

dr. Denis  
**Mukwege**  
Foundation



**ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

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

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## Letter from our **DIRECTOR**

**Survivors are at the heart of our mission and organisation, so it was a real privilege – especially after two years of the Covid-19 pandemic – to join SEMA<sup>1</sup> members in the Netherlands in June 2022. More than 35 survivors from 21 countries gathered in Amersfoort for their global retreat.**

They celebrated the 5th anniversary of the SEMA global network, shared the advocacy successes of their national movements, and agreed on strategic priorities to further guide the global network's activities in the coming years. As always, whenever I meet survivors, I was impressed by their resilience, solidarity and drive to call for a more robust response by the international community to respond to and prevent sexual violence as a weapon in war. The lifting of travel restrictions also meant broader opportunities for our team to strengthen existing national networks in-person and to reach out to new networks in several countries.

For our holistic care programme, our team was able to scale up services for survivors in the Central African Republic and to lay the groundwork to start a holistic care programme in Burundi. Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in early 2022 we were contacted by the Ukrainian government to support holistic care to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. I visited Ukraine twice in 2022 and was touched by the strong commitment of the government and health professionals to improve care for survivors. The powerful engagement of the Ukrainian survivor network in reaching out to new survivors and raising awareness has been an inspiration.



We have made strides in achieving our strategic objectives, while at the same time strengthening our team's capacity to better support survivors of conflict-related sexual violence worldwide. We have seen growth across our core missions in improving access to holistic care services, amplifying survivors' voices, and advocating for justice alongside survivors. For the latter pillar of our work, we continue working with experts and survivors through the Red Line Initiative to create a global campaign and a legal guidebook that will support civil society to call upon states to fulfil their legal obligations in preventing wartime sexual violence and punish perpetrators of these crimes.

We are grateful for the support of our donors and partners who value and endorse our survivor-centred approach. Together we will continue creating impact for survivors to have access to the care, reparations, and justice they are entitled to, and to make sure that their voices are heard and answered in a timely and meaningful manner. We are pleased to present our Annual Report to provide an overview of our impact and learning in 2022.

**Katrien Coppens**

Director of the Mukwege Foundation

## Letter from a SURVIVOR

**My name is Iryna. I am a survivor and co-founder of the Ukrainian survivor network, SEMA Ukraine. We are an association of women survivors of conflict-related sexual violence who come from areas affected by the Russian Federation's military aggression in Ukraine. Our network has been active since 2019 because sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war long before the launch of the full-scale invasion in February 2022.**

When we first started working with the Mukwege Foundation, our state had not yet noticed this particular category of victims, nor did they provide support for survivors. At that time, victims of conflict in our country were given different statuses, depending on the harm that they suffered. For example, internally displaced people, people whose houses on the conflict line were destroyed, or people who were in captivity, but sexual violence was never discussed. Over the years, SEMA Ukraine learned to fight for survivors' rights: we inform the world about the crimes committed against us and we support each other within the network. When the full-scale invasion began, we changed the course of our activities. Today, our efforts are aimed at helping new victims. Each of the "old" members can support a new victim by sharing experiences of their recovery. If requested by new members, we will help them to testify about their cases to the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine.

We are aware that our activism brings risks and consequences, so as soon as the conflict escalated last year, we joined forces and sent our children to safer places. Despite the difficult conditions we are living under we will continue to speak out. Our members have shared important speeches at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.



We met and talked to Pramilla Patten<sup>2</sup>, Charles Michel<sup>3</sup>, members of the U.S. Congress, and leaders of civil society organisations with one aim in mind: justice. Some of us have started documenting Russian crimes in the de-occupied territories. All members were active in communicating with foreign media, informing the world about the weaponisation of sexual violence in this war. We have become more united and registered our network as a non-governmental organisation. This new status helps us to establish new contacts with many new partner organisations.

Another achievement that we are proud of is our active participation in the development of the State Implementation Plan to help victims. We are hopeful that our contribution will benefit new survivors who come from the de-occupied territories or still live under the aggressors' occupation, so that they know how to get the help that they deserve. We are grateful for the support of the Mukwege Foundation that brought us this far. We look forward to continuing this fruitful collaboration, including in obtaining grants for the documentary about SEMA Ukraine and for a collective memory exhibition about Ukrainian women who survived this violence.

I share this dream while standing in solidarity with civilian women who are still held captive in the territories occupied by the Russian Federation.

Sincerely yours,  
Iryna Dovgan

2 Special Representative of the United Nations' Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict

3 President of the European Council

# PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS 2022 IN NUMBERS

## Survivors supported through our programmes

355



survivors have participated in a capacity building activity on network building/advocacy/individual or collective development

▼ -4% from 48

1,663



survivors of sexual violence have benefitted from medical care

▲ 93% from 860

120



survivors have participated in an international or regional retreat (incl. learning exchange) with other survivors/groups

New Indicator

149



gynaecological repair surgeries have been conducted

New Indicator

474



survivors have conducted or participated in advocacy and awareness-raising at national levels

▲ 410% from 93

2,424



survivors of sexual violence have benefitted from psychosocial support (counselling, accompaniment, group-therapy)

▲ 7% from 2270

154



professionals have benefitted from training on medical, psychological and/or holistic care

New Indicator

988

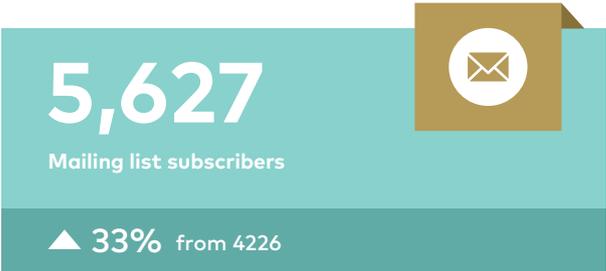
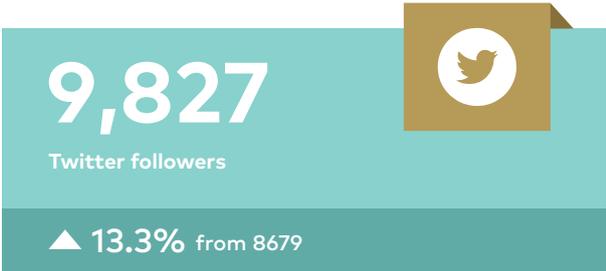


survivors of sexual violence have benefitted from socioeconomic/ material support

