

dr. Denis  
**Mukwege**Foundation



# Annual Report 2019

[www.mukwegefoundation.org](http://www.mukwegefoundation.org)

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# Interview with Director Esther Dingemans

## *What is the biggest highlight of 2019 for the Mukwege Foundation?*

Overall, 2019 has been a year of significant achievements where the Mukwege Foundation has formed strong partnerships, shaped advocacy activities and country-based programmes, and supported the active participation of survivors in the development of international and national policies related to the matters that concern them.

Since the very beginning of our work, survivors have been calling out for their right to receive reparations for the harm they suffered, and they have played a major role in the development of the Global Survivors Fund. It has been an incredibly inspiring journey to work side by side with survivors in the development of this initiative.

Victims of wartime sexual violence live with the double burden of being

raped, and then being shunned by their communities and denied recognition for the serious crimes that they have suffered. In many countries, survivors of wartime rape cannot rebuild their lives, nor can they contribute fully to society because of the lack of justice and recognition of the crime they suffered. This is where **reparations** play a key role: by aiming to repair the harm caused by gross human rights violations – through compensation and acknowledgement, as well as guarantees of non-repetition, reparations are the core of survivors' demands to get back a life of dignity, respect and equality.

*“It has been an incredibly inspiring journey to work side by side with survivors in the development of this initiative.”-Esther Dingemans*



Mukwege Foundation Director Esther Dingemans and Asmaou Diallo, president of AVIPA, and SEMA member, Guinea

I see the launch of the Fund in October 2019 as a crucial step for the world to see reparations as a *right* and essential to achieve justice and healing, as well as tackling stigma.

The topic of reparations is extremely important for survivors, but key elements of recognition and compensation, have been painfully lacking in their lives. When we organised our first survivor network conference in 2017, the members of the network made reparations their number one priority for advocacy work.

Reflecting back now, only a few years later, it is amazing to see that the Fund is up and running, and we are excited that the first project -co-created with survivors- is fully underway in Guinea.



From left: Tammy Sheldon of SEMA, Tatiana Mukanire of the Movement of Survivors DRC, Esther Dingemans of the Mukwege Foundation, Dr Denis Mukwege, Pilar Rueda Jimenez and Angela Escobar Vasquez of Red Mujeres, Feride Rushide of KRCT and Elizabeth Bohart of Nadia's Initiative at the Global Survivors Fund launch

### ***Are there any other highlights and inspirational moments you would like to share?***

When I visited Kosovo with Dr Mukwege in November 2019 on the invitation of the Kosova Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims, one of the things that really struck me was to see the long-term consequences of wartime sexual violence. Many women still live in the same houses where they were raped during the Kosovo war. One woman told us she used wooden planks to barricade the room where she was raped, and that just passing the door was a daily confrontation with what she had endured. The stigma, trauma and lack of justice experienced by the women in Kosovo demonstrate how the pain continues even after 20

years, and possibly for the rest of survivors' lives, and how vital it is to have long-term and sustained care for survivors of sexual violence in conflict.

At the same time, it was encouraging to see positive change too. Kosovo is one of the only countries in the world that has established a reparations program for victims of wartime sexual violence, and it is amazing to see how Vafije Krasniqi-Goodman, a member of SEMA, and one of the first women in Kosovo who spoke about her experience of sexual violence publicly, are of great inspiration to others in breaking the silence and fighting for justice.



Vafije Krasniqi-Goodman hugs fellow survivor Mer Ayang at the Stand Speak Rise Up Forum in 2019

***The Mukwege Foundation places survivors' voices at the heart of its projects. Why do you believe this is of such importance?***

It is crucial for us to receive guidance from survivors – they are the ones who are affected by the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and know what works best for them. But they are not only survivors, they are also professionals such as teachers, businesswomen, and activists. Some survivors of wartime sexual violence, especially those who have gone through a healing process have become activists themselves. They are helping others and are an incredible source of strength and determination. They want to see change, but they often have never been given the opportunity to have their voices heard. We must remember that sexual violence as a weapon of war is truly a horrific weapon, which is sustained by the silence of communities, politicians and ultimately survivors. However, the weapon becomes much less effective when survivors can speak out safely, and are supported by their communities in doing so.

It is with support from our donors that we can continue to use innovative ways towards ending sexual violence, together with survivors. It is possible to end conflict-related sexual violence, and we remain resolute in this goal.



# Conflict- Related Sexual Violence and the Theory of Change

The Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation puts survivors of wartime sexual violence at the core of its mission. We support survivors' demands for a world where sexual violence as a weapon of war is no longer tolerated, and bears consequences for individual perpetrators and states. We work for a future where survivors receive the holistic care and reparations that they need to rebuild their lives. We create opportunities for survivors to speak out and be heard, and where they can organise to create change, influence policies, and demand justice and accountability. We use national and international advocacy and global campaigning in order to achieve lasting and systemic change. Our source of inspiration remains Dr Mukwege and his team at Panzi Hospital in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The impact of their work in DRC motivates us to scale-up their best practices elsewhere.

## Problem analysis

Sexual violence used systematically as a weapon of conflict is uniquely destructive<sup>1</sup>: it effectively destroys the life of the victim without killing them, leaving them with a heavy burden of physical and psychological harm for the rest of their life. Beyond the individual, it may aim to destroy the reproductive potential of a group or community, and to spread disease. By committing these crimes in public, or coercing family and



Tatiana Mukanire pays attention to a discussion at a Mukwege Foundation retreat.

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<sup>1</sup> See United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Resolution 1820 (2008), UN Doc. S/RES/1820 (2008), 19 June 2008, para 1



community members either to witness or take part in these atrocities, perpetrators impact the whole community, destroying social bonds and relationships. As a weapon of conflict, sexual violence aims to demoralise a community or a whole ethnic group, destroying their resilience and ability to rebuild and recover.



Stigma can be an overwhelming obstacle to survivors' healing process

Sexual violence in conflict takes many forms, including rape, gang rape, penetration with objects or weapons, sexual slavery, forced pregnancy or abortion, forced marriage, sexual torture, and a host of other horrific abuses designed to humiliate and destroy the sexual identity and autonomy of the victim<sup>2</sup>.

Beyond injury and disease, the psychological and social impacts of humiliation and shame are corrosive for victims and their communities alike. Victims are typically excluded from their families and communities, and children born of rape face lifelong stigmatisation and rejection. Moreover, communities and authorities fail to hold perpetrators to account, preferring to maintain the status quo, enabling impunity and fuelling a downward spiral of abuses.

Brutal sexual violence committed in conflict settings is also connected with an increase in all forms of gender-based violence.

Domestic violence, child marriage, and sexual exploitation are all exacerbated in humanitarian settings for many reasons, from family separation, to food insecurity and the impunity of perpetrators. Rape and sexual assault are also committed out of individual opportunism in a lawless context.

Sexual violence does not stop when the conflict ends. Armed militias may demobilise

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<sup>2</sup> See "The Civil Society Declaration on Sexual Violence", 2019, for an attempt to fully define acts of sexual violence, produced in consultation with self-identified victims.

or be incorporated in the regular army, but often continue to commit crimes for as long as lawlessness persists. Sometimes entire generations are brought up to believe sexual violence is a common part of life, or that it is the norm.

