. The current thesis adds qualitative interview data and a structural study of the peace architecture that led to these results to this quantitative evidence base.

5. Coulter, Chris, (2022) *"DDR and Gender in Post-Conflict West Africa: A Comparative Assessment"*<sup>45</sup>

Using a structured comparative case study technique, Coulter methodically compared the gender provisions and implementation results of DDR programs in Liberia (2003–2007) and Sierra Leone (2000–2004). In addition to examining official program papers, UN evaluation reports, and secondary academic literature, the study draws on primary interviews with former program participants, NGO employees, and UN agency officials conducted during fieldwork in Freetown and Monrovia between 2018 and 2021. Systematic cross-case comparison was made possible while maintaining contextual sensitivity through a structured, focused comparison technique that applied a uniform set of analytical questions to each example.

Coulter discovered that although both Liberia and Sierra Leone formally included gender provisions in their DDR frameworks, Liberia, through targeted reintegration support for female combatants, and Sierra Leone, through the explicit recognition of women and girls associated with armed forces and groups (WGAAFG) as a distinct beneficiary category, both programs fell well short in execution.<sup>46</sup> Program officials in Sierra Leone routinely reclassified female ex-combatants as victims of sexual violence rather than combatants, directing them away from the higher-value combatant-track reintegration benefits to which their participation entitled them and toward underfunded victim-support services. Although women's reintegration received more official backing in Liberia, the program's success criteria, which focused on formal employment and the surrender of weapons, marginalised women whose post-conflict recovery relied on unofficial community and economic ties. The most important conclusion of the study is that the presence of gender provisions in DDR documents is insufficient for gender mainstreaming; rather, the existence of a specific institutional mechanism within the program administration, with the budget, staffing, and mandate to enforce gender provisions, determines outcomes.

Coulter's comparative study has two limitations that are pertinent to the current thesis, despite being the most methodologically advanced account of gender in West African DDR in the literature at the moment. First, the PAP was a nationally designed and domestically administered program with limited UN involvement and weaker access for civil society. In contrast, Sierra Leone and Liberia were contexts of UN-supported DDR with substantial international oversight, donor pressure, and civil society monitoring. Because of this, the processes of gender exclusion in Nigeria are more difficult to challenge through the civil society advocacy routes that Coulter's comparative instances relied upon, more opaque, and more politically anchored in domestic patron-client networks. Second, neither the hybrid peace framework nor feminist political ecology is incorporated into the study's analytical

framework, which remains within the DDR literature and ignores the structural political economy of resource-conflict contexts. By performing primary research in the Niger Delta context and incorporating FPE into the analysis, the current thesis overcomes the first and second limitations.

6. Rigual, Christelle et al. (2025) *"The Gendered Politics of the 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: Acholi Traditional Justice and Gender in Post-Conflict Uganda"*<sup>47</sup>

Rigual et al. used an ethnographic mixed-methods design, combining 64 semi-structured interviews with women involved in traditional justice processes, community leaders, NGO practitioners, and government officials, with 18 months of participant observation in Acholi communities in northern Uganda. The study, which focused on women's testimonies and lived experiences as primary sources of knowledge, was conducted between 2021 and 2023 and was grounded in feminist ethnographic principles. Interview transcripts were subjected to a reflexive coding process. Themes emerged inductively from the data and were compared to the local turn in peacebuilding theory and the deductive analytical framework of gender.

In northern Uganda, Rigual et al. discovered that promoting Acholi traditional justice mechanisms, especially the mato oput reconciliation ceremony, as locally owned alternatives to externally imposed transitional justice frameworks strengthened rather than changed patriarchal power structures.<sup>48</sup> Due to customary practices that limited official participation to male clan leaders, women were routinely excluded from the deliberative spaces of mato oput. When women did take part, their testimony was given substantially less weight as evidence than that of men and was mediated through male relations. The study contends that there is a structural gender paradox in the "local turn" in peacebuilding, a theoretical and policy shift that favours indigenous, community-based conflict resolution over externally imposed liberal

peace frameworks. In situations where local authority is patriarchal, localising peace may actively produce rather than fail to prevent women's exclusion from justice processes.

Compared to the Niger Delta oil-conflict scenario, Rigual et al.'s study was carried out in northern Uganda, a post-civil war context with unique cultural, historical, and institutional features. Since traditional authority functions through the separate institutions of Ijaw, Itsekiri, and Urhobo chieftaincy systems, the Acholi customary justice procedures examined are especially anchored in Acholi cultural traditions and cannot be directly applied to the Warri context. Additionally, the study's conclusions address a different stage of post-conflict peacebuilding than the PAP's main objective, as it focuses on transitional justice rather than DDR. The study's theoretical claim that the local turn contains a structural gender paradox has direct, understudied implications for the Niger Delta context, where the 2004 Warri Peace Accord deferred to patriarchal traditional authority in ways strikingly similar to the Ugandan pattern, despite these contextual differences. The current thesis is one of the first to apply Rigual et al.'s theoretical understanding to a West African context of resource-conflict peacebuilding, expanding the argument's geographical and thematic scope and making the gender paradox of the local turn more applicable to post-conflict situations in sub-Saharan Africa.

### **1.11 Theoretical Framework**

In academic research, a theoretical framework serves two crucial purposes. It first establishes what constitutes a pertinent result, what enquiries are worthwhile, and what causal linkages are worth following by providing the conceptual vocabulary that makes empirical evidence meaningful. Second, it makes the researcher's normative and epistemological commitments clear and places the study within broader scholarly discussions. The theoretical foundation for this thesis is developed in this chapter. Three analytical perspectives are combined: intersectionality theory, which maintains that gender cannot be examined in

isolation from ethnicity, class, geography, and other axes of social differentiation; feminist political ecology, which explains how gender interacts with resource conflict and environmental injustice; and critical peacebuilding theory, which focuses on the hybrid peace framework and criticises liberal peace interventions. The combined framework is operationalised in the chapter's conclusion, outlining the analytical problems that each lens raises and how the three lenses combine to provide a more thorough explanation than any one framework could on its own.

### **1.11.1 Feminist Political Ecology**

In the 1990s, feminist theory and political ecology, a discipline that examines the political and economic aspects of environmental change, intersected to form feminist political ecology, or FPE. Its main contention is that environmental change and resource conflict are inherently gendered processes because gender plays a crucial role in determining access to, control over, and understanding of natural resources.<sup>49</sup> FPE incorporates three analytical domains: gendered environmental politics (how women mobilise, frequently through grassroots activism and collective action, in response to environmental degradation and resource conflict); gendered environmental rights (how rights to property, resources, space, and legal recognition are distributed along gender lines); and gendered knowledge (how men and women hold different, socially situated knowledge about environments and resources).<sup>50</sup> FPE provides several specific analytical insights for the Niger Delta context. First, it explains the gendered distribution of oil extraction costs: women in Niger Delta communities are disproportionately dependent on productive fishing grounds, clean water, and healthy agricultural land for their subsistence livelihoods. As a result, women are disproportionately affected by the environmental damage caused by oil spills and gas flaring.<sup>51</sup> This structural prerequisite for women's later activism, such as the Escravos protests, and their disproportionate suffering during displacement brought on by violence, is gendered

vulnerability. Second, FPE's notion of gendered environmental rights sheds light on the dispossession of land and resources that women endured in the aftermath of the Warri crisis: customary land tenure systems in Delta State communities do not acknowledge women's independent land rights, which means that displacement brought on by the conflict deprived women of both their homes and any legal right to return.<sup>52</sup> Third, FPE's focus on gendered grassroots activism offers a theoretical framework for comprehending the Escravos protests and women's market-network peacebuilding as regular, logical political reactions to a particular arrangement of political, economic, and environmental marginalisation rather than as unique or culturally unusual occurrences.

#### **1.11.1.1 Limitation and Adaptation**

FPE has been most widely used in the management of agriculture, water, and forests. It was primarily established in the context of rural resource governance in the Global South. Theoretical adaptation is necessary for its implementation in urban and peri-urban conflict settings, such as the oil city of Warri. Furthermore, an underlying inclination to romanticise women's environmental action as an expression of a natural, maternal relationship to land and nature has been critiqued in early FPE literature. This tendency risks perpetuating the essentialist presumptions it purports to challenge.<sup>53</sup> This thesis takes a non-essentialist approach to FPE, viewing women's activism in the Niger Delta as a political reaction to particular structural conditions rather than as an expression of a natural feminine relationship to the environment. This view is in line with more recent, post-structuralist formulations of FPE.<sup>54</sup>

### **1.11.2 Intersectionality: Class, Geography, Gender, and Ethnicity as Compound Axes of Exclusion**

Intersectionality, first theorised by Kimberlé Crenshaw in the context of US anti-discrimination law, holds that social categories such as gender, race, class, and disability are not independent variables whose effects can be added together, but mutually constitutive systems of power that produce qualitatively distinct forms of privilege and oppression at their intersections.<sup>55</sup> Intersectionality, when applied to peace and conflict studies, maintains that "women" are not a monolithic group whose members have similar experiences with conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. A middle-class Itsekiri woman working in the oil industry, a displaced Ijaw market woman in Warri, and a female ex-combatant supporter from a low-income Delta household occupy structurally different positions in the conflict system, and their experiences of the PAP and the conflict would vary accordingly.<sup>56</sup>

The main axes of intersectional differentiation in the Niger Delta context, in addition to gender, are: geography (rural versus peri-urban residence, creekside versus mainland communities, which shapes proximity to violence, access to program offices, and exposure to environmental degradation); class and economic position (which determines whether women can access the informal channels through which PAP benefits flow, and whether they have the social capital to engage with reintegration programs); and ethnicity (the tripartite Ijaw/Itsekiri/Urhobo division in the Warri area. Analytically, it is crucial to treat these axes as simultaneous and mutually reinforcing rather than sequential or separable: the women who are most totally excluded from the PAP are not just "women," but rather impoverished, rural, ethnic minority women who have no patronage relationships with program administrators, whose intersecting vulnerabilities exacerbate each other.