▲ 330% from 230

# FUNDRAISING & COMMUNICATION HIGHLIGHTS 2022 IN NUMBERS

dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation

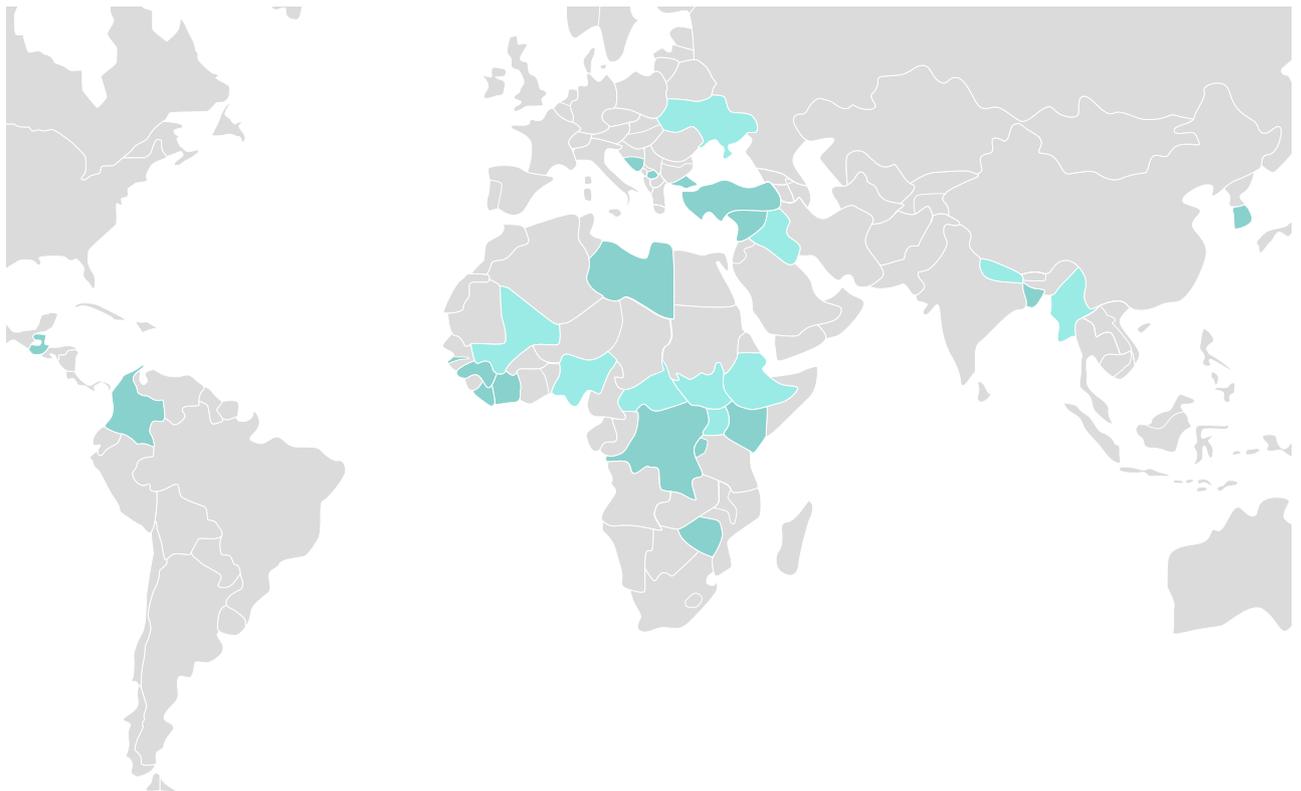


# OUR SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS IN 2022

Survivors from over 25 countries are connected in the SEMA network. We support national survivor networks in 8 countries and provide holistic care through projects in the Central African Republic, Ukraine, and Iraq.

