



Nordiska
Samarbetsrådet

A future for the Children – Providing a New Start
for Survivors of Sexual Violence
South Kiwu, DR Congo



MD 101 Proposal for NSR 2023-2025

Background

For decades, rape has been used as a weapon of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Since 1999, Panzi Hospital and Foundations (Panzi) has been providing holistic healing for women and children who have survived extreme sexual violence and its consequences including severe gynecological and psychological trauma, and ostracization from their families and communities. **Over 69,000 survivors of sexual violence – aged 6 months old to over 80 years old – have sought refuge at Panzi since its inception.**

Children are among the most vulnerable groups affected by conflict and sexual violence in DRC. Children living in the context of chronic armed conflict and high rates of sexual violence face diverse and severe barriers to their development. Many children born of rape are stigmatized and/or abandoned by their families. Children are often themselves victims of rape and other sexual violence. Mothers who have survived sexual violence struggle to care for their children (i.e., nutrition, education, etc.) while undergoing medical or psychological treatment. In the absence of education and economic stability, many children turn to sex work to provide for themselves and their families. In each of these instances, the ability of children to survive and thrive to their full developmental potential is compromised, triggering a life-long cycle of inequality for children affected by sexual violence.

South Kivu, a province in eastern DRC, has been heavily plagued by armed militia conflict and sexual violence. Bukavu is an urban hub on the shores of Lake Kivu that is home to Panzi Hospital, a world-renowned center of excellence for treatment of sexual violence in conflict. **However, there are vast improvements that can be made in order to sufficiently fulfill the needs of children affected by sexual violence.**

When survivors of sexual violence and other marginalized women seek medical and psychological care at Panzi Hospital, their children are typically cared for at Aire de Jeux, an on-site child-care facility. However, Aire de Jeux is currently in an advanced state of disrepair, with potentially dangerous playground equipment and little shelter from extreme elements. There is no garden, and very few age-appropriate learning toys, books, art supplies, basic musical instruments, or other materials. The “classrooms” require rehabilitation and the two committed teachers are unable to adequately care for the number of children in their charge. Furthermore, there is no security gate protecting Aire de Jeux, and no way to efficiently control who can enter.

This project will provide children affected by sexual violence in South Kivu Province, DRC with the opportunity to thrive. The overall objective of the project is to update and re-design the child-care facilities and program/curriculum (Aire de Jeux) at Panzi Hospital for children affected by sexual violence and other marginalized children. This project will give children (many of whom have experienced trauma that no child should have to endure) a safe and stimulating environment to play, grow, and develop. Furthermore, by ensuring that the children at Panzi have a safe place to be cared for, we make it possible for the women (both mothers and women caring for other survivors’

children) to fully focus on their recovery, which will ultimately enable them to better care for their families, post-treatment. Lastly, this project aims to improve access to high-quality early childhood education and childcare in the greater community by distributing the curriculum that is developed. Collectively, this project aims to break the cycle of inequality created by sexual violence and improve access to basic developmental education for vulnerable children in a deeply impoverished and conflict-afflicted region of the world.

Lions Clubs and Panzi

Lions have acknowledged and supported the important work at Panzi for survivors of sexual violence in several ways. Swedish Lions clubs support the hospital and have donated for example crucial hospital equipment, like a blood analysis machine for HIV-testing. In 2019 - one year after Dr Denis Mukwege, the initiator of the hospital, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize - he was recognized with the Lions Humanitarian Award.



Effect Objectives & Activities

Aire de Jeux provides children with the supportive environment required to reach important physical, motor, and psychomotor developmental milestones, and acts as their initiation into formal education. Aire de Jeux is designed to receive children between 0 and 6 years of age. The overall effect objective of this project is to cultivate a physical and educational environment at Aire de Jeux that meets international standards of a child-friendly space (UNICEF) and best-practice in early childhood development. Ultimately, this project aims to mitigate the cascade of inequalities experienced by children affected by sexual violence in the DRC.