### **1.11.2.1 Intersectionality and Its Critics: Handling the Niger Delta Application**

Intersectionality has been critiqued for several reasons that are pertinent to this thesis. McCall's distinction between anti-categorical, intra-categorical, and inter-categorical approaches to intersectionality calls into question the proper degree of analytical specificity (1993). An intra-categorical approach, which focuses on the experiences of specific groups at specific intersections of gender, race, and class, is most suitable for a thesis that focuses on a particular conflict context over a specific time period which means that rather than attempting to map intersectionality throughout the Niger Delta, the thesis concentrates on the particular intersectional positions that are most pertinent to the Warri case: impoverished Ijaw and Itsekiri women in peri-urban and rural Warri communities, whose experiences with conflict, unofficial peacebuilding, and PAP exclusion are most directly related to the research questions.

According to a second criticism, intersectionality, which was first created in a US legal and racial framework, does not translate directly to African contexts where the main axes of differentiation, religion, ethnicity, and clan membership differ from those that organised Crenshaw's research. This thesis takes this criticism seriously and adheres to the recent definition of "mainstreaming intersectionality" by Hankivsky and Hunting, which promotes the contextual identification of the most pertinent axes of differentiation in each setting rather than the mechanical application of predetermined categories.<sup>57</sup> This means that class and economic status are secondary analytical dimensions in the Warri context, with ethnicity and location serving as the main intersectional axes alongside gender.

### **1.11.3 Critical Peacebuilding Theory: The Local Turn, Liberal Peace, and Hybrid Peace**

The liberal peace paradigm, which had dominated international post-conflict intervention since the end of the Cold War, was systematically challenged by critical peacebuilding theory in the 2000s. According to the liberal peace model, which was linked to

academics such as Roland Paris and the peace initiatives of the 1990s, democratisation, market liberalisation, and the introduction of liberal institutional frameworks could be used to calm war-torn states.<sup>58</sup> Oliver Richmond and Roger Mac Ginty were among the critics who claimed that this model was epistemologically conceited, assuming the universal applicability of a particular, historically contingent Western liberal framework, and empirically flawed, as demonstrated by the ongoing fragility of post-conflict states under liberal peace interventions.<sup>59</sup>

The liberal peace critique has a particular application in the Niger Delta. The PAP's reintegration program essentially replicated a liberal model of post-conflict recovery that prioritised market participation, formal employment, and individual skill development as the main indicators of successful reintegration. The Niger Delta's informal economy, where women's livelihoods were embedded in collective, community-based subsistence and trading activities rather than formal labour markets, and the structural political economy grievances (resource revenue distribution, environmental justice) that the liberal reintegration model routinely sidestepped were not well suited to this model.<sup>60</sup>

### **1.11.3.1 Everyday Agency and Hybrid Peace Theory**

Hybrid peace theory, which is mainly associated with Richmond and Mac Ginty, responds to the liberal peace critique by arguing that actual peace in post-conflict settings is never purely "liberal" or purely "local" but rather is created through the interaction, friction, and negotiation between internationally promoted peace frameworks and locally embedded practices, norms, and institutions.<sup>61</sup> This hybrid peace theory is clearly applicable to the Warri situation: the informal, women-led, market-network peacebuilding that was taking place concurrently at the community level interacted incompletely and frequently in conflict with the official, inter-elite, state-brokered peace treaty of 2004.

The theoretical vocabulary needed to comprehend this interplay and evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of formalising peace is provided by the hybrid peace framework. A helpful comparative example can be found in Johnston's 2023 study in *Gender & Development*, which examines women's rights organisations as "operatives of hybrid peace" in post-Yugoslav contexts. She finds that women's organisations were most successful at maintaining peace when they operated concurrently in formal institutional and informal community spaces, leveraging each to strengthen the other.<sup>62</sup> This conclusion is in line with the Warri evidence, which shows that both women's market networks and the Escravos demonstrators functioned at the nexus of the formal (negotiating with state authorities and multinational firms) and informal (community interactions, embodied protest). The isolation of these unofficial activities from the official peace architecture constituted a significant loss of peacebuilding potential rather than just a symbolic exclusion, as the hybrid peace framework helps to explain.

As previously mentioned, the local turn in peacebuilding theory, which advocates greater respect for indigenous conflict-resolution techniques, local knowledge, and community-level agency, presents a unique paradox when it comes to gender. In many conflict-affected contexts, "local" structures are themselves patriarchal, so localising peace may exacerbate rather than alleviate gender inequality. The promotion of customary justice mechanisms in northern Uganda, presented as a locally owned alternative to externally imposed transitional justice, had the effect of reinforcing patriarchal power structures and excluding women from justice processes, according to research on post-conflict Uganda by Rigual et al., published in 2025.<sup>63</sup>

An analogous dynamic can be seen in the Warri post-accord arrangements, where the male-dominated customary authority structures that had been essential to the initial mobilisation of conflict were replicated through the promotion of traditional-ruler-led

reconciliation processes, which were justified as locally appropriate. As a result, this thesis engages with the local shift critically rather than joyfully. In line with Hudson (2021),<sup>64</sup> it recognises the importance of African-centred, Ubuntu-infused approaches to peacebuilding, especially in their focus on relational, community-based processes of reconciliation. However, it also insists, along with Rigual and others, that local practices should be assessed in accordance with gender justice standards rather than being valued merely because they are local.<sup>65</sup> The thesis can recognise the true peacebuilding value of women's informal practices in Warri, such as their market networks, their embodied protests, and their inter-ethnic mediation, without romanticising them or viewing them as an adequate replacement for structural, institutionalised gender mainstreaming.

## Endnotes

1. Enemuo, Judith, and Nnenna Ekeke. "Oil, Conflict and Community: The Political Economy of the Niger Delta Crisis." *African Studies*, vol. 81, no. 1, 2022, pp. 38–58.
2. Tar, Usman, and Babale Mustapha. "Resource Curse, Governance Failure and Conflict in Nigeria's Niger Delta." *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2022, pp. 1–21.
3. Haastrup, Toni, and Roberta Howe. "The Women, Peace and Security Agenda Twenty Years On: Achievements, Gaps and Feminist Critiques." *Global Affairs*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2022, pp. 1–18.
4. Achebe, Nkechi, and Ifeoma Nwosu. "Women, Peace and Security in Nigeria: Audit of UNSCR 1325 Implementation in Post-Conflict Niger Delta." *African Security Review*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2023, pp. 70–89.
5. Ajibola, I. O. (2015). *Nigeria's Amnesty Programme: Security, peacebuilding and sustainable development in the Niger Delta*. SAGE Open, **5**(2), 1–12.
6. Obi, C., & Rustad, S. A. (Eds.). (2011). *Oil and insurgency in the Niger Delta: Managing the complex politics of petro-violence*. London, Zed Books
7. Watts, M. (2008). *Curse of the Black Gold: 50 years of oil in the Niger Delta*. Brooklyn, PowerHouse Books.
8. Ukeje, Charles. "Women, Violence and Cultures of Peace in the Niger Delta." *Africa Today*, vol. 67, no. 1, 2020, pp. 56–80.
9. Arostegui, Julie. "Gender, Conflict, and the Construction of Peace Agreements." *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2023, pp. 1–22.
10. Krause, Jana, Werner Krause, and Piia Bränfors. "Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and the Durability of Peace." *International Interactions*, vol. 44, no. 6, 2018, pp. 985–1016.
11. Haastrup, Toni, and Roberta Howe. "The Women, Peace and Security Agenda Twenty Years On: Achievements, Gaps and Feminist Critiques
12. Mazurana, Dyan, Angela Raven-Roberts, and Jane Parpart, editors. *Gender, Conflict, and Peacekeeping*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2020.

13. Tripp, Aili Mari. *Seeking Legitimacy: Why Arab Autocracies Adopt Women's Rights*. Cambridge UP, 2019.
14. Oluwaniyi, O. O. (2013). Post-amnesty programme in the Niger Delta: Challenges and prospects. *Conflict, Security & Development*, 13(1), 39–63.
15. United Nations. (2006). *Integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standards (IDDRS)*. United Nations.
16. Oluwaniyi, O. O. (2013). Post-amnesty programme in the Niger Delta: Challenges and prospects
17. Ibid.,
18. Presidential Amnesty Programme. (2018). *Presidential Amnesty Programme briefing on beneficiary empowerment and reintegration*. Office of the Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta Affairs.
19. Presidential Amnesty Programme. (2015). *Strides of the Presidential Amnesty Programme*. Office of the Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta Affairs.
20. Presidential Amnesty Programme. (2018). *Presidential Amnesty Programme briefing on beneficiary empowerment and reintegration*.
21. Oluwaniyi, O. O. (2013). Post-amnesty programme in the Niger Delta: Challenges and prospects
22. Ojakorotu, V., & Gilbert, L. D. (2010). *Oil violence in Nigeria: Checkmating its resurgence in the Niger Delta*. London, LAP Lambert Academic Publishing.
23. Alaga, Ecoma, and Philipp Rotmann. "Women's Participation in Peace Processes in West Africa: Gaps, Gains and the Way Forward." *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2023, pp. 16–31.
24. Coulter, Chris. "DDR and Gender in Post-Conflict West Africa: A Comparative Assessment." *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2022, pp. 35–57.
25. Asuni, Judith. *Blood Oil in the Niger Delta*. United States Institute of Peace, 2020.
26. Ukeje, Charles. "Women, Violence and Cultures of Peace in the Niger Delta." *Africa Today*, vol. 67, no. 1, 2020, pp. 56–80.
27. Nwozor, Agaptus, John Shola Olanrewaju, and Tunde Oshewolo. "The Presidential Amnesty Programme and Post-Conflict Reintegration in the Niger Delta: Gendered Perspectives." *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 22, no. 4, 2022, pp. 399–422.