Sexual violence is deeply rooted in a society's gender norms which determine what society expects of women and men, their roles, privileges and limitations. Gender inequality exists in all societies, also prior to conflict and displacement. In fragile or humanitarian settings, it becomes a fertile ground for the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war. We see sexual violence in conflict through a gendered lens. That means we understand that by 'weaponising' gendered roles, populations are more vulnerable to sexual



We see sexual violence in conflict through a gendered lens

violence as a weapon of war, and it is more likely that this type of violence will be committed.

## The change we want to see

**We believe that for change to happen it is crucial to break the silence around sexual violence as a weapon of war.**

We are working towards a future where sexual violence in conflict is no longer seen as inevitable and is recognised for what it is: a crime that should have consequences. We want the international community to draw a line against wartime sexual violence and strengthen its accountability mechanisms against states and individuals.

**Our approach is survivor-centred,** meaning that survivors themselves define their needs and solutions. We work to create the conditions that will allow survivors to take the lead in fighting for their rights. Our aim is to help transform victims into survivors, and survivors into agents of change.

## How do we see change happening?

The Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation sees three interconnected strategies as essential for change to happen:



### **VOICE**

survivors of conflict-related sexual violence  
speak out, organise and act



### **CARE**

universal access to holistic care for survivors  
of CRSV



### **JUSTICE & ACCOUNTABILITY**

survivors should have access to reparations;  
impunity will not be tolerated

## Strategies

The underlying assumption for all these strategies is that the collective silence around sexual violence is what makes it such an effective weapon. It fuels a sense of shame in victims and their family members, it enables impunity and prevents victims from seeking support.

Our strategies reinforce each other, creating an enabling environment where survivors can genuinely become agents of change:

- When victims have access to dignified, integrated, quality care, which meets all of their needs, they can recover and heal, and regain their personal agency.
- When victims are given safe spaces to share their experiences, and to have their voices heard, they can support each other and start to reclaim their power. They can reach out to other victims of sexual violence and encourage them to come forward to claim the services that they deserve.
- When survivors know their rights, and can voice their needs, they can become agents of change. They can organise themselves to claim their rights to justice and reparations.
- When survivors and their communities speak out about sexual violence they can break through deeply rooted taboos which place the blame on victims, exclude them from decision-making, and leave them powerless to change their situation.
- When survivors' experiences and testimonies are documented on their own terms, the harms that they have suffered can be publicly acknowledged, and the widespread denial of these atrocities can be challenged.
- When survivors are supported to participate meaningfully in humanitarian programming and peace negotiations, their needs and voices can be kept at the heart of the laws, policies and programmes that impact them.
- When proper survivor-centred justice mechanisms are in place, survivors will be able to seek formal justice, breaking the cycle of impunity and recurrence.



# Programmes and activities

## Holistic healing

To heal from the harms of sexual violence, victims need to regain agency and control over their lives, their decisions, and their bodies. Their needs are complex and interconnected, and the solutions need to be designed with this in mind. In order to reintegrate into their community, it is essential their dignity and humanity are recognised.

We promote the model of holistic, integrated care for survivors of wartime sexual violence pioneered at Panzi Hospital DRC as a human rights standard globally, and we facilitate its implementation in other (post) conflict zones. Wherever possible, we promote an approach where these services are integrated into existing healthcare systems, and we work with local actors to embed the model sustainably in the local context.

Panzi's model of holistic care is structured around four pillars that deal with the interconnected consequences of sexual violence. Each survivor of sexual violence has a social assistant assigned to him or her from the start. Together they design a tailor-made healing pathway that includes:



Holistic healing is also known as the Panzi Model.

- medical care and, where needed, surgery for severe gynaecological injuries
- psychological support through one-on-one support and/or group counselling
- legal representation, and assistance in obtaining forensic evidence
- socio-economic assistance such as literacy training, small business management, and microcredit programmes.

At Panzi, all four pillars are integrated in a one stop centre, accessible at one location, with coherent referrals and co-ordination between services. For survivors this means receiving holistic care without the risk of stigmatisation, as anybody could be visiting a

hospital for a variety of reasons. Coordinated services avoids survivors having to retell their story to multiple professionals and enables them to choose from the services as they feel they are ready.

## Strong survivor networks and survivor-led activism

Survivors face crippling social stigma that prevents them from seeking justice, excludes them from their communities, and often leaves them to care for themselves (and their children) without any support. Many survivors suffer alone, unable to fight for their rights, or to influence programmes meant to support them. We believe this needs to change.

We bring survivors of conflict-related sexual violence together in a global action network, and strengthen national survivor networks for mutual support, in order to break the silence around these crimes, and to call for a proactive political response from the national and international communities.

Our support for survivor-led movements aims to tackle stigma, and to enable survivors to access the care and justice they deserve. We



take a multi-pronged approach, giving different levels of support depending on survivor's needs and their personal healing process:

- We organise regional and global retreats, giving victims and survivors a safe space where they can speak out, share with each other and receive support. We support local survivor networks with capacity building and resources, enabling them to develop solutions and actions according to their own context.

- We connect local and regional survivor networks with SEMA, our global network, for mutual support, inspiration, learning and growth.
- We facilitate survivor-led advocacy and awareness raising at local, national and international levels.
- We enable survivors to document their testimonies through creative

approaches, to enable them to express experiences which are beyond words.

Wherever possible, we connect survivor activists and networks with the wider civil society 'landscape' at a local level for mutual learning and sustainability, and to coordinate joint advocacy towards service providers and authorities.



Survivors of sexual violence in conflict from Central African Republic



## Hold to Account

We advocate for an end to the complicit silence and tolerance of sexual violence crimes

committed in conflict, pushing for changes in policy and institutional behaviour to end impunity, and tackling the obstacles to justice that allow perpetrators to avoid facing the consequences of their actions.

Rape as a weapon of war is considered a war crime, a crime against humanity, and can amount to genocide. In international law, and in the national laws in many countries, there is legislation recognising crimes of sexual violence in conflict, yet perpetrators of these crimes largely go unpunished, and judicial processes do not meet survivors' needs. Procedures may be slow or be influenced by corruption, the burden of legal costs might be placed unfairly on the victim, and proceedings often compromise confidentiality.

Perpetrators often get minimal sentences or are not punished at all.

These crimes, committed across entire communities, spread diseases, destroy



A survivor raises her hand at Maison Dorcas In DRC

family ties and inflict harm over generations. Their consequences are further exacerbated by poverty and stigma. Survivors live with the double burden of the violence and of being shunned by their communities. Only a tiny minority of survivors of sexual violence worldwide ever receive **reparations** awarded by a formal justice mechanism. In addition to the sheer absence of a judicial infrastructure in many contexts, numerous hurdles prevent survivors from initiating proceedings, including widespread corruption, high legal fees, fear of reprisals and stigmatisation. Moreover, survivors can rarely identify their perpetrators, as attacks often happen at night by armed militias, unknown to the community, or because individuals have been gang raped. Even in the rare cases where survivors have successfully brought proceedings against their attackers, and



reparations were awarded by the courts, the procedures for obtain reparations is often transferred from the criminal to the civil courts, a time-consuming and expensive procedure that prevents most survivors from ever receiving compensation. Access to reparations and other forms of redress for survivors of sexual violence has not been a high priority on the policy agenda at the international, national or local level. The lack of formal acknowledgement and justice contribute greatly to survivors being unable to reintegrate into society. Moreover, it has an extremely negative impact on communities' ability to heal and prosper after wartime violence.