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## PROJECT MAP

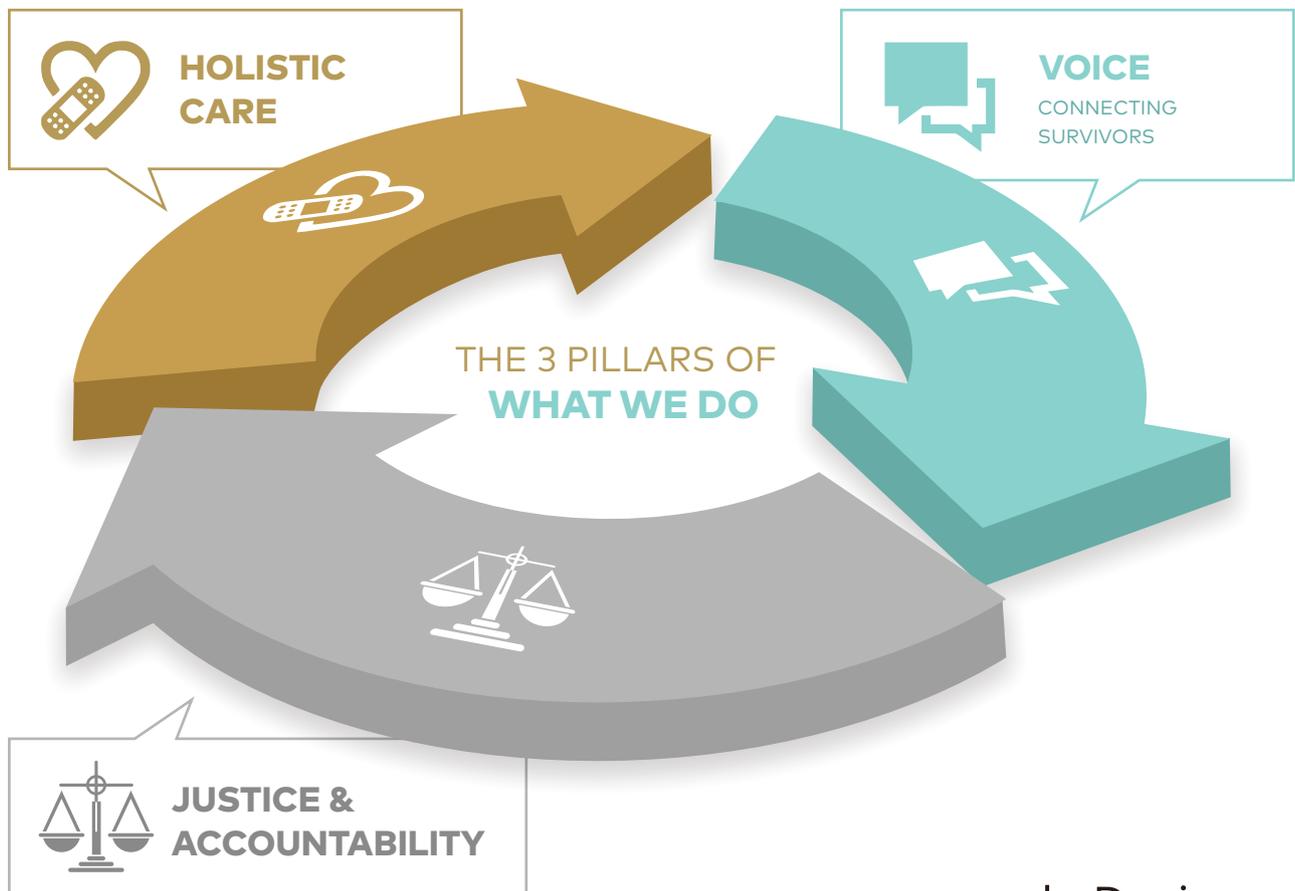


-  Survivors represented in the SEMA Network
-  Survivors supported through Mukwege Foundation's programmes

# OUR PROGRAMMES

Our programmes flow from our Theory of Change which recognises that in order to heal from the harms of sexual violence, victims need to regain agency and control over their lives, their decisions, and their bodies. Survivors' needs are complex and interconnected, and solutions need to be designed with this in mind. Survivors' feedback about their needs and aims guide all of our programmes and activities. Our goal is to change the collective response to sexual violence in conflict by:

- 1** Promoting access to holistic, quality care for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence worldwide;
- 2** Supporting survivor-led activism for solidarity and recognition, and to end stigma;
- 3** Advocating for accountability and survivor-centred transitional justice, including reparations and redress.



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01

# HOLISTIC CARE FOR SURVIVORS



**The Mukwege Foundation promotes access to quality holistic care for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, pioneered at Panzi Foundation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) as a standard and right.**

We collaborate closely with our sister organisation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Panzi Foundation DRC, and other specialists and trainers to roll out a holistic model of care in other conflict-affected countries based on the Panzi one-stop-centre model. This international roll-out includes 1) capacity building efforts and knowledge exchange, 2) financial, technical, and other support to multisectoral service providers and structures for the provision of holistic care and 3) survivor-centred and survivor-informed advocacy on national, regional and international levels for compassionate, quality holistic care. Using a linking and learning approach, we facilitate knowledge exchanges, organise trainings of trainers, and document and share best practices. We support locally embedded partners and structures that are trusted by survivors and their communities to provide holistic care for survivors of sexual violence. We also conduct or commission evaluations and other research to build an evidence base on holistic care and share lessons learned internationally.

The holistic care programme currently has six priority countries, including Central African Republic and Ukraine where we have flagship national programmes at different stages of development, Burundi where we have been preparing for the start of a national programme in 2023 and Iraq, Colombia and Ethiopia where we advocate for holistic care and are engaging with different partners and survivors to explore opportunities where the Mukwege Foundation's expertise in survivor-centred holistic care can bring added value. Globally, the Mukwege Foundation continues its advocacy efforts to change narratives and influence policies on holistic care and to build an evidence base on compassionate holistic care.



## The African Great Lakes Region

In 2022, after three years of collaboration on the development of a joint Regional Integrated Model for the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence, the piloting of joint training and other research and advocacy initiatives, the Mukwege Foundation concluded its partnership with the Regional Training Facility of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (RTF-ICGLR).

In January 2022, marking ten years of the signature of the Kampala Declaration, member states of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region met in Kampala, Uganda, for a Conference on Holistic Care Learnings and Best Practices - with the support of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH* and the Mukwege Foundation. During this conference the Mukwege Foundation presented:

- 1 A joint advocacy strategy and agenda for accelerating progress on the implementation of Art.11 of the Kampala Declaration requiring ICGLR members to implement holistic recovery centres for victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence;
- 2 A research paper combining perspectives of professionals, institutions and survivors, which assessed the implementation of Art.11;
- 3 The final Regional Integrated Training Model; and
- 4 Lessons learned in the piloting of this integrated training model in five of the twelve member states of the ICGLR: Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia.

The conference also drew on survivors and care experts' experiences which demonstrated the disparity between policy commitments and realities of the availability of care – as highlighted by a survivor from Uganda, Grace Achan:



**“ We ask Member States of the ICGLR to expand the coverage of holistic care to more areas where service is needed. Unequal access to holistic care between the cities and more remote areas meant that outreach capacity can be improved.**

One of the key recommendations from the regional conference was to ensure that survivors play an active role in monitoring progress on member states' commitments to holistic care, recognising their important role in holding duty-bearers accountable. The Mukwege Foundation is currently exploring opportunities to continue this regional initiative, ensuring that political commitments to holistic care in the African Great Lakes Region materialise.

## Central African Republic



The Mukwege Foundation has been implementing holistic care in the Central African Republic since 2020 as part of the Nengo consortium, led by the Pierre Fabre Foundation, together with Panzi Foundation DRC and the Francophone Institute for Justice and Democracy. This programme aims to improve access to quality holistic care for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) via the creation of a one-stop-centre in Bangui. A team of three experts from Panzi and a Mukwege Foundation coordinator are based permanently in Bangui to support this project as part of a multisectoral team of national and international colleagues. Within this consortium, the Mukwege and Panzi Foundations are responsible for the medical and psychological care pillars, as well as acting as the overall guarantor of the holistic care model.

In 2022, 1,492 victims of SGBV, as well as women and girls with grave gynaecological issues, received medical care, and 2,802 victims of SGBV benefited from psychosocial care via Nengo, contributing to a total of 4,970 victims of SGBV receiving care since September 2020 thanks to this project. Further, 60 professionals benefited over the year from training on holistic care and medical and psychological care principles.