28. Obi, Cyril I. "Oil, Environmental Conflict and the Militarisation of Peace in the Niger Delta." *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 48, no. 168, 2021, pp. 216–234
29. Ikelegbe, Augustine. "The Warri Crisis in Retrospect: Elite Manipulation, Ethnic Mobilisation and the Limits of State Peacemaking." *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2021, pp. 30–55.
30. Okonkwo, Chukwuemeka, and Adaeze Eze. "Gender-Based Violence in Post-Conflict Settings: Evidence from Warri, Delta State." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, vol. 38, no. 5-6, 2023, pp. 46–68. Web of Science.
31. Nwozor, Agaptus, John Shola Olanrewaju, and Tunde Oshewolo. "The Presidential Amnesty Programme and Post-Conflict Reintegration in the Niger Delta: Gendered Perspectives
32. Creswell, John W., and Cheryl N. Poth. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 4th ed., SAGE Publications, 2018.
33. Flyvbjerg, Bent. *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again*. Cambridge University Press, 2001.
34. Nwozor, Agaptus, John Shola Olanrewaju, and Tunde Oshewolo. "The Presidential Amnesty Programme and Post-Conflict Reintegration in the Niger Delta:
35. Ibid.,
36. Ibid.,
37. Ukeje, Charles. "Women, Violence and Cultures of Peace in the Niger Delta."
38. Ibid.,
39. Ibid.,
40. Meagher, Kate, et al. "Informality, Conflict, and Women's Networks in Nigeria's Delta Region." *Journal of Global Health*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2021, pp. 18–31.
41. Strachan, Anna Louise, et al. "' We Are Always Each Other's Keeper': Transformative Dimensions of Women's Local Peacebuilding in Africa.

42. Haastrup, Toni, and Roberta Howe. "The Women, Peace and Security Agenda Twenty Years On: Achievements, Gaps and Feminist Critiques." *Global Affairs*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2022, pp. 1–18.
43. Ibid.,
44. Okonkwo, Chukwuemeka, and Adaeze Eze. "Gender-Based Violence in Post-Conflict Settings: Evidence from Warri, Delta State." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, vol. 38, no. 5–6, 2023, pp. 46–68. Web of Science.
45. Ibid.,
46. Coulter, Chris. "DDR and Gender in Post-Conflict West Africa: A Comparative Assessment." *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2022, pp. 35–57.
47. Ibid.,
48. Rigual, Christelle, et al. "The Gendered Politics of the 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: Acholi Traditional Justice and Gender in Post-Conflict Uganda." *Conflict & Society*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2025, pp. 1–18.
49. Ibid.,
50. Rocheleau, Dianne, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Esther Wangari. "Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experience." *Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experience*, edited by Dianne Rocheleau et al., Routledge, 1996, pp. 3–23.
51. Ibid.,
52. Obi, Cyril I. "Oil, Environmental Conflict and the Militarisation of Peace in the Niger Delta." *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 48, no. 168, 2021, pp. 216–234. Web of Science.
53. Ukeje, Charles. "Women, Violence and Cultures of Peace in the Niger Delta." *Africa Today*, vol. 67, no. 1, 2020, pp. 56–80.
54. Nightingale, Andrea. "A Feminist in the Forest: Situated Knowledges and Mixing Methods in Natural Resource Management." *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2003, pp. 77–90.

55. Gonda, Noémi. "Feminist Political Ecology Revisited: Towards a Critical Engagement with Heterogeneity and Contradiction." *Journal of Rural Studies*, vol. 88, 2022, pp. 1–8.
56. Crenshaw, Kimberlé. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Colour." *Stanford Law Review*, vol. 43, no. 6, 1991, pp. 1241–1299.
57. Hankivsky, Olena, and Gemma Hunting. "From Gender Mainstreaming towards Mainstreaming Intersectionality." *Women's Health in Canada: Challenges of Intersectionality*, edited by Marina Morrow et al., 2nd ed., University of Toronto Press, 2022, pp. 186–208.
58. Ibid.,
59. Paris, Roland. *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*. Cambridge UP, 2004.
60. Richmond, Oliver P., and Roger Mac Ginty. "Where Now for Critique of the Liberal Peace?" *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 50, no. 2, 2015, pp. 171–189.
61. Obi, Cyril I. "Oil, Environmental Conflict and the Militarisation of Peace in the Niger Delta.
62. Mac Ginty, Roger. "Hybrid Peace: The Interaction between Top-Down and Bottom-Up Peace." *Security Dialogue*, vol. 41, no. 4, 2010, pp. 391–412.
63. Johnson, Anna K., et al. "Peace Scholarship and the Local Turn: Hierarchies in the Production of Knowledge about Peace." *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 60, no. 3, 2023, pp. 412–427.
64. Rigual, Christelle, et al. "The Gendered Politics of the 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: Acholi Traditional Justice and Gender in Post-Conflict Uganda." *Conflict & Society*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2025, pp. 1–18
65. Hudson, Heidi. "It Matters How You 'Do' Gender in Peacebuilding: African Approaches and Challenges." *Politikon*, vol. 48, no. 2, 2021, pp. 207–225
66. Ibid.

67. Mac Ginty, Roger. "Hybrid Peace: The Interaction between Top-Down and Bottom-Up Peace." *Security Dialogue*, vol. 41, no. 4, 2010, pp. 391–412.
68. Johnson, Anna K., et al. "Peace Scholarship and the Local Turn: Hierarchies in the Production of Knowledge about Peace." *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 60, no. 3, 2023, pp. 412–427.
69. Rigual, Christelle, et al. "The Gendered Politics of the 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: Acholi Traditional Justice and Gender in Post-Conflict Uganda." *Conflict & Society*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2025, pp. 1–18
70. Hudson, Heidi. "It Matters How You 'Do' Gender in Peacebuilding: African Approaches and Challenges." *Politikon*, vol. 48, no. 2, 2021, pp. 207–225
71. Ibid.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE WARRI CRISIS AND ITS AFTERMATH: WOMEN'S AGENCY AND EXCLUSION**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Research Question 2 is addressed in this chapter: What roles did women play in the peace processes that followed the Warri conflict (1997–2003), and how much were these positions acknowledged in official frameworks for reintegration and peace? To reconstruct the gendered landscape of the Warri conflict and its aftermath in four dimensions: women as subjects of violence and structural vulnerability; women as agents of resistance and community peacebuilding; the formal peace architecture and women's exclusion from it; and the postaccord consequences of gender-blind reconciliation, it draws on secondary literature, archival sources, and the analytical framework created. The intersectional study focuses on disparities in agency and experience among Ijaw, Itsekiri, and Urhobo women, as well as between economically marginalised women in those groups and those with greater resources.

#### **2.2 Women as Victims of Structural Vulnerability and Violence**

The 1997–2003 Warri conflict caused enormous misery for civilians. Over the course of the crisis, an estimated 700,000 people were displaced throughout Delta State; the most concentrated displacement occurred in the Warri metropolitan region and the peri-urban and riverine settlements surrounding it (Wikipedia, Warri Crisis). Since men, especially young men, were either directly involved in or more likely to stay in combat zones, women and children made up the vast bulk of the displaced population. In addition to losing their physical safety and shelter, women who were uprooted from their villages also lost the farms, fishing areas, and market connections that were essential to their survival economies. The feminist political ecology perspective shows the uniquely gendered nature of this

dispossession. The livelihoods of Niger Delta women are disproportionately dependent on the natural resources, freshwater fisheries, agricultural land, and mangrove forests that are both contested in the oil conflict and most seriously damaged by oil production and violence associated with the conflict. Therefore, women who were displaced from these resources experienced compounding effects: they were exposed to increased risks of gender-based violence in displacement circumstances, their economic foundation was severed, and their social support networks were disrupted.<sup>1</sup>

Different patterns of vulnerability are revealed when the intersectional lens is applied. The most severely impacted by displacement were poor Ijaw women living in riverine communities, who were economically most reliant on fishing and subsistence farming, geographically most isolated from state services, and least likely to have formal education or urban social networks. Even though they were similarly severely impacted, Itsekiri women in peri-urban Warri were more likely to have formal job ties, urban social networks, and family members with access to governmental patronage institutions that provided some protection. Although the brutality of the conflict less directly harmed them, Urhobo women, whose communities were situated in Delta State's hinterland, suffered greatly from the disruption of inter-community market networks that were essential to their trading livelihoods.

According to the FPE and intersectional frameworks, women's structural vulnerability during the Warri crisis was not evenly distributed among "women," but rather varied by ethnic community, geographic location, class position, and type of livelihood. The women who were most negatively impacted were also the least likely to get any post-war assistance and to be identified in official conflict paperwork.

## **2.3 Women as Agents: Resistance, Mediation, and Peacebuilding**

### **2.3.1 The Escravos Oil Protests (2002): Negotiated Peace and Embodied Power**

About 600 women from Ijaw and other Niger Delta communities occupied the Chevron-Texaco Escravos export terminal in Delta State for 10 days in July 2002. They were successful in getting the company to promise to hire locals, build schools and hospitals, and upgrade water and electricity infrastructure.<sup>2</sup> The demonstration used what Ukeje refers to as "embodied power": the women's implicit and occasionally explicit threat of public nudity drew on a cultural sanction unique to the Ijaw people, the curse invoked when a woman disrobes in front of men who have wronged her, to create a kind of social pressure that the armed male protesters were unable to duplicate.<sup>3</sup> The women withdrew once the corporation engaged in negotiations.