This project will have four main effect objectives, each with several sub-objectives and activities to achieve those objectives. Three will be focused on improving child-care operations at Panzi and one will be focused on improving access to high-quality child care and early childhood education in the community, as well as the program's sustainability.

1. Physical rehabilitation of existing child-care facilities at Aire de Jeux to meet the international standards of a child-friendly space as published by UNICEF:
 - a. The safety of the children at Aire de Jeux is of primary concern. Therefore, this project will first physically rehabilitate the building, grounds (i.e., activity fields, fencing, garden, etc.), and playground equipment at Aire de Jeux.
 - b. Children require a diverse and stimulating environment to enhance development. Therefore, this project will diversify the books, toys, games, art supplies, and other educational materials required to provide an enriching environment for children at Aire de Jeux.
 - c. Furthermore, many of the children attending Aire de Jeux come from families with low socioeconomic status. Hygiene/sanitation and nutrition are critical to a child's development. This project will provide access to basic materials for children affected by sexual violence (e.g., food, clothing, etc.).
2. Enhanced child-care curriculum at Aire de Jeux:
 - a. Scandinavia is at the frontier of children's development, child-care systems, and education. The preschool years are critical for a child's future – these are the years that can accelerate their capacity to grow, evolve, and problem-solve. In collaboration with the Scandinavian Lions Club, this project will bring Scandinavian experts on child-care to Bukavu to work with the Congolese staff at Aire de Jeux to re-design the child-care program and curriculum (i.e., improved nutrition program, recommendations on facility renovations, re-designed teaching strategies, etc.) at Panzi Hospital. If the COVID-19 pandemic does not allow for in-person instruction and collaborative work, virtual meetings will be arranged.

3. Increased access to comprehensive support for children (i.e., education, psychosocial care, etc.) to improve long-term developmental outcomes:
 - a. The inadequate staff to child ratio (two teachers) at Aire de Jeux is a major barrier to the success of its child-care program. This project will increase and diversify the staff at Aire de Jeux to provide comprehensive support for the children, including:
 - i. **A child protection officer:** The child protection officer has a double capacity to be an educational psychologist (i.e. trained in the principles of child education), as well as a therapist (i.e., experience in psychosocial care to identify the diverse psychological pathologies that children affected by sexual violence manifest, and to consider appropriate solutions). He/she must have a university degree in psychology and educational science, have worked as a therapist and/or in caregiving (specifically with children). He/she will work with the supervisors to follow-up with all children and request a complete program overview each month of the Aire de Jeux program (monitoring and evaluation). The child protection officer will also serve as the project manager and received an enhanced salary to cover both job functions.
 - ii. **Supervisors:** The child protection officer will be assisted by supervisors and social workers that will provide day-to-day support for children including making sure they are fed according to the advice of nutritionists, that they are enrolled in school, that they are clothed, and that they have appropriate access to medical and psychosocial care. Specifically, seven additional staff are required to realize our mission of a state-of-the art child-care program for children affected by sexual violence at Aire de Jeux:
 - Two supervisors for the laundry and hygiene of the children
 - Two supervisors for the nutrition and social supervision of the children
 - Two monitors for children already in school
 - One social worker to take care of children with specific psychological pathologies after the psychologist's (child protection officer) assessment.
 - b. Aire de Jeux is an introduction to the formal education system for many of its children. Continuing access to education is an important aspect of comprehensive child development. This project will also cover the school fees for children who are old enough to attend primary school. Children who will receive school fees include child-survivors who have undergone medical/psychological treatment at Panzi, abandoned children of rape survivors currently living at Panzi, and children of rape survivors who are too old to attend Aire de Jeux.

4. Improving access to high-quality early childhood education and childcare in the community:
 - a. Translation, printing and distribution of the renovated “Aire de Jeux” curriculum that is developed alongside Scandinavian childcare experts and with cultural contexts incorporated.
 - b. Training Aire de Jeux staff as trainers in the new curriculum.
 - c. Offering training for other childcare centers and schools to learn the new curriculum.
 - d. Generate income through fees charged for printed/digital curriculum distribution as well as in-person training.



