



# Quarterly report

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES JANUARY - APRIL 2024

## THERAPEUTIC PLAYGROUNDS

The topics addressed during this quarter's therapeutic playgrounds were creativity, autonomy, children's prospects and a possible future.

During these therapeutic activities, our team of psycho-social counselors worked on strengthening the children's personal resources, encouraging them to belong to the group, stimulating their creativity, empowering them and, last but not least, enabling them to move towards a better future.

To achieve this, the activities offered were diverse and varied: dress-up workshop, thinking game, fine motor skills activity, workshop on the development of children's talents, mother-child pairs to strengthen attachment, sports and creative workshops...

The aim was to show the children, through play, that they had skills and talents that they could make use of in the long term and that would lead them to a better future.



## BUILDING PLAY EQUIPMENT AT PANZI HOSPITAL

During this quarter, we were also able to finalize the installation of a supervised play area for children within the Panzi hospital.

Funded by MINAFET, the play area will be available to families, medical teams and social workers, providing a playful and therapeutic space for children attending the hospital.



## ASSESSMENT OF PHASE 1 GIRLS

We remain determined and motivated to continue our work with the girls we accompanied during phase 1 of our project.

In March, we used the Kooki application developed by EPA to assess their mental health.

We are now paying closer attention to the girls who have become mothers, in order to assess their emotional distress and level of trauma following early motherhood. We offer them clinical interviews and guidance, with the aim of strengthening their resilience.



## A GROWING TEAM

February saw the arrival of Laura Herroudi to the Belgian EPA team, whom we are delighted to introduce to you.

Laura is a psychologist graduated from the University of Liège (ULiège) and will be in charge of the mental health angle of the asbl, with the creation of psychological content, the running of mental health training courses and research through scientific publications.

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS DAY

As part of the International Women's Rights Day, EPA organized a prevention campaign on gender equality in March.

The economic, social and political development of a country cannot be achieved without the effective participation of all its social strata, especially women.

During this campaign, we discussed the importance of gender equality and the role of women in Congolese society.





We therefore organized a mass awareness-raising project at the Kavumu and Bunyakiri sites, involving exchanges and debates on gender equality with parents, local leaders and school officials, as well as a radio program with 8 panellists. Children also took part in an activity on the importance of gender equality.



## TRAINING MISSION IN IRAQI KURDISTAN

In March, Cathleen and Laura flew to Iraqi Kurdistan to train teams from the Free Yezidi Foundation (FYF).

The theme of this training course for psycho-social workers (Harikaras, Protection officers, etc.) was "Psychological support and therapeutic care for traumatized children in conflict and post-conflict zones".

It also included a presentation of the Kooki application and coloring book to FYF teams.



The course was designed to be interactive, combining theory, practical application, tool presentation, case analysis and debates. This tailor-made training addressed the needs of the field and the requests of the teams, notably concerning aggression, addictions, suicide and the safe return of children abducted by Daesh.

Future collaborations will enable us to deepen these new skills.

## FONAREV SYMPOSIUM IN KINSHASA

Cathleen was invited to speak at a symposium on the mental health of victims of conflict-related violence held at the end of April in Kinshasa, DRC.

The symposium was organized by the Fonds national des réparations des victimes de violences sexuelles liées aux conflits et des victimes des crimes contre la paix et la sécurité de l'humanité (FONAREV), in collaboration with the National Mental Health Program of the Ministry of Public Health, FRACARITA and the Swiss Cooperation.





At the symposium, Cathleen represented EPA and spoke about our association's mission, then went on to talk about symptoms, prevention, care, risks and reparation for children who have suffered severe trauma.



## TRAINING MISSION IN BUKAVU

In April, Cathleen and Laura travelled to Bukavu (DRC) to train psychologists and PSAs from various organizations.

The training brought together teams from BVES, Médecins du Monde, Maison Dorcas, the Panzi Hospital and Foundation, in collaboration with WAPA, and was rich in exchanges and sharing of experiences. Everyone's motivation and active participation contributed to the success of this training course.

In addition to acquiring knowledge, we were careful to promote networking between these organizations, sharing common approaches and proposing complementary interventions, in order to encourage collaboration. In EPA's view, working in partnership is a key element in improving support for child victims and enriching multidisciplinary care.

This training course is co-created by and for its participants, so the trainers are attentive to the demands of each team and do what's necessary to answer their questions.

We look forward to continuing these training modules in 2024 and 2025.



### KEY FIGURES

#### ***Number of playgrounds***

8 including : - 4 in Bunyakiri  
- 4 in Kavumu

#### ***Number of home visits***

- 9 in Bunyakiri
- 30 in Kavumu

#### ***Number of training missions abroad***

- 2 (DRC and Iraq)

#### ***Number of prevention and awareness campaigns***

- 8