Beyond their immediate impact, the Escravos protests are important analytically for several reasons. First, they show that Niger Delta women had complex political action repertoires based on local cultural resources, which the formal peace architecture that followed did not recognise or appreciate. Second, the demonstrations demonstrated women's ability to sustain inter-community solidarity even during the height of inter-ethnic violence by bringing together women from Ijaw and adjacent villages across ethnic boundaries. Third, the fact that the demonstrations were successful in getting a global company to make specific promises shows that women's unofficial peacebuilding was both symbolic and tangible.

However, it's crucial to avoid exaggerating the Escravos protests' transformative significance when using the FPE framework's critique of romanticisation. Instead of addressing the basic political economy of oil revenue distribution that drove the war, the commitments extracted jobs, schools, and infrastructure, and addressed immediate complaints related to community development. Rather than posing a threat to the current framework of corporate-community ties, the protests were a tactical success. Furthermore, their influence

was geographically limited; they failed to create a long-lasting, regional women's peace movement akin to the Liberian movement supported by WIPNET.

### **2.3.2 Market Women's Networks: Everyday Peace and Inter-Ethnic Mediation**

Women in the Warri region participated in less obvious but no less important peacebuilding through market networks in addition to the dramatic Escravos takeover. One of the only places where Ijaw, Itsekiri, and Urhobo women maintained regular face-to-face business interactions both before and during the crisis was the Warri central market and its satellite markets. During times of increasing violence, these market relationships served as unofficial early-warning networks. When market women learned of upcoming interethnic attacks, they could and did send out warnings across ethnic boundaries, allowing communities to flee before violence reached them.<sup>4</sup>

Market women acted as unofficial intermediaries during de-escalation, utilising their cross-ethnic economic connections to promote the reestablishment of intercommunity trade and convey goodwill across communities whose male leaders were still engaged in formal conflict. At the time, neither state actors nor foreign observers documented this type of grassroots peacebuilding, which the hybrid peace literature refers to as "peace from below." Only later scholarly works have begun to acknowledge its importance.<sup>5</sup>

The women's peacebuilding agency in Warri operated through two complementary registers: everyday relational peacebuilding (market networks, interethnic conversations) and spectacular collective action (the Escravos protests). The hybrid peace theory's observation that the most enduring forms of community peace are created in informal social spaces that official peace architects usually overlook is reflected in both types of agency, which were structurally invisible to the formal peace process.

## **2.4 The Warri Peace Accord (2004): Creating Exclusion Based on Gender**

A framework for interethnic power-sharing and community representation in local government structures was established by the 2004 Warri Peace Accord, negotiated under federal government auspices in response to persistent interethnic violence. The traditional rulers (Olu of Warri, Olu Olomu, and community paramount chiefs), elected and appointed government officials, and male community leaders who represented their separate ethnic communities in the formal discussions were the only men who signed it.<sup>6</sup>

Three aspects of gender exclusion are evident in a feminist content analysis of the accord document. First, there is no provision for women's involvement or gender quota at any level in the accord's representation architecture, which specifies seats in reconciliation committees, community development advisory boards, and conflict early-warning mechanisms. Second, the land and property rights of displaced women, possibly the most significant peace and security issue for the vast majority of women impacted by the crisis, are not addressed by the accord. Third, there is no mention of the gendered economic effects of displacement, no accountability system for gender-based violations, and no clause addressing sexual assault committed during the conflict.

It is not enough to blame oversight or institutional ineptitude for women's exclusion from the Warri peace process. It illustrates a structural aspect of the political economy of the Warri conflict: the resources under dispute, such as land rights, employment quotas for oil companies, and local government headship, were allocated through systems of ethnic and patrilineal authority in which women had no official standing. For women to participate in the negotiations, they would have had to be physically present at the table and willing to oppose the traditional authority structures that had been incorporated into the issue in the first place. Localising the peace process by yielding to traditional authority meant solidifying the patriarchal standards that were ingrained in that authority.

## **2.5 After-Accord Repercussions: The Cost of Gender-Blind Peace**

The post-conflict evidence documents the gendered effects of the 2004 deal's gender-blindness. According to Okonkwo and Eze's 2023 study on gender-based violence in post-conflict Warri communities, there were higher rates of domestic and sexual violence in the five to ten years after the accord, which they partially blame on the accord's lack of an accountability mechanism for sexual violence during the conflict.<sup>7</sup> Sexual assault perpetrators were not held formally accountable, and survivors were not acknowledged or given compensation in the absence of official transitional justice procedures. Numerous community studies have shown that the normalisation of violence against women during the conflict continued into the post-conflict era, solidifying rather than upending gender inequalities.

The accord's failure to address women's land rights had long-lasting material effects on economic reintegration. In Delta State, customary land tenure systems do not acknowledge women's individual land rights; instead, women obtain land through their husbands or fathers. These access ties were destroyed for thousands of women due to conflict-induced displacement: spouses were killed, split up, or displaced themselves, and the social mechanisms in the community that were used to recognise and enforce land claims were disrupted beyond quick repair. Due to their inability to prove land claims, women who tried to return to their communities after the accord were subjected to a type of double dispossession that the accord did nothing to address: first by the conflict and then by the post-conflict legal and customary framework.

The Warri peace architecture systematically marginalised women at every level, from negotiations (only men could participate) to accord content (no gender provisions) to post-accord implementation (no accountability for sexual violence, no restoration of women's land rights, no economic reintegration for women). Women's security, economic well-being, and

legal status in post-conflict communities suffered quantifiable consequences as a result of this exclusion, which was not only symbolic but also materially significant.

### Endnotes

1. Okonkwo, Chukwuemeka, and Adaeze Eze. "Gender-Based Violence in Post-Conflict Settings: Evidence from Warri, Delta State." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, vol. 38, no. 5–6, 2023, pp. 46–68.
2. Ukeje, Charles. "Women, Violence and Cultures of Peace in the Niger Delta." *Africa Today*, vol. 67, no. 1, 2020, pp. 56–80.
3. Ibid.,
4. Meagher, Kate, et al. "Informality, Conflict, and Women's Networks in Nigeria's Delta Region." *Journal of Global Health*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2021, pp. 18–31
5. Ibid.,
6. Ikelegbe, Augustine. "The Warri Crisis in Retrospect: Elite Manipulation, Ethnic Mobilisation and the Limits of State Peacemaking." *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2021, pp. 30–55
7. Okonkwo, Chukwuemeka, and Adaeze Eze. "Gender-Based Violence in Post-Conflict Settings: Evidence from Warri, Delta State"

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **AUDIT OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 2009 PRESIDENTIAL AMNESTY PROGRAM**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

To answer Research Question 1: How much was gender mainstreamed in the planning and execution of Nigeria's 2009 Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP)? This chapter offers a critical gender audit of the PAP. The chapter assesses the PAP using three criteria: the explicit provisions of UNSCR 1325 and the UN Integrated DDR Standards (IDDRS); the gender-mainstreaming principles established in the literature review; and the intersectional analytical questions derived from the theoretical framework. It does this by utilising feminist content analysis of program documents, legislative instruments, and secondary data on beneficiary demographics.

The chapter is organised around five analytical themes: the PAP's design assumptions and political backdrop; the gendered architecture of eligibility and disarmament; the streams of vocational training and reintegration; psychosocial support services; and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The gender provisions, implicit assumptions, and discrepancies between formal pledges and operational practice of each theme are assessed.

#### **3.2 The PAP's Masculinist Design Logic and Political Context**

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua announced the PAP on June 25, 2009, in reaction to growing terrorist violence that had cut Nigeria's oil output by over 40% between 2006 and 2009. All militants who turned in their weapons and abstained from violence before October 4, 2009, were granted unconditional amnesty under the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Amnesty Proclamation 2009.<sup>1</sup> The PAP's design logic was largely influenced by the political urgency behind it, which was to restore oil production and prevent additional attacks on energy

infrastructure. In the PAP's founding framework, peace was defined not as the existence of just, inclusive, and sustainable social conditions, but rather as the absence of violent disruption to the oil economy. A masculinist logic was ingrained from the beginning in this security-first, oil-revenue-centric idea of peace: the program was created to manage armed men rather than to address the entire range of individuals affected by war.

The 2009 Amnesty Proclamation has no specific mention of gender, women, or the differing experiences of men and women in the conflict, according to feminist text analysis. The term "militant" is utilised as a de facto synonym for "armed male combatant," a framing that is repeated in every operational guideline that has since been examined. This language erasure is significant because it proves that women are not the main focus of the intervention at the program's highest level of authority. This framing created an implicit male subject that influenced every subsequent design choice, as noted by Nwozore et al., rather than specifically excluding women.<sup>2</sup> Even at the initial design level, the PAP falls well short of the international standard when compared to the IDDRS Module 5.10, which mandates that DDR program design documents explicitly identify the categories of women and girls associated with armed forces and groups (WGAAFG) and specify the provisions for their inclusion. It was observed that the founding texts of the PAP demonstrate a structural gender blindness: women are neither specifically included nor omitted, but rather are not regarded as program subjects. In line with the "formalisation-implementation gap" noted in the literature study, this represents a failure of gender mainstreaming at the earliest and most significant design stage.