To change this situation, we collaborate with other actors to undertake actions including:

- Capacity building of judicial and law enforcement actors, and promotion of survivor-centred procedures
- Advocating for various forms of reparations and redress
- Increasing survivors' access to justice by raising awareness on their rights and on procedures for reporting, by providing legal aid and financial support, and by addressing possible repercussions
- Advocating for perpetrators to be held accountable, building on existing laws and accountability mechanisms
- Seeking innovative solutions at the local and national level which are capable of providing a sense of justice to survivors and victims.

# What we have done in 2019







Voice

## SEMA, The Global Survivor Network: survivors united for change



The SEMA global network connects victims and survivors of wartime rape from all around the world. Through the network, survivors support each other, and jointly speak out about the reality of sexual violence in conflict, and create change through innovative awareness raising and advocacy. In addition, it has set a precedent to involve survivors as experts in their own right. We have been moved to see survivors taking their rightful place in negotiations and policy fora, and that they have been accepted as valued contributors to policy and programme debates around the world. Our guiding principle ***‘Nothing about us without us’*** is getting more recognition globally.

## The story of SEMA

The SEMA journey began in June 2017, when the Mukwege Foundation facilitated the first international survivor retreat in Geneva, bringing together survivors of conflict-related sexual violence from 15 countries. With the generous support of the Dutch Postcode Lottery, this was followed by global retreats in 2018 and 2019.

In 2019 the SEMA network discussed the most essential goals of the global movement and agreed upon four focal points for the year: maintaining a safe

international platform for survivors to come together and strengthen one another; raising awareness about the reality, causes and consequences of wartime rape; changing the narrative on wartime rape: and advocating for the abolition of the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war.

The Mukwege Foundation continued to support SEMA members with training in diverse capacity-building activities during international advocacy trips, local training,

and remotely, through webinars, with the aim of equipping survivors to better help themselves and represent other survivors around the globe. In November we organised together with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and coaching agency Intelligences Alternatives, we organised a capacity building workshop where survivors learned powerful group approaches to analysing and processing experiences of

gender-based violence (techniques easily replicated in their local networks), received individual coaching, and engaged in team building.



Two survivors hug at a retreat in Luxembourg

In March 2019, the third annual SEMA retreat took place in Luxembourg. It focused on facilitating **regional discussions and collaboration, strengthening the existing working groups and exchanging experiences between countries.** With 18 countries represented, including new ones like Nigeria, all survivors felt supported after learning about similar situations and advocacy efforts in other countries.



## Co-partner of Stand Speak Rise Up conference in Luxembourg:

Following the SEMA retreat in March, SEMA members participated in the Stand Speak Rise Up international conference, organised by Her Royal Highness the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, in partnership with the Mukwege Foundation and We Are Not Weapons of War. Fifty-two members of SEMA were present, and many spoke in different panels as experts during the event about topics including holistic care,



Survivor Iryna Dovgan speaks in Luxembourg

reparations, survivors' movements, children born of rape, the role of technology in advocacy, the criminal justice system — all issues where the survivors' perspective is crucial for relevant action to be taken.



The stage fills with survivors, dignitaries and activists at Stand Speak Rise Up Forum in Luxembourg

# Highlights: Influencing policy by speaking out at public events

## Representation at the UN Commission on the Status of Women

In March 2019 in New York, the Mukwege Foundation was present at the 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. During the session, we put survivors' voices at the core of a side event on holistic care co-sponsored by Belgium, France, Senegal and Switzerland. Tatiana

*"It is time that survivors of rape and sexual violence show to the world that they are worth respect and not stigma. It was a great honour for me to bring the voices of survivors of DRC to the United Nations for the Universal Periodical Review of DRC. Our voices have long been ignored; we have been forgotten by our bruised society. Getting support and a space to speak brings hope to all survivors of rape and sexual violence".*

*-Tatiana Mukanire*

Mukanire (DRC) and Vasfije Krasniqi-Goodman (Kosova) called for universal access to holistic care for all victims of wartime rape. They also participated in other advocacy and networking meetings to present SEMA's demands.

## Presenting recommendations to end conflict-related sexual violence in DRC to the Human Rights Council

In April 2019, Tatiana Mukanire was in Geneva to present the key recommendations of a joint report submitted to the Universal Periodical Review of DRC to the Human Rights Council. Based on the experiences of survivors, the report highlights the need to fight impunity, to address the lack of access to reparations and holistic care, and the urgent need to implement prevention and proper strategy to achieve equality between women and men in DRC. It was the first time a survivor ever addressed the Council directly.

## Co-hosting a high-level meeting on global reparations

The Mukwege Foundation co-hosted an **expert meeting in June 2019** with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) on the creation of the Global Survivors Fund. During two days of meetings, the initiative was presented to experts from around the world, including survivors, and participants provided their input on both the theoretical and technical aspects. Topics included the role of judicial and truth-seeking projects, criteria for awarding reparations, actors to be held accountable, and funding.

## Speaking at the United Nations (UN) in New York

In the second half of 2019, survivors gave compelling testimonies at the UN about their realities and the pressing need for survivor-centred approaches to change, where they were invited to



Tatiana Mukanire testifying at the UN in New York

mark the 10th anniversary of the UN Mandate on Sexual Violence on October 2019. A particular highlight (and culmination of SEMA survivor-led advocacy) took form in their participation at the launch of the Global Survivors Fund, the reparations initiative spearheaded by Dr Mukwege and Nadia Murad, also showcased during the commemorative UNHQ event.

## Presenting at an international conference on mental health and psychosocial support

In October 2019, the Mukwege Foundation accompanied survivors as they shared their perspectives on how to effectively manage trauma at an important international conference, hosted by the Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation in Amsterdam and the Hague.

## Meeting with NATO to discuss rape as a weapon of war

In November 2019, SEMA was invited to **NATO's Brussels headquarters**, where the Director of the Mukwege Foundation, the network coordinator and survivor Tatiana Mukanire spoke to an audience of around one hundred NATO Ambassadors and officers.



## Highlights: Exchange visits and capacity-building

Survivors consistently emphasize the tremendous value they experience from having direct contact with each other, and being able to witness how advocacy, awareness-raising, and capacity-building approaches are implemented at local levels. During 2019 survivor groups made four exchange visits; to South Korea, Colombia, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina. to learn from each other's activism. The Ukrainian survivors' network visit to Kosovo had a deep impact on them, as they learned first-hand about the processes of negotiating and implementing reparations for survivors of wartime sexual violence.