Project Goals

The overall goal of this project is to enhance the child-care program for children affected by sexual violence at Aire de Jeux. There are two main project goals (derived from the effect objectives), that each adhere to the SMART (specific, measurable, accepted, time-bound) framework:

1. Complete rehabilitation and re-designing of Aire de Jeux, specifically:
 - a. Within 1 year, the building, grounds, and playground equipment will be upgraded to meet international standards for child safety and enrichment. The specific blueprints for this rehabilitation will be developed based on recommendations from the entire project team, including the Scandinavian child-care experts, and the Congolese Aire de Jeux project staff. This outcome will be measured by the completion of physical rehabilitation of the Aire de Jeux building, rehabilitation of the grounds (i.e., new fields for complex games, creation of a garden, etc.), and installation of new playground equipment.
 - b. Within 1 year, the material enrichment environment at Aire de Jeux will be upgraded to meet international standards for early childhood development. The specific materials covered by this project goal have been agreed upon by the entire project team. This outcome will be measured by the increase in consumable materials available to the children at Aire de Jeux including but not limited to books, toys, games, art supplies, basic musical instruments, and other educational materials. Furthermore, this outcome will also be measured by the number of children provided with access to basic materials including clothing and food.
2. Access to comprehensive support for children affected by sexual violence at Panzi, specifically:
 - a. Within 1 year, we will hire the 8 additional staff members (i.e., one child protection officer, seven specialized day-to-day supervisors) outlined in the effect objectives. Profile of staff required for Aire de Jeux has been outlined and accepted by the current operations team at Aire de Jeux. This outcome will be measured by the number and profile of specialized staff on the Aire de Jeux staff roster by the end of the project period.
 - b. Across the entire project period (of two years), we will provide approximately 250 children affected by sexual violence at Panzi (that are too old for Aire de Jeux) with school fees for continued education. The importance of this project goal has been agreed upon by the entire project team. This outcome will be measured by the number of children who have received school fees and attended school by the end of the project period.

3. 'Market curriculum for distribution to other communities and childcare centers
 - a. During the second year of the project, we will translate and package the curriculum into not only French, but other local languages (Swahili, potentially Lingala). Local schools and childcare centers will be able to buy either print or digital copies of the curriculum for their own programs. This curriculum will be advertised as a gold-standard for early childhood education and promoted by Panzi's advocacy team who works with communities on behavior change.
 - b. In addition, in year two of the program, the Aire de Jeux staff will participate in a "training-of-trainers" program that will instruct them on how to train other childcare centers and early childhood programs on the new curriculum. The Aire de Jeux staff will then offer monthly trainings that local childcare centers and schools can send their staff to.
 - c. Both of these offerings (the curriculum distribution for purchase and the paid training classes) contribute toward the sustainability of the project by generating income that will be able to sustain salaries and consumable costs for Aire de Jeux after the grant period ends.



Timeline & Milestones

Year 1:

- July: Project begins, school fees begin to be covered
- By August, curriculum overhaul will begin with assistance of Swedish child care experts
- By September, four additional local staff will be hired
- By November, renovation will have begun (due to the time it takes to go through the procurement and bidding process)
- By December, four additional local staff will be hired
- By January, a mid-term report on curriculum overhaul will be complete
- By March, renovation will be complete, school fees for year two begin (trimester system)
- By June, curriculum will have been completed and approved

Year 2:

- Throughout the year: childcare and early childhood education continues at Aire de Jeux
- July-August: Curriculum is translated
- September: Curriculum is designed and packaged in print and digital versions for purchase
- October-June: Income generation begins:
 - April: Curriculum advertising and distribution begins
 - June: Panzi childcare staff participate in “training-of-trainers” courses to become experts in how to train other schools/childcare centers
 - August-December: Trainings begin and are offered monthly or more as demand and trainer capacity allows