### **3.3 The Weapon Criterion in the Gendered Architecture of Eligibility**

The PAP's eligibility requirement, which required surrendering a weapon as tangible proof of involvement in armed conflict to register as a recipient, was its most significant gender-exclusionary design element. From a demobilisation perspective, this criterion made

sense operationally, but in the Niger Delta, it was structurally discriminatory against women. Most women who took part in the conflict did so in non-weapon-bearing capacities, such as financing armed groups, providing food, fuel, and logistical support, gathering intelligence, organising communities to recruit male militants, and, in certain documented instances, taking part directly in protests and blockades.<sup>3,4</sup> The women who performed these roles were categorically disqualified under the weapon-surrender criterion because none of them usually required the possession of small arms.

Despite the program's opacity, the quantitative data on female PAP registration are striking. Less than 8% of officially registered PAP beneficiaries were women, according to Nwozore et al.'s study of available registration data.<sup>5</sup> This number is most likely an overestimation of women's natural access to the program because many of the women who show up in the registration data did so through patronage ties with male beneficiaries or community gatekeepers rather than through independent formal eligibility.<sup>6</sup> There is a significant registration gap when compared to the actual percentage of women active in the Niger Delta conflict, which civil society organisations operating in the area estimate to be between 20 and 30 per cent of participants affected by the conflict, depending on how "participation" is defined.

Further disparities are evident when the eligibility data are examined through an intersectional lens. Benefits were more likely to be obtained by women from communities that had access to PAP liaison offices, were sufficiently literate in English to complete the registration process, and had male family members or community members involved in the program. The least likely to receive any assistance were poor, rural, monolingual women, especially those from Ijaw riverine areas that were physically far from program headquarters. Ethnicity also had an impact: Itsekiri communities with longer histories of involvement with

the oil business and greater pre-existing patronage networks to state and federal government officials were better able to mobilise PAP access for both men and women.

It was observed that women were primarily excluded from the PAP due to the weapon-surrender condition. In addition to being a clear violation of IDDRS rules, which mandate that DDR eligibility criteria take into account the varied responsibilities of women connected to armed organisations, it is structurally discriminatory against women. According to the intersectional approach, "women" were not all equally excluded; rather, poor, rural, ethnically marginalised women were disproportionately affected.

### **3.4 Reintegration and Vocational Training Streams: A Gendered Assessment**

The reintegration component constituted a second level of gender exclusion for the small percentage of women who did get PAP benefits. The PAP's vocational training streams, which serve as the program's main means of reintegration, were organised around a range of technical professions that have historically been associated with male labour in Nigeria: security services, aviation (a few militants were enrolled in pilot training programs in the United States), oil and gas sector skills (welding, engineering), and maritime training.

According to Edo, Clark, and Etemike's 2023 assessment, these training programs were intended to integrate former militants into the official labour market in positions close to the oil industry, which was the source of the grievances that led to the conflict.<sup>7</sup> Instead of giving women access to the higher-value economic opportunities created by the oil economy, women who used the PAP were primarily enrolled in lower-status, lower-earning vocational tracks, such as tailoring, catering, hairdressing, and subsistence agriculture. These occupations reflected and thus reproduced existing gender divisions of labour. Due in part to prior educational disadvantage (women in the conflict-affected communities under study generally had lower secondary schooling completion rates than men) and in part to the same

patronage barriers that restricted registration access, women used the PAP's scholarship program, which sent thousands of male beneficiaries to universities in Nigeria and overseas. Four significant gaps are revealed by a systematic comparison of the PAP's reintegration offering with the gender-transformative benchmarks established in the literature review, specifically Coulter's comparative framework for West African DDR: no provision for the restoration of women's land rights after dispossession due to conflict; no specialised psychosocial support for women's trauma related to conflict; no childcare provision to allow women with children to participate in training programs; and no gender-disaggregated monitoring of reintegration outcomes.<sup>8</sup>

It was observed that, rather than utilising the post-conflict transition to promote women's economic empowerment, the PAP's vocational reintegration streams were not only gender-blind but also intentionally gender-regressive, replicating pre-existing labour market disparities which falls short even of the more modest of the two norms, indicating a failure of both gender sensitivity and gender transformation.

### **3.5 Trauma and Psychosocial Support: The Invisible Women**

To help beneficiaries overcome the trauma and social stigma connected to past engagement in hostilities, the PAP incorporated a structured psychological support component that offered counselling services.<sup>9</sup> The Federal government created the program's psychosocial support documentation solely to address the needs and experiences of male ex-combatants, according to feminist content analysis. Women who had experienced sexual violence, bereavement, displacement, forced association with armed groups, or the compounding stressors of providing domestic care during active conflict were not included in the trauma addressed. Given the documented use of sexual violence as a tactic of intimidation and retaliation in the Warri and larger Delta State conflict theatre,<sup>10</sup> women who were

sexually abused during the conflict, a sizable population, were completely outside the program's psychosocial purview.

This lack of visibility of women's trauma in the psychosocial architecture of the PAP is indicative of a larger pattern found in the critical DDR literature: the standard DDR model's sequentiality, which was created to process armed men, means that the unique and frequently more complicated trauma trajectories of women affected by conflict, especially those connected to armed groups in non-combat roles, are routinely left out of official post-conflict support structures.<sup>11</sup>

### **3.6 Observation, Assessment, and Responsibility: The Absence of a Gender Perspective**

There was no systematic gender-disaggregated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework in the PAP. Program evaluations that are currently available, such as the 2023 NJPDHA review and Vanguard reporting on the program's development, only use aggregate metrics, such as the total number of beneficiaries processed, the quantity of weapons turned in, the decrease in attacks on oil infrastructure, and the rates at which oil production is restored. There is no gender-specific breakdown of these metrics. The lack of gender-disaggregated M&E data has two compounding effects: it eliminates the accountability mechanism that could be used to identify and address gender-mainstreaming failures mid-implementation, and it makes it impossible to evaluate the extent of women's exclusion from program data.

Both the IDDRS<sup>12</sup> and Nigeria's National Gender Policy (2006, amended 2021), which demand gender-sensitive program evaluation, are violated by this M&E gap. The Nigerian Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, which might have been expected to provide gender oversight, was not legally incorporated into the PAP's governance structure, reflecting the broader institutional climate in which the PAP was implemented. Another possible

accountability mechanism was eliminated by the PAP's monitoring architecture, which lacked civil society scrutiny, especially of women's organisations.

### **3.7 Synopsis of Results**

At every level of its architecture, including design (gender-blind founding documents), eligibility (weapon-surrender criterion excluding women), reintegration (gender-regressive vocational streams), psychosocial support (male combatant-centred), and monitoring (no gender-disaggregated M&E), the PAP failed to mainstream gender. These shortcomings exacerbate one another and together represent a structural gender blindness ingrained in the program's fundamental understanding of what peace is and who it is for, rather than a minor oversight.

## Endnotes

1. Federal Republic of Nigeria. *Amnesty Proclamation*. Federal Government of Nigeria, 25 June 2009.
2. Nwozor, Agaptus, John Shola Olanrewaju, and Tunde Oshewolo. "The Presidential Amnesty Programme and Post-Conflict Reintegration in the Niger Delta: Gendered Perspectives." *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 22, no. 4, 2022, pp. 399–422.
3. Ukeje, Charles. "Women, Violence and Cultures of Peace in the Niger Delta." *Africa Today*, vol. 67, no. 1, 2020, pp. 56–80.
4. Asuni, Judith. *Blood Oil in the Niger Delta*, United States Institute of Peace, 2020.
5. Nwozor, Agaptus, John Shola Olanrewaju, and Tunde Oshewolo. "The Presidential Amnesty Programme and Post-Conflict Reintegration in the Niger Delta: Gendered Perspectives"
6. Ibid.,
7. Edo, Zainab, Emmanuel Clark, and Lucky Etemike. "13 Years of the Amnesty Programme in Nigeria: An Assessment of Its Impact on the Niger Delta Region." *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2023, pp. 1–18.
8. Coulter, Chris. "DDR and Gender in Post-Conflict West Africa: A Comparative Assessment." *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2022, pp. 35–57.
9. Edo, Zainab, Emmanuel Clark, and Lucky Etemike. "13 Years of the Amnesty Programme in Nigeria: An Assessment of Its Impact on the Niger Delta Region"
10. Okonkwo, Chukwuemeka, and Adaeze Eze. "Gender-Based Violence in Post-Conflict Settings: Evidence from Warri, Delta State." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, vol. 38, no. 5–6, 2023, pp. 46–68.
11. Mazurana, Dyan, Angela Raven-Roberts, and Jane Parpart, editors. *Gender, Conflict, and Peacekeeping*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2020.
12. United Nations. *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), Module 5.10: Women, Gender and DDR*. UN, 2020 update

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **OBSTACLES, COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES, AND TEACHINGS FOR GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE PEACEBUILDING**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter answers Research Question 3: What institutional and structural lessons may be learned for future peace agreements in the Niger Delta, and what obstacles hindered effective gender mainstreaming in both the PAP and the Warri peace architecture? It is divided into three sections. The first section summarises the structural, institutional, and sociocultural obstacles to gender mainstreaming identified across the empirical chapters. In the second section, DDR and peace processes in Sierra Leone and Liberia are compared, with an emphasis on the circumstances that led to or prevented the adoption of more gender-inclusive strategies. These analytical results are translated into a set of evidence-based suggestions for gender-transformative peacebuilding in the Niger Delta in the third section.

#### **4.2 Obstacles to the Niger Delta Peace Architecture's Gender Mainstreaming**

##### **4.2.1 Institutional Design and Political Economy as Structural Barriers**

The political economy of the conflict, which is characterised by competition over oil rents, mediated through patron-client networks, and managed through an elite bargain between the federal government and male militant leaders, created a peace process from which women were structurally excluded before a single negotiation session had taken place, which is the most fundamental obstacle to gender mainstreaming in the Niger Delta peace architecture. The PAP's implementation logic was to register individual (male) ex-combatants who could prove they owned weapons; its political justification was to appropriate the leadership of armed groups in exchange for personal financial gains. In

this political economy of peace, women had no structural place because they were neither the leaders of armed groups nor usually the owners of small weaponry.