Survivor Iryna Dovgan with the Ukrainian delegation in Kosovo



Survivors from Ukraine in Kosovo

For the Ukrainian survivors this exchange brought the realisation that survivors of conflict-related sexual violence were recognised in Kosovo only 15 years after the end of the war, and they were finally granted the status of victims, eligible to receive reparations, 20 years after the end of the war. This realisation gave them a strong impetus to try to accelerate the pace of change in Ukraine to recognise the rights of survivors of sexual violence. Also powerful was the opportunity to witness another SEMA member speaking out for the first



time, the 2nd Kosovar survivor to speak out publicly and acknowledge her experience.

SEMA members continued to combine awareness-raising with participation in a capacity-building training in London in November, supported by the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI), polishing their advocacy and messaging skills in sessions with media and public speaking specialists, following advocacy visits to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom. They networked extensively with other survivors, such as London-

based survivor members of the NGO Freedom from Torture. They collaborated with the Institute for International Criminal Investigations (IICI) in the development of the Murad Code, in its early stages, which is intended to contain comprehensive guidelines for engagement with survivors of sexual violence in conflict.



Survivor meeting in London

## Creation of an online communications platform and website for SEMA

A secure digital communications platform with automatic translation is crucial for SEMA's growth, increased cohesion and

The Foundation staff, a first group of survivors and an outside developer consultant have been testing the system for functionality, security, and reliability. The platform, which will be integrated within the SEMA website, features unique coding developed for SEMA and approved by

autonomy. With support from the Open Society Foundation we were able to develop an easy-to-use- platform.

Google as open source code, so freely available for other grass-roots groups with similar communications needs. By December 2019, it went live for a select group of survivors to test. As one survivor put it: ***'It is flexible, I am looking forward to having more members join!'***

## Production and strategic dissemination of collective memory tools

The Foundation continues to work with SEMA members to give shape to their narratives through writing, photography, and other art forms. A standout example was a collaborative creation led by survivors from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), who wrote and acted in a very special film, based on survivors' lived experiences of sexual violence. The cinematic result is called Sema, or 'Speak Out' in Swahili, a powerfully authentic tool of collective memory for advocacy and awareness building in DRC and also beyond, whose production became a challenging, moving part of the survivors' own healing processes.

The film has since been submitted to over thirty film festivals, having its US premiere on International Women's Day 2020, at the oldest independent film festival of the US in Washington, DC.



### UPDATE

As of publication of this report, the film *Sema* won the best International film at the DC International Film Festival, Best Feature Film at Through Women's Eyes Festival. The film has also been selected for the Nice International Film festival and the New York Independent Film Festival.

# National networks

In 2019, the Mukwege Foundation with support from the Dutch Postcode Lottery has continued to support existing survivor networks and has fostered new or emerging networks, such as the Ukrainian survivors' network created in February 2019.

We continued to support on-the-ground implementation and guidance for the networks, with a focus on four national networks in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and Ukraine. Through these interconnected networks survivors have been able to:

- support one another, build solidarity, and reach out to those who are isolated
- raise awareness to reduce stigma
- engage in dialogues on peace, security and other key issues in their countries
- advocate to influence policies and programmes
- promote survivor healing programmes
- call for justice and public recognition of committed crimes

## Central African Republic

The Central African Republic (CAR) has experienced several waves of political instability and conflict since gaining independence in 1960, most recently during an armed rebellion by militants known as the Seleka, and the overthrow of the elected government in 2013. The bloody takeover resulted in grotesque violence, including ethnic cleansing, mass displacements and horrific acts of sexual violence. Although elections in 2016 allowed a new government



Bernadette Sayo, President of Mosuca and member of SEMA

to be formed, in practice it wields little authority outside the capital Bangui, and sectarian violence continues between armed



groups battling for control over territory. Survivors decided to break the silence and unite in a movement to fight against sexual violence, and to prevent new generations from facing the same atrocities. On 10 December 2018, the anniversary of the 1948 signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, MOSUCA — ‘Mouvement des Survivantes de Violences Sexuelles en Centrafrique’ — was launched in front of an audience of 500 at the National Parliament. The CAR network was initially composed of survivor-representatives of six local victims’ organisations, and 25 Bangui members.



A meeting of MOSUCA in Central African Republic

It has since grown to span 14 prefectures, and to represent 350 members.

MOSUCA’s focus is on advocacy and victim support, raising awareness, reducing stigmatisation, fighting impunity, and assisting in socio-economic empowerment. In 2019 MOSUCA organised several large-scale advocacy events which received national media coverage, including:

For the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict (19 June 2019) MOSUCA members produced T-shirts to promote the right of survivors to engage in the peace process, distributed leaflets explaining the importance of a survivor-centred approach in the prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence, and organised a march of HIV-positive victims.

For the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November 2019) MOSUCA marked the 16 days of activism with a national radio programme bringing together socio-economic advisors, women deputies, ministers, academics and survivors of sexual violence to raise awareness about the realities of conflict-related sexual violence.





Members of the movement of survivors in DRC

## Democratic Republic of Congo

The systematic use of sexual violence— by rebel groups, militias, and the army — has been a brutal feature of the conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since the 1990s. The eastern provinces have been particularly afflicted by violence fuelled by numerous factors: conflict in neighbouring countries spilling over onto DRC’s territory, mass displacement of populations fleeing genocide and violence in Rwanda, violence associated with the election cycle and territorial battles to control land and mineral resources.

The DRC network, ‘Le Mouvement des Survivant.e.s de Viols et Violences Sexuelles en RDC’, was created following the first global annual retreat of survivors organised by the Mukwege Foundation in June 2017. This highly active network is currently present in three provinces, North & South Kivu and Central Kasai, with plans to expand activities to two other provinces, Tanganyika and Ituri, during 2020. Activities are coordinated at a provincial level by survivors,

who have formed committees to organise monthly meetings for their survivor membership, and coordinate a busy programme of community awareness-raising to tackle stigma and reach out to other victims of sexual violence.



Members of the Movement of Survivors gather to celebrate Dr. Mukwege's Nobel Prize at Panzi Hospital.

Quarterly interprovincial meetings bring the coordinators together to share results and align strategies across provinces. The network works with Dr Mukwege's Panzi Foundation in Bukavu, as well as a number of other local NGO's working on issues around conflict-related sexual violence.

The movement's mission is to create a space where survivors of sexual violence can share knowledge and support one another, as well as raise awareness and advocate against conflict-related sexual violence. Its vision is to break the silence surrounding sexual violence, and to fight stigma and impunity. In

addition to nurturing solidarity and creating a space for exchange and mutual support between survivors, the objectives of the movement are to:

- Help other survivors in accessing the care they need
- Create a collective memory of survivors' experiences and gain acknowledgement of the crimes that have been committed
- Conduct effective advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns to influence the programmes dedicated to victims of sexual violence in DRC, and internationally through SEMA

The focus in 2019 for this network has been on its activities programme and raising its profile by organizing several large-scale public events. The network is increasingly sought as an effective partner in advocacy. They are part of a group of civil society actors focused on gender-based violence in DRC, and collaborate closely with UN agencies and NGOs

On the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, the network organised a major exhibition 'Listen, Recognise, and Join (us) the Survivors'. The exhibition showcased works of art and



performances by artists and survivors. Entirely designed and conceived by the members of the network, this exhibition was intended to be both a forum for exchange and a stark reminder of the scourge of conflict-related sexual violence in conflict in DRC. Some 200 people visited, including the adviser on sexual violence to the governor of South Kivu, and the secretary of the provincial gender division, to listen to survivors, acknowledge their suffering, and join their struggle.