The Mukwege Foundation opened its office in CAR in 2021, when we first began a five-year collaboration with the ICC Trust Fund for Victims as part of its assistance programme in CAR for victims of conflict-related sexual violence. To date, we have assisted 890 victims of sexual and gender-based violence, including cases of conflict-related sexual violence, with psychosocial support and socio-economic or material support, including income-generating activities, housing support, school fees, and referrals for medical



care. In 2022 we established and operate four Listening and Psychotherapy Centres in Bangui and environs, which receive, support and refer victims to care via Nengo or other partners on a daily basis.

Also in 2022, the Mukwege Foundation provided urgent care for women and girls with grave gynaecological conditions in Paoua and Bossongoa, two conflict and crisis-affected prefectures in CAR. The Mukwege Foundation collaborated with the Ministry of Health, the national survivors' network MOSUCA, and local partners to conduct 105 gynaecological repair surgeries and ensured accompaniment of patients by trained survivor-advocates and community members. However, many more women and girls remain without access to the critical care they require outside of the capital city of Bangui. Strengthening access to care for victims of sexual violence, and women and girls with grave gynaecological issues outside of Bangui remains a priority for Mukwege Foundation in the future.

# Ukraine



Following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russian Federation forces, on the invitation of the government of Ukraine, our team visited Lviv and Kyiv in April 2022. We met with government and civil society representatives, together with survivors of conflict-related sexual violence from the Luhansk and Donetsk regions of Ukraine, and from Russia's occupation of Crimea since 2014. Following [this visit](#), in July 2022, the Mukwege Foundation and the Global Survivors Fund signed an [agreement](#) with the Ukrainian Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, and the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy. All parties commit to support efforts to deliver quality, survivor-centred holistic care and develop an early reparations framework for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. The Mukwege Foundation's commitments in this agreement fall under three themes:

Since then, we have worked alongside and in support of Ukrainian authorities, health professionals, civil society actors, and survivors to strengthen holistic care for all victims of conflict-related sexual violence. Across the board, Ukrainian authorities we met agree on the crucial importance of comprehensive survivor-centred holistic care for victims of the conflict. Adopting a survivor-centred approach across all response efforts in this conflict can play a key role in building trust and ensuring that victims who come forward receive quality care and effective redress. Click here to see the Ukrainian translation of [the holistic care handbook](#).

**TRAIN**

for capacity building and knowledge exchange;

**CARE**

for reinforcing access to coordinated, quality, survivor-centred and trauma-informed holistic care;

**AWARE**

for survivor-led and informed national and global advocacy and awareness-raising on conflict-related sexual violence in Ukraine.

02

## VOICE: CONNECTING SURVIVORS



### **The Mukwege Foundation supports victims and survivors of conflict-related sexual violence to unite and stand up for their rights.**

Not only do survivors of sexual violence face a cascade of long-term physical, psychological, social and economic consequences, they live with the burden of being shunned or silenced by their communities. Stigma creates a downward spiral of injustice and victimisation for too many survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. Many are rejected and silenced by their families and communities, left to care for a child born of rape, or displaced by conflict, leaving them unable to make an income, vulnerable to other abuses, and blocked from seeking justice and redress.

Silence is sometimes the best protection that survivors have against stigma, and so the pain and the devastating consequences of these crimes remain hidden. Coming forward, breaking the silence and claiming their rights is often an insurmountable task that cannot be achieved alone.

We believe that for change to happen it is crucial that the collective silence and denial around sexual violence as a weapon of war is broken. Our approach is survivor-centred, meaning that survivors themselves define their needs and solutions, while we work to create the conditions that will allow survivors to take the lead in fighting for their rights. The aim of our VOICE programme is to enable survivors to speak out and to act as agents of change: we bring survivors together in networks that give them a safe space for peer-to-peer support and solidarity, and we strengthen their organised activism to influence programmes and policies that directly impact them, improving their quality and relevance.

We help connect survivors globally through SEMA – the global network of victims and survivors to end wartime sexual violence – and through national survivor networks in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the MENA region. By coming together, survivors can support one another, share resources and knowledge, and advocate for their rights, increasing their ability to heal and create a better future.

# SEMA

the Global Network of Victims and Survivors  
to End Wartime Sexual Violence



Global Network of Victims and Survivors  
to End Wartime Sexual Violence

Survivors' testimonies about the SEMA Network

## How has being part of SEMA had an impact on your life?



## As a SEMA member, what are you most proud of?



2022 was a special year for SEMA. The network marked its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a series of breakthroughs that we can be proud of. First, SEMA expanded its membership from 21 to 26 countries, welcoming survivors from Gambia, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Nepal and Turkey.



SEMA members met in person at the 4<sup>th</sup> global survivors' retreat in June, organised by the Mukwege Foundation, in Amersfoort, the Netherlands. This was the first time SEMA members were able to meet since the COVID-19 pandemic. For four days, 38 SEMA members from 21 countries re-connected, reflected on their five-year journey, defined their priorities, shared their advocacy success and continued to foster solidarity. In collaboration with our longstanding partner, Make Music Matter, and the singer and survivor ambassador Marie Daulne (known as Zap Mama), SEMA members wrote and recorded a new song titled Solidarity. The song will be officially launched on music streaming platforms in 2023.

In 2022 survivors continued to speak out against the continued use of sexual violence in conflict, the ongoing impunity of states and individuals for such acts, and the international community's continued failure to take meaningful actions to prevent and respond when conflict-related sexual violence occurs. SEMA increased its efforts to draw attention to the accountability gap through the Red Line Initiative and

launched a Call to Action demanding concrete action from states in the areas of prevention, response, justice and accountability, and reparations for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. With the aim of informing the general public about sexual violence being used as a weapon of war worldwide, the Mukwege Foundation and SEMA launched a survivor-led campaign for the 16 Days of Activism in which SEMA members debunked some of the misconceptions around conflict-related sexual violence.

SEMA's collective voice gained greater recognition globally at the Prevention of Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) Conference hosted by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in London in November 2022, where 22 SEMA members were present and 13 spoke on panels. In one of these, six survivors presented the achievements of SEMA – the first and only global network of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence – during the session *Five Years of SEMA: the successes and challenges of the global movement of survivors of CRSV*.