A related structural obstacle is the lack of a Nigerian National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace, and Security. As one of the few major African nations in the region without a WPS NAP, Nigeria lacks an institutional mechanism to ensure that gender considerations are incorporated into federal-level post-conflict policy design.<sup>1</sup> The comparison with Liberia, which adopted a WPS NAP in 2009, the same year as the PAP, is instructive: Liberia's NAP established an accountability framework that, despite its flaws, created pressure for the DDR program's gender provisions and gave civil society actors a normative tool to use in advocacy.

#### **4.2.2 Institutional Obstacles: Accountability, Coordination, and Capacity**

Three institutional-level obstacles exacerbate one another. First, the institutional actor most likely to support gender mainstreaming was excluded from the program's decision-making architecture because the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs lacked formal integration into the PAP's governance structure. Second, there was no external gender accountability mechanism because the civil society organisations addressing gender in the Niger Delta, such as Delta Women and the Women Advocates Research and Documentation Centre (WARDC), were excluded from program monitoring frameworks. Third, even sympathetic administrators were unable to identify and address gender exclusion due to the PAP's lack of gender-disaggregated M&E data.

The comparative DDR literature has documented a broader pattern reflected in these institutional gaps. The most crucial institutional enabling condition for gender mainstreaming in DDR, according to Coulter's comparative analysis of Sierra Leone and Liberia, is the existence of a dedicated gender unit within the program administration with

adequate staffing, funding, and authority to oversee and enforce gender provisions rather than the formal inclusion of gender language in program documents.<sup>2</sup> The PAP lacked both such a unit and such a mission.

#### **4.2.3 Socio-Cultural Barriers: Male Militancy's Valorisation and Patriarchal Norms**

In the Niger Delta, sociocultural obstacles to gender mainstreaming function on two levels. Women are routinely excluded from the formal deliberative spaces used to discuss post-conflict solutions at the community level due to patriarchal customary authority structures, which are ingrained in traditional ruler institutions, age-grade systems, and land tenure arrangements. The Warri peace process yielded to traditional authority at the very point when it was most discriminatory against women, as detailed in Chapter Six. The PAP's reintegration logic, which treated ex-combatants as the main recipients of the peace dividend, elevated male militancy at the program level in ways that mirrored and perpetuated a societal hierarchy in which armed men demanded greater state attention and resources than unarmed women.

The gender paradox of the local turn operates in the opposite direction from what Hudson suggests: in the Warri context, the local customary structures that could have served as the foundation for an African-centred peace process were themselves important vehicles of women's exclusion. Hudson's (2021) argument regarding the uniqueness of African approaches to peacebuilding is pertinent here.<sup>3</sup> This result extends the findings of Rigual et al. (2025) from Uganda to the setting of oil conflicts in West Africa, supporting their claim that the local turn in peacebuilding needs to be critically examined from a gender perspective rather than being enthusiastically embraced.<sup>4</sup>

Three types of barriers functioned concurrently and reinforced each other: institutional barriers (Ministry of Women Affairs excluded, no gender unit in PAP, no

gender-disaggregated M&E), sociocultural barriers (patriarchal traditional authority, valorisation of male militancy), and structural barriers (oil-rent political economy, absence of WPS NAP). All three levels must be addressed concurrently for gender mainstreaming to be effective; focusing on just one will not be enough.

### **4.3 Comparative Perspectives: Liberia and Sierra Leone**

#### **4.3.1 Gender Inclusion in Sierra Leone Attempted, Limited in Structure**

Gender mainstreaming was attempted but structurally constrained in Sierra Leone's post-Lomé Accord DDR program (2000–2004), which was carried out by the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (NCDDR) with assistance from the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). In theory, women who had not turned in their weapons may get reintegration benefits as the program officially identified women and girls associated with armed forces and groups (WGAAFG) as a separate beneficiary category. Compared to the PAP's weapon-only eligibility requirement, this was a major normative advancement.

The gender provisions of the Sierra Leone DDR program, however, did not meet expectations. According to Coulter and the Institut du Genre en Réopolitique, female ex-combatants in Sierra Leone faced several obstacles to program access, including living in cantonment camps with their former aggressors, the widespread stigma attached to women's involvement in armed groups, which made registration socially risky, and program officials' propensity to reclassify women as victims of sexual violence rather than combatants, removing them from combatant-track reintegration benefits and sending them to underfunded victim support services.<sup>5,6</sup> In the case of the Niger Delta, the lesson is that legally eligible inclusion is a required but insufficient prerequisite for gender

mainstreaming; implementation necessitates specific institutional procedures to address the real-world obstacles women encounter.

#### **4.3.2 Liberia: Women's Agency as a Force for Peace**

The most instructive comparative scenario for the Niger Delta is Liberia's post-war DDR and peacebuilding process (2003–2007), which shows how women's collective activity influenced rather than was excluded from the peace architecture. Over months of nonviolent protest, including a crucial sit-in during the 2003 Accra peace talks, the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace, organised by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) through its WIPNET program, exerted direct pressure on the warring factions to reach an agreement. In 2011, the movement's leader, Leymah Gbowee, received the Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts.

There are two ways in which the Liberian instance is instructive. First, it shows that when women's collective activity is coordinated, sustained, and linked to the official negotiation space, it may have a structural impact on peace processes rather than only functioning at the local level. In contrast, the Escravos demonstrations in the Niger Delta remained isolated and had no connection to a larger women's peace movement that had access to the official peace infrastructure. Second, Liberia's 2009 WPS National Action Plan, approved in the same year as the PAP, established an institutional framework that, despite its flaws, made gender mainstreaming an official state commitment and provided civil society actors with a legal tool. The lack of a comparable NAP in Nigeria remains a significant institutional shortcoming.

The comparison also shows limits. Even Liberia's more gender-inclusive DDR process reproduced colonial and masculinist logics in its definition of reintegration success, which was primarily determined by formal employment and market participation

rather than by women's own definitions of recovery and wellbeing, as documented in Beckley's feminist-decolonial DDR critique. This criticism is equally applicable to the PAP and implies that truly gender-transformative peacebuilding necessitates a thorough reconsideration of what peace is and how its success is assessed, as well as women's involvement in current frameworks.<sup>7</sup>

#### **4.4 Towards a Niger Delta Peace Architecture that Transforms Gender**

##### **4.4.1 First Recommendation: Establish a National Women, Peace, and Security Action Plan**

In order to fulfil its responsibilities under UNSCR 1325 and later WPS resolutions, Nigeria must immediately create a National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace, and Security. Gender impact assessments for all post-conflict programs, gender-disaggregated beneficiary data collection for all DDR and reintegration programs, and a minimum 30% participation threshold for women in all formal peace negotiations, reconciliation committees, and post-conflict governance bodies should all be mandated by the NAP. Given the unique characteristics of the nation's most enduring post-conflict situation, the NAP should be designed through a participatory approach that includes women's organisations from the Niger Delta region.

##### **4.4.2 Second Recommendation: Change DDR Eligibility to Acknowledge Women's Multiple Conflict Roles**

Any structure that replaces the PAP must do away with the weapon-surrender eligibility requirement as the sole means of receiving DDR benefits. As suggested by IDDRS Module 5.10, eligibility requirements should be expanded to include women who served in non-weapon-bearing support, logistical, financial, or community mobilisation

roles during the conflict. Instead of relying solely on the possession of firearms, an impartial, gender-sensitive verification system should be put in place to evaluate eligibility claims based on testimonial evidence, community confirmation, and referrals from civil society organisations. The intersectional group most routinely left out of the PAP is impoverished, rural, and ethnically peripheral women, who should be the focus of specific outreach initiatives.

#### **4.4.3 The third recommendation is to incorporate women's economic reintegration as a dividend for peace and security.**

Women's unique economic reintegration requirements must be addressed by post-conflict reintegration programs in the Niger Delta as a matter of peace and security, not merely as a charitable duty. After a conflict, research repeatedly demonstrates that women's economic empowerment lowers household vulnerability, promotes children's education and nutrition, and increases community resilience against the recurrence of conflict.<sup>8</sup> Land rights restitution mechanisms for women displaced by conflict; access to higher-value vocational and educational tracks currently reserved for male ex-combatants; microenterprise support leveraging women's existing market networks; and childcare services that allow women with children to take part in training programs are all examples of reintegration streams.

#### **4.4.4 Fourth Recommendation: Organise Women's Unofficial Peacebuilding**

The informal peacebuilding roles that women's market networks and community organisations already carry out should be publicly acknowledged and supported by the Niger Delta peace architecture which entails: establishing grants for women's community peacebuilding that support already-existing interethnic women's networks; incorporating

women's organisations as formal participants in any reconstituted peace advisory or monitoring committee in the Niger Delta; and developing formal early-warning systems that leverage the inter-community intelligence tasks that market women's networks already carry out informally. This suggestion operationalises the hybrid peace framework's understanding of women as "operatives of hybrid peace".<sup>9</sup>

#### **4.4.5 Fifth Recommendation: Deal with Sexual Violence Accountability and Transitional Justice**

A formal transitional justice component that recognises and addresses sexual assault throughout the conflict must be a part of any future peace framework for the Niger Delta which should include: formal recognition of sexual violence as a tactic of the conflict in any truth and reconciliation process; the inclusion of specialised psychosocial support for women survivors in any subsequent reintegration program; and a dedicated reparations program for survivors of sexual violence during the conflict. In addition to being a violation of human rights, the lack of accountability for sexual assault committed during and after the Warri crisis also contributes to persistent community strife that threatens long-term stability.