Network members have organised an average of 8 awareness-raising sessions per month aimed at survivors, school students, and community members. Survivors have spoken on important issues such as the need to break the silence, countering harmful myths and showing the reality of sexual violence as a weapon of war, and ways to fight against stigma and

## Nigeria

In northeast Nigeria sexual violence has been used on a mass scale during the ongoing insurgency. Women and girls have been abducted by fighters belonging to Jama'atul ahl al-sunnah li da'awati wal jihad (JAS - known globally as Boko Haram), forcibly married to their captors and in many cases have become pregnant as a result of



Survivors in DRC rest behind mosquito nets

impunity. The network's members have also started to conduct family visits and referrals of new cases to appropriate holistic services (medical care, integrated with legal, psychosocial, and socioeconomic support).

As described earlier, the network created and produced a film "SEMA", based on the real stories of their members, and featuring survivors as actors. While the film is already having a great impact internationally, it was created to address the crushing stigma experienced by DRC survivors in their own communities.

rape. Women and girls who have escaped or been released face marginalisation, discrimination and rejection by family and community members due to stigma, as well as fears that they may have been radicalised in captivity and are a danger to the community. Children who have been



born of sexual violence are at even greater risk of rejection, abandonment and violence. Victims displaced in internally displaced person (IDP) camps in Northeast Nigeria's northeast face a humanitarian crisis, with



Survivors in Nigeria often prefer to remain anonymous

shortages of food, medical care and economic opportunity. Sexual exploitation within the camps is an ongoing danger, where perpetrators are taking advantage of impunity and a context in which women are destitute and easy targets for sexual exploitation. In most cases, women and girls

do not know how to formally report sexual violence and do not trust formal authorities.

The Building Survivor Network (BSN) in Nigeria draws its members from Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, the three states most affected by the Boko Haram conflict. The network brings survivors of sexual violence together to work in solidarity, supported by the local NGO Grassroots Researchers Association. Survivors agree that their voices are systematically silenced. Stigmatisation and isolation are widespread, and many survivors have been rejected by their families. The BSN provides these girls and women with the opportunity to listen to one another and speak about their experiences in a supportive space.

Three objectives were identified by the survivors at their initial meeting:

- enhancing solidarity among survivors in Nigeria
- empowering survivors
- listening to survivor voices for awareness and policy change.

The activities in 2019 have been focused on the first two objectives, and on laying the groundwork for the survivors to lead their network further.

Each of the meetings organised in the 3 states provided opportunities for the women and girls to develop trust and connect. As they shared stories, they also strengthened their bonds. While many of the girls had already informally met in the camps, these structured meetings allowed for new connections to develop, and a discussion about how they could build something from a survivor-led perspective. The opportunity to share their stories has also helped the survivors to gain a clearer understanding of the extent of sexual violence in conflict, as they have been able to connect with survivors from outside their own communities.

During these meetings, survivors also explored ways to develop a collective memory, with the aim of empowering survivors to document and share their experiences in a way that reaches wider society. Dance therapy was used during this seminar as a way of giving the women and girls some relief from the intense topic, and also to give them more confidence to connect with one another and to express themselves in a creative way. A further training session was focused on building the leadership capacities of the survivors and increasing their confidence in self-expression to become role models for other survivors.

## Ukraine

Sexual violence has been used systematically by both sides in the armed insurrection in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions of Ukraine, and in the aftermath of Russia's occupation of Crimea. Women and men have suffered torture and sexual violence in illegal detention facilities and at checkpoints. Sexual violence has also been used to intimidate individuals and communities to force them to leave the territory. Victims report that they struggle to access appropriate psychological support, and stigma and fear of reprisals has meant that many survivors have not



A Ukrainian survivor holds pieces of a grenade

reported these crimes to law enforcement agencies

From its inception in February 2019, the Ukrainian survivors' network has been working hard to achieve its aims to raise

awareness of conflict-related sexual violence amongst survivors and government decision-makers, to establish a viable route to peace and to gain support. Known as the Ukrainian Network of Women Affected by Violence, the network is composed of 15 members throughout Ukraine, many whom are currently internally displaced because of ongoing violence.

Much of the work over the last year has been preparation and capacity-building for agreed-upon activities. As reported above, members of the Ukrainian network travelled to Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Kosovo to learn about the local approach to compensation and reparations, discussing the Ukrainian context with policy-makers, representatives of international

Members of the network have succeeded in establishing contacts with a number of influential female politicians, who expressed readiness to provide support for survivors in the future, specifically, giving their commitment to support the investigation and prosecution of criminals who committed or sanctioned sexual violence.

Two important state-level events addressing sexual violence were also held. On May 30, network members met at the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers to discuss this issue, and on June 19, the Ukrainian parliament discussed the issue to develop a position on how best to combat sexual violence connected with the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.



The Ukrainian Survivor Network

organisations,

and ambassadors.



Members of the Ukrainian survivor network were given a significant role in the discussion, with ample opportunity to share their views and concerns. They actively lobbied for the appointment of a UN Special Rapporteur on the investigation of sexual crimes committed during the conflict in Donbas.

Network members have developed an advocacy strategy to raise awareness around the sexual violence committed during the conflict in east Ukraine. The national coordinator and other active members of the network have been prominently featured in a number of Ukrainian news articles, speaking about the national network and SEMA.

In June 2019, network members received training on psycho-social care, to better communicate with women who have experienced violence. They learned about recovery techniques, and developed self-help skills in the process. As members intend to reach out to other women who suffered sexual violence during the conflict,



Survivors engage in a team- building activity in Kiev

the training aimed to improve their contact with other victims, while reducing any risk of re-traumatisation.

One of the network members has very actively addressed the problem of sexual violence through the media. She continues to represent the network to public authorities and international organisations, attracting material and medical care for network members. Her efforts to provide care to other network members has had direct, positive effects on their emotional recovery, with psychologists and medical doctors offering assistance.

# Care



Dr Mukwege treating patients at Panzi Hospital

## Expansion of holistic care worldwide

In 2019, we continued to support survivors of wartime sexual violence in a number of countries in their access to quality, holistic integrated care, based on the model pioneered at Panzi Hospital in DRC. We have facilitated South-South knowledge exchange and learning efforts between healthcare professionals, transferring expertise in holistic care from one (post)-conflict country or region to another.



## Guinea

On 28 September 2009, in Conakry, the capital of the Republic of Guinea, a demonstration turned into a tragedy. Thousands of demonstrators had gathered in Conakry's stadium to say "no" to the presidential candidacy of the then transitional head of state, Captain Moussa Dadis Camara. Soldiers and men in civilian clothes entered through the gate and beat, killed and raped the civilians present. According to the UN International Commission of Inquiry, at least 156 people were killed or disappeared and 109 women were raped. Several women died of their injuries as a result of particularly cruel sexual assaults. Until today these crimes remain unpunished.