Throughout 2022, 23 members of the network spoke publicly at various global fora with the support of the Mukwege Foundation and in accordance with their name SEMA, which means “speak out” in Swahili. Survivors’ voices were heard at the [European Council](#) in Brussels, the side event of the United Nations’ 77<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the [World Justice Forum](#) in the Hague, and before the United States of America’s congress members in Washington D.C. At the invitation of UN Women, the Mukwege Foundation facilitated survivors’ participation in their Female Military Officers Course, delivered to female peacekeepers. In these sessions, SEMA members shared their lived experiences directly with participants to help provide a deeper understanding of the impacts of conflict-related sexual violence on communities and to discuss ways to improve peacekeeping missions’ support to survivors.

In 2022, 19 survivors contributed to memorialisation initiatives with partner organisations worldwide,

including through a [collective memory project](#) – funded by the Robert Bosch Stiftung – which aims to inspire survivors and accompany them as they use creative methods to document and memorialise their experiences. SEMA members also collaborated with a professional portrait photographer, Rachel Corner, to create a series of photo portraits and testimonies of their personal journeys as activists and change-makers. This process was both a practical exploration of the wish of survivors to ‘portray the stories of survivors in a sincere and respectable way’, and a concrete attempt to amplify survivors’ voices and stories. The resulting portraits were curated by the survivors and were compiled into a book – *Breaking the Silence: turning pain into power* – and a photo exhibition. This unique exhibition presents portraits of survivors from 15 countries and 4 continents, demonstrating the widespread use of wartime sexual violence. The exhibition was first showcased at the PSVI Conference in London where it was visited by more than 800 conference delegates.



*The interaction with survivors is key in preparing the female peacekeepers on the real dangers on the ground, and highlights some of the areas that we need to think of in future as peacekeepers e.g. how to assist not only CRSV survivors but children born out of rape/or fathered by peacekeepers in the host countries. I really appreciate the advocacy work that SEMA members are doing.”*

- Female peacekeeper, participant of UN Women's Female Military Officers Course

Committed to supporting survivors' activism, the Mukwege Foundation facilitated learning exchanges for 45 SEMA members and capacity-building trainings for 68 survivors throughout the year, including workshops about the Murad Code, the Kinshasa Declaration, and the UN's Framework for the Prevention of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. The partnership with EMCC<sup>4</sup> that had been initiated in 2021 continued, and 38 SEMA members benefitted from a 10-week coaching programme in 2022.

The global survivor network will continue to speak up for survivors' rights and to advocate for justice. As a safe, international platform for survivors to come together, we hope that SEMA will continue to grow and welcome new members from all over the world in the coming years. We will continue to support SEMA members to raise awareness about the causes and consequences of wartime sexual violence and demand action from the international community to draw a red line against sexual violence being used as a weapon of war.



## National survivor networks

The global network is rooted in survivor-led, activist networks at the local level, representing thousands of survivors of wartime sexual violence. These in-country networks vary according to their context, but in all cases, survivors organise to raise awareness about the realities and consequences of wartime sexual violence, to combat stigma, impunity and harmful myths around conflict-related sexual violence, to advocate for their needs, and to commemorate and recognise the many victims of these atrocities by creating a collective memory of survivors' experiences.

The Mukwege Foundation accompanies and supports new and existing survivor-led networks to enable survivors to unite and stand up for their rights. It focuses on strengthening survivors' agency to actively

influence and participate in policy and practice concerning them at the national and international levels. The advocacy and activism of these local networks build pressure to change attitudes and justice outcomes within survivors' communities.

In 2022, the Mukwege Foundation continued its support to survivor networks in CAR, Iraq, Mali, Nigeria, South Sudan, Uganda, and Ukraine, including in refugee settings. This year, we also took the first steps to engage with survivors in Nepal and Ethiopia. Based on survivors' priorities and requests, the Mukwege Foundation also started supporting a network of children born of war in Uganda, as well as a group of male survivors in Ukraine, two groups who have distinct needs and vulnerabilities.

## Supporting survivors to become strong powerful advocates

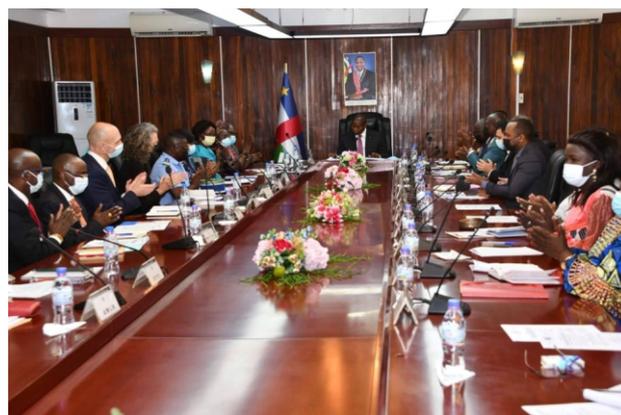
Survivors benefit greatly from support and accompaniment in order to participate meaningfully in their network activities. As part of our network-building activities, the Mukwege Foundation provides psychosocial and livelihoods support to survivors through group activities that build their networks' cohesion.

In 2022, 220 network members benefitted from group psychosocial sessions, learning to cope with trauma, stress and anxiety, and teaching them how to support their peers in a safe manner. The majority (over 95%) of session participants reported being able to use the psychosocial methods and tools they had learned about to support their peers.

This year, we also facilitated access to group income-generating activities for network members. 258 survivors in **Uganda, Mali and South Sudan** started small businesses renting tents for weddings, making soap, crafting baskets and bags, and making cakes. With their profits, they started small loans schemes, providing support to one another in case of emergencies.

**”** *We are no longer on the sidelines, as we turn the page and give ourselves fully to our daily activities such as breeding [animals], weekly meetings and awareness activities.*

*- a member of the Initiative Des Femmes Pour La Défense Des Droits Humains au Mali (Initiative Of Women For The Defense Of Human Rights in Mali)*



## Capacity-building and peer-to-peer learning exchanges

The Mukwege Foundation organises and facilitates training to build the capacities of survivors to become activists, strengthening their networks' effectiveness and impact. In 2022, the Mukwege Foundation organised and/or facilitated trainings for over 300 survivors in topics as diverse as sexual and gender-based violence case management and understanding referral pathways, leadership and conflict-management, mental resilience and self-care, or transitional justice and survivors' rights.

