



Les Enfants  
de Panzi et d'ailleurs

# Annual report 2024



# Foreword

## from the President of CPE



As 2024 draws to a close, it marks a new stage in the commitment of our association, Children of Panzi and Elsewhere (CPE), to children born and affected by sexual violence in conflict zones.

Thanks to the efforts of our teams, the strength of our partnerships, and the unwavering support of our donors, we have met many challenges and laid the foundations for a fairer, more hopeful future.

Sadly, the conflicts ravaging the world continue to use rape as a weapon of war, leaving thousands of victims in their wake, particularly women and children. Whether in Africa, the Middle East or other regions affected by armed conflict, this inhumane practice underlines a tragic reality that still too often goes unpunished. In the face of this, CPE remains firmly committed to providing concrete help to the children concerned and their families, and to raising public awareness of this crucial issue.

This year, our action has been illustrated by concrete initiatives in the field, notably in the villages of Kavumu and Bunyakiri, where our efforts have directly contributed to changing lives.

We have also stepped up our mission to raise awareness and share our expertise at various international conferences, underlining the importance of holistic care for these children facing the unimaginable.

As you read through this report, I hope you will share with me the pride of belonging to a community that is taking concrete action to offer a better future to those who need it most. It's not just about projects or statistics, but about the lives we transform and the stories of hope we write together.

As we look to the future, I am convinced that the values that unite us will continue to guide our actions. Together, we can build a world of greater solidarity, inclusiveness and opportunity for all.

Thank you for your confidence. Let's keep moving forward, with ambition and determination.