Following the events of 28 September, the victims, family members and friends organized themselves into an association to promote respect for human rights and to assist survivors and their vulnerable families. The Association des Victimes, Parents et Amis du 28 Septembre 2009 (AVIPA) fights for the medical, psychological, legal and socio-economic care of victims of sexual and gender-based violence.

In 2019, with support from our donor ProVictimis, we continued to work with our local partner AVIPA. During previous visits to Conakry, Panzi's team spoke with survivors who complained of persistent



Asmaou Diallo, the president of AVIPA and staff

infections, unaddressed internal injuries and severe psychological trauma that in many cases, prevented them from earning a living.

Our collaboration with Panzi and AVIPA ensures that survivors of the 2009 atrocities and others get access to critical medical and psychosocial care as well as socio-



economic support via a South-to-South knowledge exchange program.

In 2019, AVIPA continued to provide this critical assistance to survivors, organizing a steering committee to manage a medical assistance fund; conducting referrals to service providers; organizing individual and group therapy sessions and providing training and supplies for socio-economic support.

In mid-2019, the Mukwege Foundation conducted a monitoring mission to Guinea, together with Panzi expert trainers. The professionals went on to train about 100 more local SGBV professionals in Conakry and the other communities targeted by the project.



Livelihood-building activities at AVIPA in Conakry, Guinea

## Iraq

In 2014, the Yazidi population in Sinjar (Nineveh) was targeted by the Islamic State (ISIS), in attempts to repress them and destroy the entire community. These brutal attacks, which resulted in massacres, kidnappings and rapes, led to the forced displacement of the majority of the Yazidi population, approximately 400,000 people.

Captured Yazidis were separated by gender, with men and boys of fighting age being massacred, and women and children

abducted and taken as prisoners to Mosul and Syria. Enslaved women and girls were subjected to severe and prolonged sexual (and other physical and psychological) abuse, and young boys were forced to serve alongside ISIS militants.

In July 2019, the Mukwege Foundation started a collaboration with Yazda, a respected NGO in the Yazidi community, aimed at strengthening access to quality holistic care for survivors of sexual violence

committed by ISIS. With financial support from SANOFI, the Mukwege Foundation supported Yazda in 2019 to facilitate access to specialized medical care, psychosocial support, and socio-economic assistance to survivors of sexual violence. Survivors have

so far had access to surgeries and other forms of specialized care, as well as benefited from support and accompaniment from Yazda’s case workers. They also have participated in livelihoods training activities.

## Great Lakes region

The International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children (2006) foresees the creation of a Regional Training Facility (RTF). This Regional Training Facility is mandated “for training and sensitising judicial officers, police units, social workers, medical officers and other categories of persons who handle cases of sexual violence in the Great Lakes Region”.

In 2019, with the support of the German Development Agency (GIZ) a collaboration



Streets of Bukavu, DRC

started between the Mukwege and Panzi Foundations and the ICGLR Regional Training Facility (RTF) in order to reinforce survivors’ access to quality holistic assistance in the Great Lakes Region. The collaboration focuses on the integration of Panzi’s holistic model of care in the RTF’s training activities, which form part of an ambitious regional programme to train thousands of Sexual and Gender based Violence (SGBV) professionals in ICGLR member states, utilising a training of trainers approach. This integrated training will be piloted in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Zambia, Rwanda, Uganda and the Central African Republic by joint



Panzi Hospital, Bukavu, DRC



teams of Panzi expert trainers and trainers selected by the RTF. Several learning exchanges took place between May and November 2019. These meetings brought together a total of 60 trainers and experts and allowed the teams to exchange experiences both on training approaches and tools, as well as on key themes within Panzi's expertise, like holistic care,



Women gather at Panzi Hospital in DRC

psychosocial support and forensic medicine. As a result, Panzi's holistic care model and the RTF's socio-ecological model are integrated into one comprehensive training program for SGBV professionals.

The first pilot training jointly delivered by Panzi and RTF trainers took place in December 2019 in Goma and Kinshasa in the DRC. As a result of the training, a total of 73 professionals involved in SGBV response in the DRC increased their knowledge on how to appropriately manage cases and address the holistic needs of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

This program has been a key opportunity to advocate for holistic care as a standard and right for survivors of sexual violence in the Great Lakes region, particularly in those countries affected by conflict. In October 2019, the project team presented the holistic care model and its experiences in rolling out this model in DRC and other countries, during a high-level meeting in Congo-Brazzaville, in the presence of Ministers of Gender and Justice from ICGLR Member States.

In 2020, the initiative will be further rolled out in Rwanda, Zambia and Uganda and the Central African Republic (CAR). In addition, the RTF will develop an online database with the profiles of SGBV experts in each of the 12 ICGLR Member States to facilitate access to expertise within the region. A lessons-learned paper, developed with the technical support of the Mukwege Foundation, will be presented at a regional round-table towards the end of the project to share good practices with key stakeholders in view of a potential replication elsewhere.



## Preparations for a holistic care project in CAR

In 2019 we finalized the preparations for a four- year program in Central African Republic (CAR) with a consortium consisting of Fondation Pierre Fabre (FPF), l'Institute Francophone pour la Justice et la Démocratie (IFJD) and the Mukwege and Panzi Foundations. In late 2019, an accord was signed between the consortium partners and the French Development Agency in Paris, to implement a holistic care project in Bangui, CAR. This project will improve access to quality holistic assistance for survivors of sexual violence, thanks to the creation of a one-stop-centre in Bangui. It is an example of a South-to-South learning approach, enabling a team of Panzi's experts to work alongside their CAR colleagues to set up a holistic care system and enhance services for survivors.

It will also ensure strong survivor involvement in the development of the project. An estimated 3000 survivors of sexual violence and women with serious reproductive health issues like fistula or prolapse will benefit from medical, psychosocial, legal and socio-economic assistance by the end of the project.

In March 2020, project activities will start, and the Mukwege Foundation will deploy an international coordinator to Bangui, who will support the team of experts from Panzi and other project staff in-country.



# Justice and Accountability

Survivors from DRC clasp hands

## Reparations and other forms of redress

In 2019 the Mukwege Foundation's justice and accountability work was primarily focused on advocating for improved access to reparations for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

## The desire for acknowledgement and compensation

When establishing their advocacy agenda, SEMA members identified the lack of formal acknowledgement and compensation to be a major obstacle to healing and integration in their community and society. The Mukwege Foundation supported SEMA members to continue to make an unequivocal call for reparations to be

considered a priority for the international community.

The Mukwege Foundation co-organised a high-level working meeting in January 2019 in New York with Nadia's Initiative (the organisation of Nadia Murad) and the Office of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. The meeting was hosted by Roosevelt House, the Public Policy Institute at Hunter College and the objective was to brainstorm with key actors on the way forward in establishing a reparation fund. Four members of SEMA were present. In addition to Dr Denis Mukwege, Ms Nadia Murad and SRSG Patten, the Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Korea and Sweden participated, as well as high level representatives of other countries.

Throughout 2019, Dr Mukwege and the Mukwege Foundation, with the support of Nadia's Initiative put the topic of reparations on the international agenda by participating in panel discussions, organising debates and conducting high-level engagement with Foreign Ministries. These concerted advocacy efforts resulted in the creation of a Global Survivors Fund in October 2019.