Budget

Year 1

No.	Items	
Activity Costs		
1	Rehabilitation of Aire de Jeux Building	5,000
7	Rehabilitation of Aire de Jeux Grounds	12,500
2	Playground Equipment & Rehabilitation	12,000
3	Consumable Materials (toys, games, educational materials)	5,500
4	Children's Clothing	2,000
6	Salary of Employees (as outlined in 3a)	24,000
8	Contribution to Education (i.e., school fees)	8,000
Administrative Costs		
9	Institutional costs and overhead	\$8,000
Total Costs		\$80,000

Year 2

No.	Items	
Activity Costs		
1	Graphic design and printing of curriculum (digital + limited print run)	7,000
7	Advertising of curriculum (radio, print) and training program	5,000
2	Travel expenses for promotion (gas, driver, car rental)	6,500
3	Consumable Materials (toys, games, educational materials)	5,500
4	Children's Clothing	2,000
5	Other Operational Supplies	3,000
6	Salary of Employees (as outlined in 3a) plus advocacy team/promotes salaries	30,000
8	Contribution to Education (i.e., school fees)	8,000
Administrative Costs		
9	Institutional costs and overhead	\$6,000
Total Costs		\$73,000

Total for Two Years: \$153,000

Risks and Risk Management

Panzi has a well-established monitoring and evaluation team to assess both the progression and achievement of stated objectives in each project, as well as a continuous assessment of risk and risk management.

Internal risks:

- Lack of funding for the project. The re-design of the child-care program, facilities, and services at Aire de Jeux is a new project without prior funding. It is currently dependent on funding to become reality. If the financial support from NSR is not granted, the project will not begin until another means of funding has been secured.
- The risk of something happening to the Panzi facilities or organization that operates the hospital and health center. Panzi has been operating for twenty years, the grounds are secured by UN peacekeeping forces and private security guards, and multi-lateral organizations (including the World Bank and European Union) are involved. There is little risk that there will be issues regarding facilities or the organization.

External risks:

- The risk of violence and armed conflict continues to be a concern for Panzi and all other partners working in South Kivu province. However, Panzi has a longstanding relationship with MONUSCO (the United Nations peacekeeping force in DR Congo) who provides security for both the hospital and its staff during missions to dangerous locations.
- Contagious diseases of which Ebola would be the most severe. Ebola is not currently a threat to South Kivu, though the hospital and its health centers continue to exercise extreme caution and utilize preventative measures to manage risk.

Quality Assurance

Panzi has a robust procurement process that ensures the quality of all its renovations and construction projects. This process requires a minimum of three bids from different contractors and decisions are measured based on both cost-effectiveness and quality of materials included in the estimate. Resiliency to local climate and weather patterns is included, as is the sustainability of the materials. Renovations are supervised by both the project manager (in this case the child protection officer) as well as the hospital maintenance staff. Panzi has over twenty years of experience in maintain and managing high-quality construction projects.

Contribution from district and clubs in Sweden

This projects builds upon the Youth and Humanitarian objectives of LCIF as well as the expressed encouragement by MD101 of initiatives aimed at counteracting social exclusion.

In Scandinavia, we are at the frontier of children's development, child care systems, and education. The preschool years are crucial for a child's future – these are the years that can accelerate their capacity to grow, evolve, and problem-solve; and encouraging interaction, communication, and aptitude for learning is critical. Lack of adequate nutrition, emotional interaction, and cognitive input has the opposite effect and stunts a child's development. This project would bring people with extensive experience of Scandinavian child care to Bukavu to re-design the entire child care program at Panzi Hospital. Either they will travel to Bukavu or analyze and contribute through online means (if safety concerns related to the pandemic makes that necessary)

We will engage Scandinavian Lions clubs in the endeavor of providing the children of South Kiwu with a safe haven through a campaign where the clubs collect toys, games and things for children, which can easily be sent to Congo. In a sustainable way things that are insignificantly used will continue bringing joy to innumerable children in Congo, instead of being thrown away. Of course every care will be taken to ensure that there is no risks of spreading viruses associated with the sending of goods.