**Cathleen de Kerchove**  
*President & co-founder of CPE*

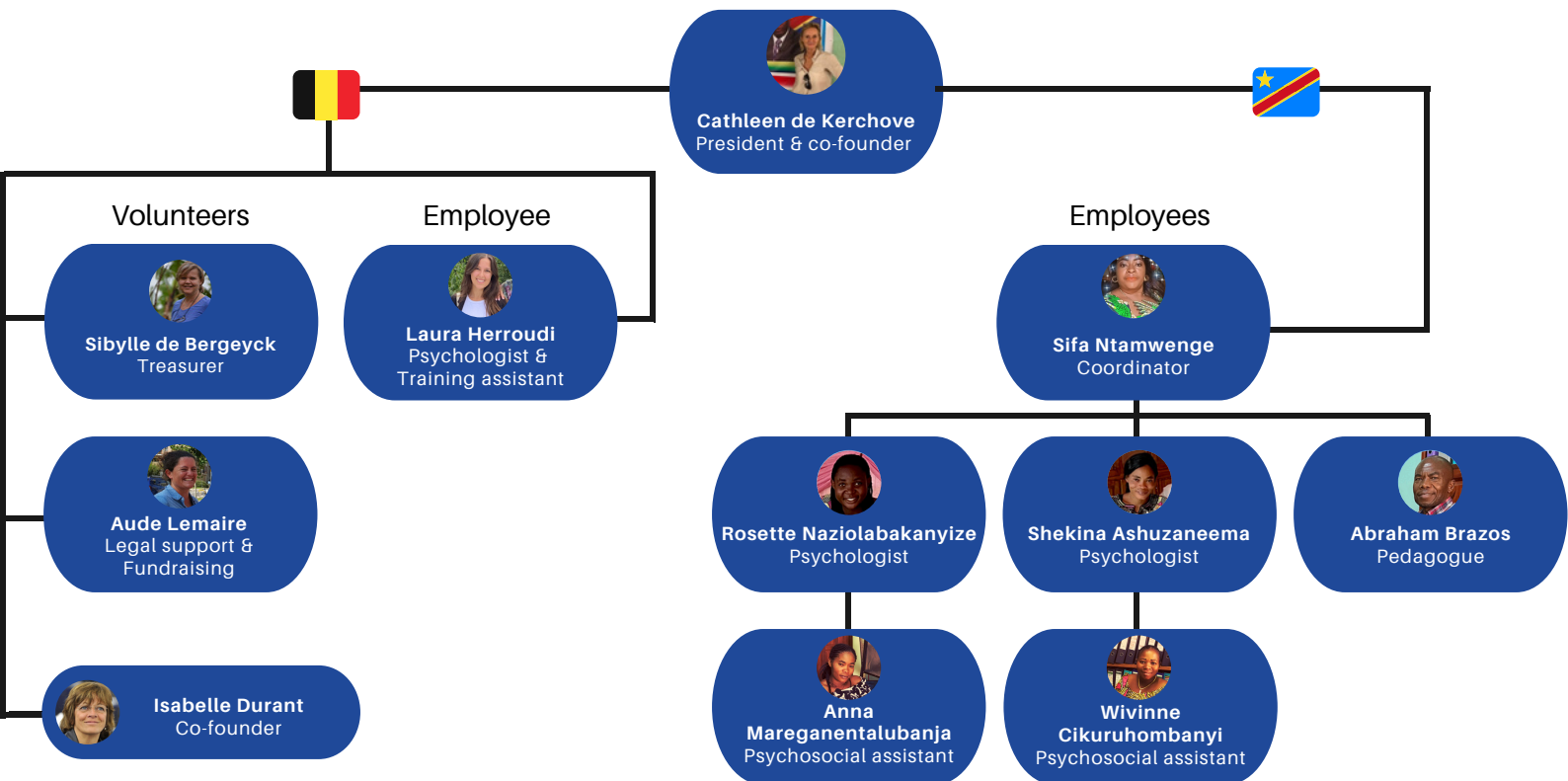
# Table of contents

<b>Foreword</b>	2
<b>Organization chart</b>	4
<b>Presenting CPE</b>	5
<b>Mission, Vision, Values</b>	6
<b>Objectives</b>	7
<b>In 2024</b>	8
Transition to annual follow-up	11
Vocational training	10
Income-generating activities	12
Community library	13
Video clips	14
Scientific conferences	15
Training courses	17
Missions	18
Academic collaborations	19
Partnerships	20
Event	21
<b>Challenges and perspectives</b>	22
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	23

# Organization chart

## THE CHILDREN OF PANZI AND ELSEWHERE

Organization chart



# Presenting CPE



In many countries, sexual violence is still used to humiliate, instill terror, and destroy communities. It has long-lasting consequences and remains largely unpunished.

The alarming rise in cases of sexual violence committed against children, denounced by the UN and by Dr. Mukwege (gynecologist and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate in 2018), prompted Véronique De Keyser, Cathleen de Kerchove, Isabelle Durant, and Marie-Dominique Simonet to create the NGO The Children of Panzi and Elsewhere (CPE) in 2015.

CPE cares for traumatized children in conflict and post-conflict zones, with a particular focus on minors who are victims of and/or born of sexual violence.

CPE has developed a holistic psychosocial care methodology for children over a three-year period, in partnership with the University of Liège.

This methodology is continuously taught to local teams of psychologists and psychosocial assistants and is also the subject of training for other international organizations.

The local team supports young victims of severe violence using individual therapy, family therapy, and group therapy.

CPE also provides educational support to children and assists families. This comprehensive care is complemented by prevention and awareness campaigns on current issues, aimed at all members of the community.



## Mission

Accompany very young children who are victims and/or born of rape in conflict and post-conflict zones towards psychological reconstruction and a possible future within their community.

## Vision

Facilitate access to reparations for children who have been victims of sexual violence through holistic psychosocial care.

## Values

Our actions are committed, collaborative and sustainable, with a basic principle of *do no harm*.

# Objectives

A close-up photograph of a woman with short, curly grey hair and black-rimmed glasses. She is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and is holding the hand of a child. The child is wearing a patterned purple and white garment. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with dry earth and some greenery.

**Provide psychosocial support**  
to child victims of trauma in armed conflicts

**Build**  
a better future

**Raise awareness**  
on children's rights, gender equality and  
sustainable development goals

**Promote**  
peace and education



**In 2024**

CPE provided support to:

## IN KAVUMU

40 children born of rape, 10 from the community

30 home visits

4 therapeutic playgrounds

8 prevention and awareness campaigns

## IN BUNYAKIRI

30 children born of rape, 20 from the community

9 home visits

4 therapeutic playgrounds

8 prevention and awareness campaigns



# Transition to annual follow-up in Bunyakiri and in Kavumu



After three years of sustained support in Bunyakiri and Kavumu, 2024 marks the transition to annual monitoring with needs assessment in these two communities.

Our efforts have borne fruit. Children born of sexual violence have strengthened their personal skills and their ability to envision a positive future. Through activities focused on creativity, autonomy, and teamwork, they have discovered their talents and acquired the tools necessary to build a better future.

The results are encouraging. All the set objectives have been achieved, with significant progress for each child. The families, too, have been prepared for sustainable autonomy through mutual aid initiatives, awareness campaigns, and strengthened community support.

Although our regular presence is coming to an end, the monitoring continues. We will adopt a less frequent intervention schedule to assess progress and provide support if needed. This transition ensures continuity in support while empowering the communities in the long term.

Thanks to this approach, we are leaving behind solid foundations and a wave of hope for the children and their families.

# Nyota Center

## Vocational training



2024 marked the completion of our two projects focused on income-generating activities (IGAs), in partnership with Wallonie Bruxelles International (WBI).

The first project focused on funding vocational training for vulnerable young girls welcomed at the Nyota Center, thus providing them with new employment opportunities and the means to realize their dreams!

Beyond their socio-economic integration, this program also aimed at their psychological restoration, in line with the mission of the Children of Panzi and Elsewhere (CPE). By reducing the impact of the trauma they experienced and strengthening their resilience, it allowed them to acquire essential professional skills.

The central objective was therefore their personal development, psychological reconstruction, and the learning of strategies necessary for managing viable and sustainable income-generating activities, in order to ensure their autonomy and financial independence.