Esperande, a SEMA member from Burundi, sketches out activism plans



# The Global Survivors Fund

The Global Survivors Fund is an innovative mechanism whose mission is to ensure survivors of conflict-related sexual violence have access to reparations, and other forms of redress, globally. This includes redress for victims who do not have access to justice. The Fund draws its mission and vision from the work of the SEMA network and builds on the advocacy efforts of the office of the SRSG-CRSV and Ms. Pamela Patten, the current SRSG. It addresses a gap long identified by survivors and is a complement to existing efforts to prevent sexual violence and to provide justice,

*“Giving women reparations can help them resume their lives and are a way to rebuild the fabric of societies, families and communities.”*

*-Dr Denis Mukwege*

including through formal justice mechanisms.

The Fund approaches its work from a survivor-centric perspective: reparations and other forms of redress are a ‘right’ as noted



by international law. The Fund is governed by a diverse group of stakeholders, including survivors, civil society and governments.

The Fund will support civil society programs to conduct activities with restorative value and other forms of redress. ‘Interim reparations’ to survivors could take the form of livelihood packages, funds for facilitating access to education or healthcare, and other forms of individual and collective compensation, as well as commemorative events, all of which help to rebuild shattered lives and fight stigma. Not only will these respond to the needs of survivors, including acknowledgement, but they may also spur the responsible parties to take action. In addition to supporting these programs, the Fund will put pressure on responsible parties to provide reparations

The Fund was endorsed by the UN Secretary-General in his statement to the Security Council on conflict-related sexual violence in April 2019 and language referencing the Fund was included in Security Council Resolution 2467. The G7 also confirmed its support for the Fund in its August 2019 Declaration on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. With seed funding registration in Geneva, appointment of Board and Technical Advisory Council, recruitment of the team, and

*“We, the victims of sexual violence, are stigmatised by our own families, by our communities, by our society and by our institutions. This forces us to be silent. Reparations are a matter of justice.”*

*-Fulvia, Survivor of Sexual Violence, Colombia*



Dr Mukwege and Nadia Murad at the G7

from France, Germany and Norway, the foundations of the Fund were built (i.e. development of policies, the first pilot project launched in Guinea). With the support from the United Kingdom, a second pilot project may potentially start in DRC

France, the Republic of Korea, and Japan each committed 6 million Euros to be spent over a period of three years.

During the initial months since its launch, the Fund was managed by the Mukwege Foundation team, using the organization's structures. At the time of writing this report, the Fund is running as a separate entity in Geneva.

# Internal Organisation

Internally, with the growth of the organisation and our engagement with the Global Survivors Fund, we have added new positions to our team to both strengthen our support to the survivors and to build a strong foundation for our organisation.

## A growing team

The Mukwege Foundation is moving from the phase of a small start-up organisation focusing primarily on the Voice pillar of our mission, to an organisation with an equally strong commitment to translate our full ambitious mission- a consistent survivor-centred approach to end rape as a weapon of war- into concrete and innovative actions. For instance, we not only advocate for holistic care to be internationally recognised, but we also aim to support its implementation on the ground in other countries, such as our ongoing project in the Central African Republic. It is exciting to see the materialisation of our work with the Panzi Foundation DRC and other partners into broader and more concrete projects that will provide care and multidisciplinary support to victims of sexual and engage survivors in the process.

These holistic care projects provide both great opportunities as well as challenges for the current internal organisation. It requires the organisation to strengthen its funding base and to ensure the necessary internal policies and procedures are

updated and upgraded to meet and support the current ambitions and future size. With the addition of the Director of Programmes and Operations to the team, Katrien Coppens, we strengthened our senior leadership team in the organisation.



Katrien Coppens

The team is currently working on an update and upgrade of the following policies and procedures: human resources (including salary house – Reference Function grid), field guidelines, insurances, travel and per diem policies, integrity policy, security policies and trainings, GDPR compliance as well as to reinforce our database and guidelines for our colleagues working in the field.



# Communications and campaigns

## Media and press

The media is a powerful tool to amplify survivor's voices and break the silence surrounding sexual violence in conflict. We work closely with journalists, advocating for the publication of survivor's stories and the work being done by the Foundation. Here are some notable examples from 2019:

### Forgotten Women

On the 3 June 2019, Lucy Gray of the Independent Newspaper published the article Forgotten Women: What does the future hold for the country that 'never turned the page on conflict'? The article traces back the conflicts that plague the DRC, including the cycles of sexual violence affecting women and men. Dr Mukwege, Mukwege

#### **Forgotten Women: What does the future hold for the country that 'never turned the page of conflict'?**

\*Sexual violence in DRC is blind. It affects each and every generation – regardless of age, clothes, economic status, religion, or any other factor,\* Nobel Peace Prize winner Dr Mukwege tells Lucy Anna Gray in the latest of her series on the ordinary lives of extraordinary women

Lucy Anna Gray | @LucyAnnaGray | Monday 3 June 2019 14:57



Foundation staff, and survivors all contributed to the article.



From Colombia to Zimbabwe, members of a global network of rape survivors are demanding an end to the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war  
All photographs by Raegan Hodge of the Dr Denis Mukwege Foundation  
by Kate Hodal

### Impunity Reigns

Pitched and promoted by the Mukwege Foundation, The Guardian Newspaper featured the profiles of six survivors in the article Impunity Reigns, by Kate Hodal published on 24 June, 2019. The Guardian has a reach of 23 million people in Britain alone and is the 3rd largest international newspaper site in the world. The article was a triumph for The Mukwege Foundation, as it directly amplified the voices of SEMA members, elevating their individual, local stories and advocacy efforts to the world stage.

## Rape in War: The Perfect Crime

On the 10 October 2019, the article [Le Crime Parfait: viols de guerre](#) by Louise Pluyaud and Lena Bjustrom was featured on the frontpage of the French newspaper Politis. The article was an in depth look at the effects of sexual violence in conflict and quoted many survivors of the SEMA network.

### Dr. Miracle

On 17 November 2019, Christina Lamb wrote an in-depth profile of Dr Mukwege for the Sunday Times. She highlighted his devotion to survivors and their care.



## Social media

On social media, the Mukwege Foundation shares our work and initiatives, amplifies the voices of survivors and supports our partners.

[The Mukwege Foundation Facebook page](#) has over 37,000 followers. We post updates about our work, projects, survivors' testimonies, as well as important updates about news surrounding sexual violence in conflict around the world. Facebook is a necessary means to keep us visible to those who would like to know more about us and sexual violence in conflict in general.

On Instagram, [the Mukwege Foundation page](#) has 7,124 followers. We post photographs from our work around the world as well as photo stories about survivors and their activism.



Social Media posts often involve current events

[The](#)

[Mukwege Foundation](#) has 5,734 followers on Twitter. We use this platform to keep up with important advocacy, events and trending hashtags, taking part in a global discourse about survivors' rights, international justice and grassroots activism.

[The Mukwege Foundation](#) has a LinkedIn network of 12,888 followers. We use this platform to post notable news in the humanitarian sector and recruit staff, volunteers and interns.





