Landmines and Gender – The importance of a feminist perspective in working with land mines and armed conflicts

In public or media perceptions it seems that landmines are not an issue to which much importance is attached. However, dealing with this issue shows that there is an enormous need to address this subject. The "Landmine Monitor" clearly shows in its annual report of 2018 that 60 countries in the world are exposed by landmines. Accurate information on contaminated regions, even estimates, are scarce, as the collection of concrete data is difficult (Landmine Monitor: http://the-monitor.org/media/2918780/Landmine-Monitor-2018\_final.pdf). 2018).

Some national and international non-governmental organizations made landmines a focal point of their work. The commitment includes the following priorities: On the one hand, the focus is on detecting and destroying landmines and other monition. Furthermore, informing and educating the civilian population about explosive device threats is one of the main concerns (Cluster Monition Coalition: http://stopclustermunitions.org/en-gb/the-treaty/treaty-obligations/stockpile-destruction.aspx 2019) , An additional focus is on the support and rehabilitation of persons and groups of persons who have been damaged by mines (International Campaign to ban Landmines: http://icbl.org/en-gb/finish-the-job/assist-victims/ a-promise-not-yet-fulfilled.aspx. 2019).

A special narrative, with which a confrontation concerning landmines and disarmament could be achieved, is gender. In this case the term gender refers to the social construction of gender, in which there is usually a duality between female and male (Bielefeld University: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/gendertexte/gender.html. 2019). If this narrative is now applied to the problems of armed conflicts and disarmament, from a sociological perspective, it is observable that this topic was and is always male-dominated. The fact is that women are very rarely involved in the production, trade and use of weapons and monition. Even persons who are harmed by the use of monition and mines are largely male. Thus it gets clear that a female perspective on the topic seems completely lacking. It has to be mentioned, however, that in armed conflicts, for example, sexual violence against women is often used as strategic warfare, which can certainly be regarded as a "weapon". From this angle of view, the question arises as to whether a female perspective on dealing with conflicts, mines, monition and disarmament would be meaningful or even necessary (Reaching Critical Will: Gender and Disarmament: http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/ resources / fact-sheets / critical-issues / 4741-gender-and-disarmament. 2019). The fact is that promoting feminist perspectives on issues such as those discussed here can make a new view of things possible and make an important contribution to disarmament.