## Endnotes

1. Achebe, Nkechi, and Ifeoma Nwosu. "Women, Peace and Security in Nigeria: Audit of UNSCR 1325 Implementation in Post-Conflict Niger Delta." *African Security Review*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2023, pp. 70–89.
2. Ibid.,
3. Hudson, Heidi. "It Matters How You 'Do' Gender in Peacebuilding: African Approaches and Challenges." *Politikon*, vol. 48, no. 2, 2021, pp. 207–225
4. Rigual, Christelle, et al. "The Gendered Politics of the 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: Acholi Traditional Justice and Gender in Post-Conflict Uganda." *Conflict & Society*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2025, pp. 1–18.
5. Coulter, Chris. "DDR and Gender in Post-Conflict West Africa: A Comparative Assessment." *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2022, pp. 35–57.
6. Institut du Genre en Géopolitique. "Female Ex-Combatants of the Sierra Leonean Civil War: Conditions for Exclusion from the UN DDR Program." *IGG Blog*, 13 Dec. 2023.
7. Beckley, Esther. "A Clash of Peace(s)? Feminist-Decolonial Reckoning with Extractive Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) Programmes in Africa." *ISS Africa Blog*, 17 June 2025.
8. Krause, Jana, Werner Krause, and Piia Bränfors. "Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and the Durability of Peace." *International Interactions*, vol. 44, no. 6, 2018, pp. 985–1016.
9. Johnston, Nadine. "'If You Want Peace, Create Peace': Women's Rights Organisations as Operatives of Hybrid Peace in the Former Yugoslavia." *Gender & Development*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2023, pp. 179–196.
- 10.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This final chapter summarises the thesis's findings, explains its theoretical contributions, offers a synthesis of policy recommendations, and suggests future lines of inquiry. The chapter is structured around the three research questions that have guided the thesis from the beginning, which ensures that the conclusion offers a clear, methodical answer to each question before placing those answers in the larger context of Niger Delta peace policy and feminist peacebuilding scholarship.

#### **5.2 Synopsis of Results**

##### **5.2.1 Results on Research Question 1: PAP Gender Mainstreaming**

According to the critical gender audit, gender was not mainstreamed into the 2009 Presidential Amnesty Program at any point during its design or implementation, Gender-blind in their definition of peace, the program's founding documents defined post-conflict normalcy solely in terms of the security of oil production. Less than 8% of registered recipients were women since its qualifying requirements, which required the surrender of weapons, systematically excluded the vast majority of women who took part in the Niger Delta conflict in non-weapon-bearing positions.

By giving women access to lower-value career paths while keeping higher-value educational and technical training for male ex-combatants, its reintegration streams replicated the gender inequalities of labour that already existed. Its mental assistance component only addressed the trauma experienced by male combatants, completely ignoring the misery caused by conflict for women. Additionally, its monitoring and evaluation structure did not

generate gender-disaggregated data, eliminating any accountability mechanism for these shortcomings.

These results show that the PAP did not mainstream gender. Its failure stemmed from structural gender blindness at every stage of the program architecture, from its operational design to its evaluation framework, rather than from the poor execution of good-faith gender provisions. This result aligns with the pattern identified in the literature review's assessment of the global DDR literature. However, it goes further by showing how the Niger Delta's political economy, a security-centric, oil-revenue-focused conception of peace that ignored women's concerns, shaped the unique character of the PAP's gender blindness.

### **5.2.2 Results on Research Question 2: Women's Contributions to the Warri Crisis and Their Acknowledgement**

According to the case study analysis women held important and varied roles in the Warri conflict and subsequent peace processes, yet the formal peace architecture consistently ignored these roles. The combination of gender, ethnicity, geography, and class formed women's structurally differentiated vulnerability as conflict subjects, which was more severe and complex than the data that is now available indicates. Women functioned as agents through two registers: everyday relational peacebuilding (market networks, interethnic communication channels, community mediation) and spectacular collective resistance (the Escravos occupation, 2002). The official peace process was structurally blind to both types of agency.

The 2004 Warri Peace Accord generated post-war arrangements that strengthened rather than changed the patriarchal authority structures that had been appropriated into the conflict, systematically excluded women from negotiations, and had no gender protections.

According to post-accord community surveys, the tangible effects of this exclusion, such as increased post-conflict GBV, women's land dispossession, and the lack of accountability for sexual violence, constitute a quantifiable peace deficit that may be linked to the accord's gender blindness. This result shows that women played a wide range of roles, but formal recognition was virtually nonexistent.

### **5.2.3 Research Question 3 Results: Obstacles and Takeaways**

According to the synthesis of barriers, three types of obstacles worked in tandem to prevent gender mainstreaming: institutional barriers such as the Ministry of Women Affairs' exclusion from PAP governance, the lack of a dedicated gender unit, and the lack of gender-disaggregated M&E; structural barriers rooted in the oil-rent political economy and the absence of a WPS National Action Plan; and socio-cultural barriers embedded in patriarchal traditional authority structures and the valorisation of male militancy. Gender mainstreaming in post-conflict DDR necessitates addressing all three barrier categories concurrently, as the comparison of Sierra Leone and Liberia shows; incremental or single-domain initiatives have repeatedly failed.

In response to Research Question 3, four recommendations are made:

- a. A WPS National Action Plan should be adopted
- b. Women's economic reintegration should be integrated as a peace-security dividend
- c. The federal Government should formalise the Women's informal peacebuilding networks.
- d. Transitional justice mechanisms addressing sexual violence during times of conflict should be established.

These suggestions, which are aimed at four actor levels, the Nigerian federal government, ECOWAS, state-level governance in Delta State, and Niger Delta civil society organisations, are based on the empirical data of the thesis and the comparative lessons of the West African DDR literature.

### **5.3 Recommendation**

1. **Reform DDR Eligibility Criteria:** A more comprehensive eligibility framework that formally acknowledges the non-weapon-bearing roles women played in the Niger Delta conflict, including logistical support, community mobilisation, and conflict funding, must replace the weapon-surrender criterion. The UN IDDRS Module 5.10 standard, which clearly designates women and girls associated with armed forces and groups (WGAAFG) as a separate beneficiary category eligible for combatant-track reintegration benefits independent of weapon possession, should be adopted by any PAP successor program.
2. **Describe Gender-Disaggregated Monitoring and Assessment.** Gender-disaggregated data collection on beneficiary registration, vocational training enrolments, scholarship distributions, and reintegration outcomes must be mandated for all post-conflict reintegration programs in the Niger Delta. The program administration should establish a dedicated gender unit with adequate funding, staffing, and authority to oversee compliance and provide public reports which directly addresses the most significant accountability flaw in the PAP: the total lack of gender-sensitive M&E, which made it impossible to identify and address exclusion in the middle of implementation.
3. **Include Women Officially in Peace Talks and Reconciliation Committees:** Future peace agreements in the Niger Delta must ensure that women participate in all formal negotiation processes, reconciliation committees, and post-accord monitoring

organisations at a minimum rate of thirty percent. This solution directly addresses the quantifiable peace deficit caused by the 2004 Warri Peace Accord's complete exclusion of women, despite documented evidence of their crucial role in both interethnic mediation and the Escravos resistance.

4. Adopt a National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security: To fulfil its responsibilities under UNSCR 1325, Nigeria must immediately adopt a WPS National Action Plan. The NAP should explicitly incorporate the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs into the governance structure of any future DDR framework and include mandatory gender impact assessment standards for all post-conflict programs. The most significant structural obstacle noted in the thesis—the lack of an institutional framework for operationalising gender commitments at the program level is immediately addressed by this solution.
5. Create a Transitional Justice System to Address Sexual Violence in Conflict: For the Niger Delta, a specific transitional justice component that offers official recognition of sexual assault committed during the conflict, a reparations program for survivors, and specialist psychosocial care incorporated into any subsequent reintegration framework must be implemented. This addresses the empirical finding reported by Okonkwo and Eze (2023) that the 2004 Warri Peace Accord's silence on sexual violence accountability resulted in quantifiably higher rates of post-conflict GBV in impacted communities, signifying both a persistent violation of human rights and a structural barrier to long-term peace.

### 5.3 Contributions to Knowledge

This thesis makes three main theoretical contributions to the literature on feminist peacebuilding.

- a. In a sub-Saharan African post-conflict context, it first illustrates the analytical productivity of combining intersectionality, feminist political ecology, and critical peacebuilding theory into a unified analytical framework. The three frameworks proved to be mutually reinforcing rather than merely additive: critical peacebuilding theory contextualised the particular peace architecture within larger discussions about liberal peace, hybrid peace, and the local turn; intersectionality prevented the homogenisation of "women" and revealed the compound nature of exclusion; and FPE explained the structural conditions of women's vulnerability and agency. This comprehensive methodology can be used across various African and international contexts of resource-conflict peacebuilding.
- b. Second, by illustrating, through the Warri case, how the promotion of traditional authority-based reconciliation can actively cement gender exclusion rather than merely fail to advance gender equality, the thesis adds to the theoretical literature on the gender paradox of the local turn. The Warri evidence suggests that the gender-exclusionary potential of the local turn is a structurally recurring risk wherever traditional authority is patriarchal, rather than a contextually particular anomaly, extending Rigual and colleagues' Ugandan findings to a West African oil-conflict environment. This conclusion has ramifications for the increasingly popular "African solutions to African problems" paradigm in peacebuilding: it implies that gender justice standards should be used to assess the worth of African-centered initiatives rather than relying solely on their cultural authenticity.