Training participants were happy with the trainings received, with a satisfaction rate of over 95%. Nevertheless, we believe that the best mentors for network building are fellow survivors. As much as possible, the Mukwege Foundation adopts a peer-to-peer approach when organising inter-network discussions and connecting survivor activists with the global survivor network. In this manner, survivors can bring their learning from the SEMA Network to strengthen their national movements and vice versa.

In total, 3 learning exchanges between various survivor networks were conducted in 2022 – virtually and physically. Interesting discussions take place and ideas multiply when survivors come together. For instance, the exchange between the *Mouvement des Survivant.es* from **DRC** and the **Central African network MOSUCA** gave attention to community engagement, member inclusion, mental health, advocacy and outreach strategies. The discussion came at the right moment as MOSUCA scales up its advocacy efforts and has been invited by the Presidential Office to take a seat on the National Committee for the fight against sexual violence.



Later in the same year, the Foundation brought together 24 survivors from **four South Sudanese and Ugandan networks**<sup>5</sup>. Their brainstorming sessions in Gulu City resulted in sharing and identifying lessons learnt and good practices on network management, including leadership, fundraising and partnerships, campaigning and advocacy, peer-to-peer support and self-care. In 2022, survivors in **Iraq** had opportunities to virtually learn from six SEMA members about survivor-led advocacy around reparations and transitional justice to facilitate survivors' participation in the implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Law, a priority for the newly launched network, Survivors' Voices Network. Meanwhile, our project in **Nigeria** focused on the specific needs and the rights of Nigerian youth, including CRSV survivors in the conflict-affected states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe.



*In 2021, I had a lot of fear on how to present my points to these big people. In 2022, thanks to trainings and psychosocial support, I have courage and I have confidence, I am able to stand in front of people.*

- Viola, NoSSSU member

5

Golden Women Vision Uganda (GWW-U), Women's Advocacy Network Uganda (WAN), Survivors Network in South Sudan (SUNS), Network of South Sudanese Survivors in Uganda (NoSSSU).

## Supporting survivor-led initiatives to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence

In 2022, the Mukwege Foundation started working with a system of sub-granting in order to build the capacities of survivor networks to become progressively independent. Through a guided process tailored to their needs, survivor networks in five countries received small grants and were able to implement a wide range of activities, including awareness-raising, advocacy, and support to other survivors.

With their subgrants, survivor networks raised awareness about the realities of sexual violence, adding their voices to prevention efforts. In Uganda, by participating in radio talk shows and organising community events, members of the **Network of South Sudanese Survivors in Uganda** were able to reach tens of thousands of people during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. With their sub-grant, they were also able to organise a high-level visit to Juba to share the needs of survivors with the government and ensure that refugees' voices are heard as part of the transitional justice process.

In Ukraine, shelling and attacks did not destroy SEMA Ukraine's spirit to speak out about survivors' rights. The Mukwege Foundation supported SEMA Ukraine to adapt during a time of high uncertainty. We raised and disbursed emergency funds for SEMA Ukraine members within the first week of the war. The funding was used by SEMA Ukraine to evacuate some of their members to safety, to source and distribute food while in hiding, and to top-up phone credit so they could



continue to communicate with their family. As the SEMA Ukraine network has adapted its priorities and strategy, Ukrainian survivors were able to share their needs and vision of justice with high-level panels in Paris, Brussels, The Hague, New York, London, and Washington D.C. With our support, SEMA Ukraine toured governments and international institutions to raise awareness and call for protection and action. They also reached out to victims from the current invasion, travelling to de-occupied territories to support survivors and to invite them to join their network.



*I feel a feeling of togetherness surrounded by warmth. It feels like I am appreciated and welcome, that there are other people like me. That there is nothing unsafe here.*

*– SEMA Ukraine member after a workshop*

# 03

## JUSTICE & ACCOUNTABILITY



### The Red Line Initiative

Inspired by Dr Mukwege's call for bold and new thinking to finally put an end to the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, The Red Line Initiative is rooted in the belief that conflict-related sexual violence can be prevented and must be prioritised as a wholly unacceptable tactic of warfare.

Dr Mukwege's plea was born out of a deep frustration with the decades-long failure of states and the international community to realise their commitments to end conflict-related sexual violence and the devastation and damage that it causes to survivors, families and entire communities. The Mukwege Foundation is developing a campaign to demand that states take a meaningful stand to prevent sexual violence in conflict.

Specifically, The Red Line Initiative aims to:

- Evoke a clear moral rejection and outcry against the use of conflict-related sexual violence in all its forms, including as a method of warfare;
- Strengthen and clarify the legal obligations on states to prohibit the use of sexual violence in conflict, and to prevent and punish incidents of sexual violence, as well as to repair the harms it causes; and
- Build political will to ensure a more robust and timely response by states in line with their international obligations.

Through expert round tables, survivor and partner consultations, and extensive interviews and research with key actors in this field, our research to date has identified gaps in existing legal frameworks and prevention tools and practices; however, the biggest gaps are a lack of awareness, inadequate enforcement of existing norms and a lack of political will.

In June 2022, a public event was held in the Hague where Dr Mukwege and members of SEMA shared what justice means to them and engaged with government officials, civil society organisations and journalists about the need for states to act to end conflict-related sexual violence.

Over the past year, with the support of the Dutch Postcode Lottery and the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office, The Red Line Initiative team has sought to address this awareness gap by creating a "Guidebook on State Obligations for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence", which sets out the current, existing state obligations under international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and UN Security Council resolutions. The Guidebook provides states, survivor groups, and civil society organisations with an accessible and easy-to-use tool to ensure that states are meeting their obligations to prevent, stop, and respond to conflict-related sexual violence under international law. The Guidebook is being developed in close collaboration with a wide group of experts and stakeholders.

At the heart of The Red Line Initiative is the SEMA Red Line working group, which holds regular workshops to identify survivors' priorities for preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence. The working group has achieved a remarkable milestone with the launch of the survivors' Call to Action which SEMA members proudly presented at the PSVI conference in November 2022. Their Call to Action outlines 13 key action points to create a world free of conflict-related sexual violence, primarily in the areas of prevention, response, justice and accountability, and reparations.