## Campaigns

The #StandWithSurvivors campaign brought together survivors from across the globe in solidarity on June 19, 2019 for the Day of the Elimination of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. At the Luxembourg Retreat survivors chose their “power” poses in a session with a photographer to create portraits that convey confidence, dignity and resilience. During the month of June, these photo profiles and survivors’ quotes were used across our social media daily, and we received lots of great feedback from survivors, as this provided them an opportunity to talk about their hopes and activism and not just their past difficulties.

In 2019, we also featured a few short campaigns, featuring a VIP screening of Rising Silence- a documentary about the Birangona survivors of Bangladesh- as well as the Global Survivors Fund launch and holiday messaging.



Instagram during the #StandbySurvivors campaign

# Fundraising

While in 2018 we contracted projects for a total value of around 2.4 million EUR, in 2019 this increased to 6.6 million EUR. The table below shows an overview of acquired funding in 2019:

| Funding acquired in 2019 - total budgets (rounded off) |                  | Subject                               |
|--|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Dutch Postcode Lottery - 2019                          | 500.000          | Core funding                          |
| Fond. Grand Duchesse Luxembourg 2019                   | 74.000           | Global Survivor Movement              |
| Ville de Geneve - 2019                                 | 39.000           | Panzi - Common Threads II             |
| OIF - 2019   | 30.000           | Global Survivor Movement              |
| OSF 2019   | 70.000           | Global Survivor Movement              |
| UK government - 2019                                   | 62.000           | Pilot project reparations DRC         |
| Amplify Change - 2019/2021                             | 550.000          | Support survivor movement DRC         |
| Grand Challenges - 2019/2021                           | 66.000           | Panzi/survivor movement - Livelihoods |
| Panzi USA - 2019                                       | 44.000           | Global Survivors Fund                 |
| Fondation Pluralisme- 2019                             | 889.000          | Democracy project DRC and advocacy    |
| Fondation Elle - 2019                                  | 14.000           | Core funding                          |
| Sanofi - 2019/2020                                     | 100.000          | Support survivor movement Iraq        |
| French government/Fond. Pierre Fabre-2019/2023         | 878.000          | Holistic model CAR                    |
| GIZ -2019/2020   | 156.000          | Holistic model Great lakes region     |
| EU - 2019  | 15.000           | Film survivors DRC                    |
| UK gov (PSVI) - 2019                                   | 11.000           | Film survivors DRC                    |
| OIF - 2019   | 6.000            | Survivors meeting NATO                |
| UK (PSVI) 2019   | 11.000           | Participation 2019 SEMA in conference |
| SSI - 2019/2020  | 55.000           | Support survivor movement CAR         |
| Knowledge Management Platform- 2019                    | 15.000           | Support survivor movement Ukraine     |
| MMIB- 2019   | 9.000            | Global Survivor Movement              |
| Zonta Luxembourg- 2019                                 | 5.000            | Core funding                          |
| Antilope Foundation - 2019                             | 13.000           | Core funding                          |
| Individual donations - 2019                            | 400.000          | Core funding                          |
| German government-2019/2020                            | 191.000          | Global Survivors Fund                 |
| French government- 2019/2020                           | 200.000          | Global Survivors Fund                 |
| UK government- 2019/2020                               | 1.524.000        | Global Survivors Fund                 |
| Norwegian government -2019/2020                        | 730.000          | Global Survivors Fund                 |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>6.657.000</b> |                                       |

We are a young, but growing organisation. The table below shows the development in fundraising efforts over the last years since we were set up in 2016:

|  | 2016           | 2017             | 2018             | 2019             |
|--|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Total contracted projects and donations</b> | <b>745.660</b> | <b>2.040.652</b> | <b>2.371.171</b> | <b>6.657.000</b> |

Our successful fundraising over the years has allowed the Mukwege Foundation to steadily expand its activities, substantially supporting survivors worldwide in concrete ways.

## Individual fundraising

The Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation has a small but loyal base of recurring donors who support the Foundation in a sustainable way. In addition to our regular recurring donors, we received over 1300 one-off donations in 2019, which is more than double the amount received in 2018. Many of our donors find us via news articles and advocacy events featuring Dr Mukwege. We actively promote these

articles and other news-making opportunities in order to expand our audience. Based on the opportunity, we also periodically use Facebook ads to reach new audiences and increase the visibility of the organisation.

We are very grateful for the support of all private donors who contributed to our work in 2019.

## Communications with individual donors

The Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation values the communication and involvement of donors with our work. We are committed to providing regular updates about our work and developments concerning conflict-related sexual violence.

We reach out to our donors through emails and social media. We are working on the implementation of a CRM system in order to improve our communication and better serve our donors in 2020.



# Looking Ahead

## Working towards consolidation, growth and sustainability

At a national level, the national networks directly supported by the Mukwege Foundation have established themselves and started to develop effective strategies, with the networks in CAR, DRC and Ukraine already demonstrating standout successes.

For 2020, the Mukwege Foundation will support survivors to make the most of the advocacy opportunities offered at international and regional film festivals featuring the film “Sema” and we will support other survivor networks to develop comparable resources to tell their stories and engage with an international public, according to their needs and available funding.

For the longer term, the Mukwege Foundation will also focus on sourcing funding and expert collaborators to respond to the survivors’ stated priority to creatively document their ‘collective memory,’ and to present that in a virtual museum — connected with local exhibitions — to gain greater visibility and reach when engaging

with the issues around conflict-related sexual violence.

SEMA members have demonstrated real leadership, and the scope for peer learning and exchange will sustain the network in the longer term. Our faith that survivors — with the right support — can become agents of change has been confirmed. We believe that the steps taken so far have provided a sound basis for the network’s development in the coming years.

The interest in and impact of the Mukwege Foundation’s activities has been impressive for a young organisation, and we are starting to see increasing interest and buy-in from different donor organisations. The core-funding from the Dutch Postcode Lottery has been instrumental in the creation of SEMA and the initial support to a number of national networks, and we are now also pleased to see interest from other donors to support survivor-network activities worldwide.

We will also determine our advocacy agenda for the coming years and aim to step up our work for survivor-centred justice. We will continue to promote access to quality holistic care as a right for victims and survivors everywhere, never losing sight of the reality that their abilities to undertake activism rest on their personal healing and

## COVID-19

At the time of compiling this report, the COVID-19 virus has spread worldwide, with immediate impacts on survivors and their activities, and long-term consequences that are still unknown. Essential, public health measures such as closing public spaces and limiting movement add to the existing care-giving duties of women. Women, often employed informally or part-time, are suddenly required to remain at home, without the income which has supported them and their families. In light of these urgent day to day challenges, it is difficult for survivors to focus on their demands for

the reconstruction of their communities. The four-year project in CAR, starting in 2020, will provide a major opportunity to strengthen holistic care “on the ground”, and will hopefully lead to more opportunities in future to roll out this South-to-South capacity building approach to other countries.

justice and accountability. The severely limited movement opportunities, due to closing of borders and airspaces has made it impossible in the past months to meet face to face and organise field visits, retreats and conferences. We are exploring different approaches to continue our support to the holistic care project in the Central African Republic and the national survivor networks. We strongly believe in the value of the face-to-face connections made possible at international exchanges and retreats, and we are fully committed to finding solutions to continue making these connections happen.

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