As the current project owner we will propose District 101 S to do a fundraising in parallel with the NSR funds. The funds raised will be used to cover needs related to the project that surfaces during the activities

Administrative information

Project owner

NSR / MD 101

Contact info LC Sweden Be the Change:

PID Kenneth Persson, Treasurer of the club

Tel +46 708 79 76 38

Email kennethperson110@gmail.com

Project Board

Chairperson: Kenneth Persson, Treasurer

Project manager: Shalini Persson, President of the Club

Karin Eriksson, Coordinator of the Family Center in Vellinge, pre-school teacher.

Åke Persson, LC Svedala. Åke is an Engineer who has worked in Africa in 11 different countries and lived more than 1 year in Africa. He has an vast knowledge on many aspects of life and conditions in Africa.

Åsa Rosqvist, LC Svedala. Åsa is special educator for primarily children with specific disabilities. She is trained in sign interpretation.

Administrative Project manager

Shalini Persson will initially be the administrative project manager. MD 101 might later decide to appoint someone else for that role. Shalini is the President of LC Sweden Be the Change and has a master of law degree. Shalini has founded and runs a foundation with a yearly turnover of EUR 450 000. In that role she is used to handling joint ventures of different magnitudes, involving planning, overseeing and reporting projects. In 2020 the foundation ran a project aimed at countering the widespread social isolation among the elderly. The project (skillnadtillsammans.se) was financed by the Swedish Government body Socialstyrelsen. As her support in the role of managing the project Shalini has Kenneth Persson who has extensive Lions experience, both on the International Board and in Sweden/Scandinavia in many different roles.

Operative Project manager

The child protection officer described under “Effects Objectives and Activities” will serve as the operative project manager.

Reference group

In Sweden: Karin Eriksson, Coordinator of the Family Center in Vellinge, pre-school teacher.

In DR Congo: Two child care professionals at Panzi’s “Air de Jeux” child care facility
Management professionals at Panzi’s “Maison Dorcas” after-care facility for survivors of sexual violence and their families.

Project Geographical Area

Bukavu, Ibanda Health Zone, South Kivu Province. Democratic Republic of Congo (Urban).

Archive site

The project documentation will be stored with the chair person of the Project Board (contact info below) and at the MD 101 office, a copy will be kept by the MD 101 Coordinator for International Projects.

Project auditors

The auditors will be the MD 101 elected auditors.

Audit reports

Audit reports will be submitted annually by the 30 June and at the end of the project. The report will be based on a formal financial statement.

Status reports

Activity and status reports including audit reports at the appropriate intervals will be presented at NSR meetings and at MD 101 Council meetings.

Deviation reports.

Deviation reports will be submitted to NSR meetings and at MD 101 Council meetings.

Agreements

As of now there are no formal agreements made between the clubs cooperating in this project or with local authorities or other parties. Such agreements are in the process of being formalized.

Local Lions Club(s)

The District Governor of District 409 will suggest which club is most appropriate to oversee and report on the project on site.

Preparations

The project has been planned together with involved parties in Bukavu for several years and has involved discussions, meetings and interviews.

Marketing

Lions Club support of this project will be evident throughout the project. The new Aire de Jeux childcare center will display a sign that notes that renovation was made possible by the Lions Club NSR, and that operations are sustained with their support. In addition, printed and digital copies of the new curriculum will feature the Lions Club NSR logo noting their involvement, and the logo will also be featured on the Panzi website. Panzi agrees to promote the project and Lions' involvement on social media and their website via a blog post feature, as well.

In addition, local marketing and advertising will take place in the city of Bukavu and other regions of South Kivu Province to ensure the community knows about the availability of the curriculum and trainings that Panzi will be offering. This marketing will take place via print and radio advertisements, signage, as well as awareness spreading by Panzi staff engaged in other projects that work at the community-level.