The Red Line Initiative is based on the belief that widespread moral outcry has the power to strengthen shared norms around how war is conducted. Ongoing discussions are taking place with states and civil society organisations to build a global coalition which will lend its support to The Red Line Initiative and survivors' Call to Action. In 2022, the Mukwege Foundation identified three key coalition partners: The International Federation of Gynaecologists and Obstetricians (FIGO), the UK's Foreign Commonwealth Development Office's Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (FCDO PSVI), and The Elders. FIGO will showcase The Red Line Initiative at their global conference in October 2023 in Paris, PSVI has provided (co-) funding for the Legal Guidebook project and expert conference, and The Elders have added fighting conflict-related sexual violence as a priority in their new Strategic Plan.

# MANAGEMENT UPDATES

## GENERAL AFFAIRS

The Mukwege Foundation is a steadily growing organisation with an increased budget, and more and increasingly larger multi-year projects in its portfolio. In 2022, the Foundation continued to upgrade and strengthen its internal policies, procedures, and staff capacities to create a solid foundation to support its programmes and in-country presence, and to meet and support its organisational growth. Having a permanent presence in countries where we implement projects will require ongoing investments but will further increase the Foundation's impact and will also offer new funding opportunities.

### Country offices and in-country presence

#### Central African Republic

The strategic decision to open the CAR country office in 2021 has yielded the anticipated results – i.e., it significantly increased our capacity to implement programmes in a complex context, it makes an important contribution to strengthening our evidence base on the impacts of holistic care, and it has improved access to new funding sources. Next to these opportunities and lessons learned, which are allowing us to be better prepared for future in-country programmes, it also posed some significant

challenges, especially related to the difficulty in identifying senior national staff, which led to the hiring of six international staff based in Bangui. This has serious budget implications. A significant amount –300,000 Euro of our core funding – is needed to cover our staff presence in this country. However, with the increased senior programme and financial staff capacity in place, we are in a position to increase our project portfolio in CAR which we expect will lead to a decrease in the need to use core funding in the future.

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#### Ukraine

To support the implementation of our programme in Ukraine we recruited a Mukwege Foundation programme manager, based in Kyiv. In 2023 we aim to strengthen the in-country team with an additional three positions.

## Human resources

**In terms of staff<sup>6</sup>, we have grown from about 8 FTE in 2018 to 22 FTE at the end of 2022 of which 15 FTE are linked to the head office in the Netherlands and 7 FTE are based in programme countries.**

In line with the growth of the organisation, we added two new positions in 2022 - a Programme Director and an Individual Fundraising Officer. In 2023 we will further strengthen the programme team with +2,5 FTE to allow for the necessary implementation capacity.

We also increased our programme implementation capacity in the programme countries by recruiting a programme manager in Ukraine and, as noted above, having a total of 6 international staff positions in CAR.

The Mukwege Foundation continues to ensure that all staff travelling to and based in the project countries have received safety and security training and are

properly briefed on the security context. We also ensure that psychosocial support for staff is in place, when needed, and continues to assist its team in developing good self-care practices to mitigate the risk of secondary trauma. It has an integrity policy in place, and a clear procedure for reporting integrity violations has been set up, which includes having a trust person in the organisation and procedures for reporting violations and whistleblowing. In 2022 no complaints have been reported.

Additionally, the Foundation continuously works towards strengthening its project monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks to strengthen the evidence base underpinning its programmes.

## Risks and risk management

**The Foundation has a risk matrix and risk mitigation strategies are in place. It reports regularly to its Supervisory Board regarding any changes in its risk profile.**

The risk matrix identifies various risk categories, specifying the Foundation's 'risk appetite' for each category, and lays out procedures and plans to mitigate these risks.

Given our mission and the nature of our work in (post-) conflict settings with survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, we run risks related to the protection of survivors and the safety of employees, as well as unplanned interruption of programmes due to changes in the context. We mitigate these risks by ensuring we are connected to good local networks and have a solid understanding of the local contexts. We have local security plans in place and each employee is trained in security awareness. When staff travel, we prepare a travel plan, including agreed Standard Operating Procedures. We have a contingency reserve

in place to be able to cover short periods of interruption of programme funding due to insecurity.

Working in complex contexts also exposes the organisation to potential fraud and corruption risks. As a mitigation measure we perform a due diligence with national implementing partners, and in countries where we implement programmes directly with our own staff we have strict procedures in place and ensure regular field visits from headquarter staff to the in-country programme teams.

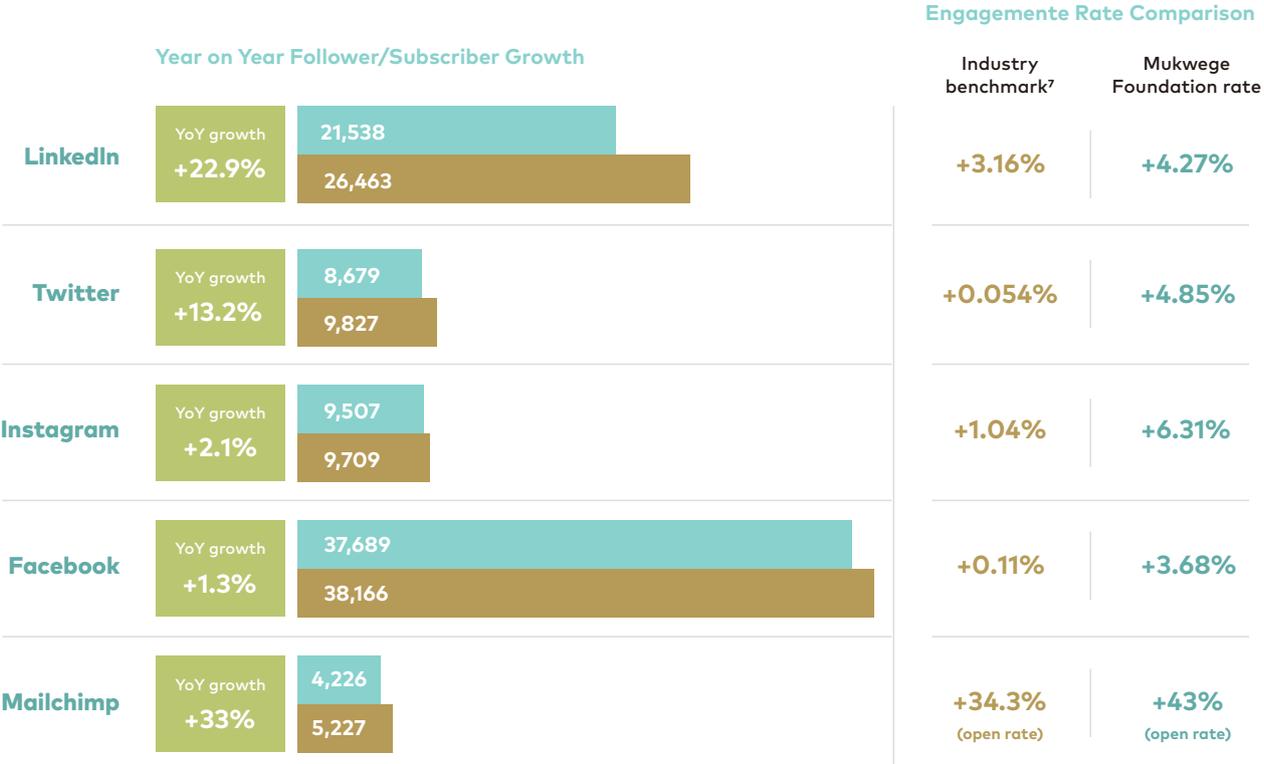
The financial risks for the organisation are mitigated through project monitoring procedures and tools, strict control of expenses and further building up of the continuity reserve.