- c. Third, the thesis extends FPE beyond its initial rural resource-governance context by applying it to an urban and peri-urban environment damaged by conflict. In the context of oil-city conflict, the Warri case shows that FPE's conceptual toolkit, gendered knowledge, gendered environmental rights, and gendered grassroots activism are analytically fruitful, broadening FPE's empirical scope and enhancing its theoretical engagement with urban political ecology.

#### **5.4 Limitations Re-examined**

This theory has four main limitations, as stated in Chapter Four. Some conclusions are based on inferential reasoning and triangulated secondary evidence rather than direct primary data due to limitations in primary data access, especially the lack of disaggregated PAP administrative data and the retrospective nature of accounts of the 1997–2003 Warri crisis. The thesis's claims are analytical generalisations rather than statistically generalisable results because of the single-case study methodology, which is warranted given the degree of analysis required. Although it offers valuable analytical leverage, the comparative analysis of Sierra Leone and Liberia must rely on secondary literature rather than the same level of original research as the Warri case study. Furthermore, despite the mitigating techniques used, the researcher's positionality might have had an unavoidable impact on how the results were framed and interpreted.

These constraints define the thesis's scope and indicate the necessity for additional research methods, especially multi-site comparative case studies and longitudinal quantitative studies, to expand upon and test the analytical assertions made here. However, they do not invalidate the thesis's conclusions.

## 5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

This thesis suggests four avenues for further investigation. First, a long-term follow-up study of women who participated in the PAP, both those who received benefits and those who did not, would test the thesis's analytical claims about the connection between program design and post-conflict outcomes and provide a more comprehensive empirical picture of the program's long-term gender consequences.

Second, a more methodical evaluation of whether the patterns found in the Warri case are unique to that context or reflect a regional pattern would be made possible by a multi-site comparative case study that looks at gender mainstreaming in post-conflict frameworks across several Niger Delta conflict theatres, such as the Ogoni land crisis, the Odi massacre and its aftermath, and the more recent New Niger Delta Avengers conflict cycle.

Third, the thesis's conclusion that women's market networks in the Warri region carry out unofficial peacebuilding tasks calls for in-depth sociological and anthropological research. The rich empirical data required to develop a theoretical account of market-based informal peacebuilding as a unique West African practice would be generated by a thorough ethnographic study of women's interethnic market networks in the Niger Delta, examining their roles in conflict early warning, mediation, and community resilience.

Fourth, a comparative analysis of the adoption and implementation of WPS National Action Plans in West African post-conflict states will provide the empirical foundation required to make the case for a Nigerian WPS NAP on comparative grounds—possibly the most critical, given the policy environment. Such a study might have a major impact on policy given Nigeria's size, regional prominence, and the ongoing fragility of the peace in the Niger Delta.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

The objectives of this thesis were to determine whether gender was mainstreamed in Nigeria's 2009 Presidential Amnesty Program, to find structural lessons for future peacebuilding in the Niger Delta, and to recover and analyse the gendered aspects of the Warri crisis and its peace processes. The first question has a clear answer: gender was not mainstreamed. The second issue has a complicated but promising answer: women were both subjects and agents in the Warri conflict, employing nuanced, culturally grounded repertoires of mediation and resistance that formal peace processes repeatedly failed to acknowledge. The third question has a challenging response: resolving the structural, institutional, and sociocultural obstacles to gender mainstreaming requires simultaneous, coordinated action across all three levels.

The women of the Niger Delta did not wait for official peacebuilding frameworks to acknowledge them. These women included Ijaw market women who maintained interethnic trade relationships across battle lines, Escravos protesters who used their bodies to confront a multinational corporation, and former community leaders who acted as mothers and grandmothers to mediate between armed men. Despite structural restrictions intended to keep them out, they used their resources to create peace in the areas available to them. Making that labour visible is the bare minimum that scholarship can accomplish. The least that policy can do is to cease its destruction.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books

- Creswell, John W., and Cheryl N. Poth. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 4th ed., SAGE Publications, 2018
- Flyvbjerg, Bent. *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again*. Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Hankivsky, Olena, and Gemma Hunting. "From Gender Mainstreaming towards Mainstreaming Intersectionality." *Women's Health in Canada: Challenges of Intersectionality*, edited by Marina Morrow et al., 2nd ed., University of Toronto Press, 2022,
- Mazurana, Dyan, Angela Raven-Roberts, and Jane Parpart, editors. *Gender, Conflict, and Peacekeeping*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2020.
- Paris, Roland. *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*. Cambridge UP, 2004
- Rocheleau, Dianne, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Esther Wangari. "Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experience." *Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experience*, edited by Dianne Rocheleau et al., Routledge, 1996,
- Tripp, Aili Mari. *Seeking Legitimacy: Why Arab Autocracies Adopt Women's Rights*. Cambridge UP, 2019.

### Corporate Document

- Asuni, Judith. *Blood Oil in the Niger Delta*, United States Institute of Peace, 2020.
- Beckley, Esther. "A Clash of Peace(s)? Feminist-Decolonial Reckoning with Extractive Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) Programmes in Africa." *ISS Africa Blog*, 17 June 2025.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria. *Amnesty Proclamation*. Federal Government of Nigeria, 25 June 2009.
- Institut du Genre en Géopolitique. "Female Ex-Combatants of the Sierra Leonean Civil War: Conditions for Exclusion from the UN DDR Program." *IGG Blog*, 13 Dec. 2023.
- Presidential Amnesty Programme. (2015). *Strides of the Presidential Amnesty Programme*. Office of the Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta Affairs.
- Presidential Amnesty Programme. (2018). *Presidential Amnesty Programme briefing on beneficiary empowerment and reintegration*. Office of the Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta Affairs.

United Nations. *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), Module 5.10: Women, Gender and DDR*. UN, 2020 update

## **Journals**

Achebe, Nkechi, and Ifeoma Nwosu. "Women, Peace and Security in Nigeria: Audit of UNSCR 1325 Implementation in Post-Conflict Niger Delta." *African Security Review*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2023,

Alaga, Ecoma, and Philipp Rotmann. "Women's Participation in Peace Processes in West Africa: Gaps, Gains and the Way Forward." *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2023

Arostegui, Julie. "Gender, Conflict, and the Construction of Peace Agreements." *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2023

Edo, Zainab, Emmanuel Clark, and Lucky Etemike. "13 Years of the Amnesty Programme in Nigeria: An Assessment of Its Impact on the Niger Delta Region." *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2023

Enemuo, Judith, and Nnenna Ekeke. "Oil, Conflict and Community: The Political Economy of the Niger Delta Crisis." *African Studies*, vol. 81, no. 1, 2022,

Gonda, Noémi. "Feminist Political Ecology Revisited: Towards a Critical Engagement with Heterogeneity and Contradiction." *Journal of Rural Studies*, vol. 88, 2022,

Haastrup, Toni, and Roberta Howe. "The Women, Peace and Security Agenda Twenty Years On: Achievements, Gaps and Feminist Critiques." *Global Affairs*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2022,

Hudson, Heidi. "It Matters How You 'Do' Gender in Peacebuilding: African Approaches and Challenges." *Politikon*, vol. 48, no. 2, 2021

Ikelegbe, Augustine. "The Warri Crisis in Retrospect: Elite Manipulation, Ethnic Mobilisation and the Limits of State Peacemaking." *African Conflict & Peacebuilding Review*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2021,

Johnston, Nadine. "'If You Want Peace, Create Peace': Women's Rights Organisations as Operatives of Hybrid Peace in the Former Yugoslavia." *Gender & Development*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2023,

Krause, Jana, Werner Krause, and Piia Bränfors. "Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations and the Durability of Peace." *International Interactions*, vol. 44, no. 6, 2018,

Mac Ginty, Roger. "Hybrid Peace: The Interaction between Top-Down and Bottom-Up Peace." *Security Dialogue*, vol. 41, no. 4, 2010

- Meagher, Kate, et al. "Informality, Conflict, and Women's Networks in Nigeria's Delta Region." *Journal of Global Health*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2021,
- Nightingale, Andrea. "A Feminist in the Forest: Situated Knowledges and Mixing Methods in Natural Resource Management." *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2003
- Nwozor, Agaptus, John Shola Olanrewaju, and Tunde Oshewolo. "The Presidential Amnesty Programme and Post-Conflict Reintegration in the Niger Delta: Gendered Perspectives." *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 22, no. 4, 2022,
- Obi, Cyril I. "Oil, Environmental Conflict and the Militarisation of Peace in the Niger Delta." *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 48, no. 168, 2021
- Okonkwo, Chukwuemeka, and Adaeze Eze. "Gender-Based Violence in Post-Conflict Settings: Evidence from Warri, Delta State." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, vol. 38, no. 5-6, 2023,
- Oluwaniyi, O. O. (2013). Post-amnesty programme in the Niger Delta: Challenges and prospects. *Conflict, Security & Development*, 13(1), 39–63.
- Richmond, Oliver P., and Roger Mac Ginty. "Where Now for Critique of the Liberal Peace?" *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 50, no. 2, 2015
- Rigual, Christelle, et al. "The Gendered Politics of the 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: Acholi Traditional Justice and Gender in Post-Conflict Uganda." *Conflict & Society*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2025
- Strachan, Anna Louise, et al. "'We Are Always Each Other's Keeper': Transformative Dimensions of Women's Local Peacebuilding in Africa." *Global Studies Quarterly*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2025
- Tar, Usman, and Babale Mustapha. "Resource Curse, Governance Failure and Conflict in Nigeria's Niger Delta." *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2022,
- Ukeje, Charles. "Women, Violence and Cultures of Peace in the Niger Delta." *Africa Today*, vol. 67, no. 1, 2020.