<sup>6</sup> By staff we mean people working directly for the Mukwege Foundation, on average 4 or 5 days a week, without regard to the type of contract (payroll, consultants, employees). Project consultants, interns and trainees are not counted. These figures may therefore differ slightly from the number of FTEs mentioned in the annual accounts of previous years.

# COMMUNICATIONS

Throughout 2022, the Mukwege Foundation has strengthened its online presence by actively raising awareness about the weaponisation of sexual violence in conflict. We also work closely with the SEMA Network's Communication Working Group to co-create content for website and social media to amplify survivors' voices. Our online activism has resulted in a

significant growth of followers and engagement rate in 2022 across all digital channels. Facebook has become a saturated and heavily commercialised social network and as such is no longer a key social media channel for the Mukwege Foundation's online engagement.



With the press attention given to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine in 2022, we noticed a shifting narrative around conflict-related sexual violence in general, moving away from regarding these crimes as an inevitable by-product of war and recognising, instead, that sexual violence is often used as a deliberate strategy and weapon of war. The Foundation used this momentum to also raise awareness about other "forgotten" conflicts and their impact on survivors' lives, such as in the conflict in Ethiopia. The preparedness and openness of SEMA members in

responding to media inquiries has helped to raise awareness and showcase survivors as agents of change and justice for their communities. Moving forward, the Mukwege Foundation plans to amplify its awareness-raising campaigns through media partnerships with prominent news outlets, as well as diversifying its communication channels to trigger in-depth discussion with target audiences, for example, through community events, community newsletters, open lectures, film screenings, and human rights fora.

7 Source: Rival IQ, Social Media Industry Benchmark Report 2022

# FUNDRAISING

Total funding acquired per year (rounded) in Euros



In 2022 we were able to increase our acquired funding significantly after two challenging Covid-19 years, and the volume of newly acquired projects was higher than expected. This not only enables us to increase our budget in 2023 but also ensures a healthy funding base for 2024.

Our funding not only increased, but our range of donors became broader in 2022. We received funding for the first time from the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the King Baudouin Foundation, Stichting Doelwijk, Weeshuis der Doopsgezinden, and United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) in CAR. In partnership with Legal Action Worldwide we successfully applied for funding from the US State Department Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, and we started a new partnership with the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The complementarity of our work with that of our sister organisations, the Global Survivors Fund and Panzi Hospital and Foundation, has enabled us to collaborate on several new projects including our work to strengthen holistic care in Ukraine, described above, funded by the Crisis and Support Centre (CDCS) of the French Government's Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères. Planning and negotiations for projects in Burundi and CAR in collaboration with our 'sisters' are well advanced and expected to come on stream in 2023.

The invitation from the Ukrainian government to assist them in strengthening the response to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence posed a challenge to raise funds rapidly and an opportunity to access new funding streams. We would like to thank Stichting Vluchteling and the EU Staff Solidarity Fund (within the King Baudouin Foundation) for enabling us to respond quickly to this crisis situation.

We are also grateful to our trusted donors and partners for their confidence in our work and their ongoing support: the Nationale Postcode Loterij, Agence Française de Développement, Fondation Pierre Fabre, the UK's FCDO, the German Federal Foreign Office, the ICC Trust Fund for Victims in CAR, the EU Commission, and Open Society Foundations.

The Mukwege Foundation has a loyal base of individual donors, which continues to increase year-on-year. Donors can choose whether they wish to support the international work of the Mukwege Foundation, or the work of Panzi Hospital and Foundation in DRC. Donations from individuals increased slightly in 2022, helped in part by the successful publicity campaign and fundraising around the publication and promotion of Dr Mukwege's book 'The Power of Women' at the end of 2021.

Finally, we are very grateful for the annual unearmarked contribution made by the Dutch National Postcode Lottery which gives the Foundation a stable and flexible financial base – invaluable in fast-changing and unpredictable times – and allows us to invest in and grow our programming according to our Strategic Plan priorities.

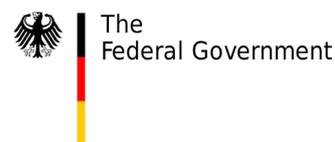
As we move forward we will seek to maintain the ratio of unearmarked funding to project funding - essential in allowing forward investments and scoping in new or strategic contexts and to maintain the continuity of our programmes as project funding fluctuates. Of the total acquired funding of €5,670,960 in 2022, €1,204,000 was unearmarked. This amounts to just over 21%. This percentage still allows the organisation to remain flexible and responsive.

With the realistic expectation that project funding for 2023 and 2024 will exceed 5 million euros per year we will strive to ensure a minimum of 20% of our income to be based on unearmarked and flexible funding.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all donors for their continued support of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence around the world.



# PARTNERS



dr. Denis  
**Mukwege**Foundation

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022

### The Hague Office

Alexanderveld 5  
2585 DB The Hague  
The Netherlands  
Tel. +31 616 209 560

### Chamber of Commerce

63545861 • IBAN: NLO6 ABNA 0402 6314 47



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