# Nyota Center

## Vocational training



- 65 girls were trained on the selection and management of successful income-generating activities.
- 2 girls were enrolled at the Higher Pedagogical Institute of Bukavu in Computer Science and Management and in Accounting and Administrative Management.
- 11 young girls were able to enroll in training for mixed hairstyling and beauty professions and received a set of tools for their professional reintegration.
- Materials were provided to support the handmade soap production unit to teach the girls the craft of soap-making for their financial empowerment.
- 3 maize processing machines for Tuska production, along with the necessary ingredients, were provided to the girls to support their income-generating activity (IGA) in agro-food production.
- 20 new laptops and a printer-copier were provided to introduce the girls to the use of computers and their application in the professional environment.

# Bakery

## Income-generating activities



The second project carried out in partnership with WBI, aimed at promoting female entrepreneurship in Bukavu, which was launched this year, concerns the survivors of Maison Dorcas. This second initiative focused on implementing a bakery managed and maintained by and for women, with the goal of empowering them and providing a stable source of income.

Integrated into the pastry training program of the Panzi Foundation, this bakery allowed the survivors to learn how to produce bread, pastries, and other baked goods. This project not only provided them with skills in team management and customer service but also offered them practical experience in the field.

The bakery also served to raise awareness in the local community about sexual violence and the need to support survivors in their reintegration process. Thanks to the tuk-tuk used for deliveries, which displayed visible prevention messages, the bakery became a tool for mobilization and awareness.

By offering a profitable and sustainable professional activity, this initiative not only allowed the beneficiaries to access vocational training but also helped them develop skills and create new prospects for the future.

# Community library

Access to books and games for all



In 2024, we also inaugurated a community library and playroom, funded by the United Nations Women's Guild (UNWG). These facilities were designed to support children in reducing the impact of the trauma they have suffered and to strengthen their resilience through the benefits of play and reading.

The project, integrated into the Nyota Center, primarily targets young girls in difficult situations. It is part of the mission of the Children of Panzi and Elsewhere (CPE), focusing on their psychological restoration, well-being, and overall development.

The library provides a space for learning and discovery through books, while the playroom allows young girls to engage in various indoor and outdoor games, as well as creative activities.

These facilities play a key role in their rehabilitation. They promote empowerment, harmonious development, and psychological rebuilding, while opening up perspectives for their future.

# Video clips

## Prevention and awareness



The Children of Panzi and Elsewhere (CPE) adopts a unique model combining an integrative and innovative approach, collective work aimed at restoring social ties and strengthening communities, as well as a long-term vision in line with children's rights and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To support these initiatives, CPE's teams developed this year a series of prevention and awareness video clips addressed to a broad audience, covering the following topics:

- Video 1: Quality Education for All
- Video 2: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
- Video 3: Justice and Conflict Resolution
- Video 4: Birth Registration of Children
- Video 5: Reducing Inequalities
- Video 6: Psychosomatic Disorders

The production of these video clips aligns with SDGs 3 (Health and Well-being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), and 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

We are convinced that an informed community is better equipped to detect and report abuse, thereby ensuring the protection of the most vulnerable.

# Scientific conferences

Research and progress



“

*April 2024*

CPE was invited to speak at the conference on the mental health of victims of conflict-related violence held in Kinshasa, DRC.

This conference was organized by the National Fund for Reparations of Victims of Sexual Violence Related to Conflict and Victims of Crimes Against Peace and Security of Humanity (FONAREV), in collaboration with the National Mental Health Program of the Ministry of Public Health, FRACARITA, and Swiss Cooperation.

During this conference, we presented the mission of our NGO and contributed to highlighting best practices for supporting young victims of sexual violence, as well as for establishing appropriate reparation mechanisms.

*June 2024*

CPE participated in the 4th Congress of the Mukwege International Chair.

During this Congress, organized by the University of Angers, we presented our methodology and approach in the care of child victims of sexual violence in Kavumu.

Finally, the members of the Scientific Committee of the Chair, including our President, met to discuss future research perspectives on gender-based sexual violence.

# Scientific conferences

Research and progress



“

*October 2024*

CPE traveled to New York (USA) to present its actions to the United Nations (UN). The President of the association was invited by Pramila Patten, UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of her mandate.

This event aimed to provide a platform for exchange on research and progress in psychosocial support and mental health care programs, following a survivor-centered approach. CPE highlighted the challenges faced on the ground, shared best practices, and presented the lessons learned from its experience.

*December 2024*

CPE participated in the 5th Congress of the Mukwege International Chair, organized in Montreal (Canada). This major event brought together international experts in health, research, social action, politics, and law to exchange best practices for combating gender-based violence and promoting women's empowerment in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

During this congress, we presented our video clips created as part of our prevention and awareness campaigns, highlighting our commitment to sustainable change.



# Training courses

## Psychological trauma in children



In 2024, CPE developed its training program on the theme of child psychotrauma. This year, CPE Belgium teams travelled to Iraq and the Democratic Republic of Congo, to train field workers in the psychosocial care of child victims of sexual violence, born of rape, and child soldiers.

The modules provided to these teams included:

- Child development and psychotrauma
- Parenting and attachment
- Brain neurobiology and traumatic memory
- Emotion regulation and the tolerance window
- Aggression and addictions in children
- The child in legal proceedings
- Therapeutic approaches and scientific foundations
- Introducing Kooki (application and coloring book)
- ...

At the request of our teams, we are preparing new modules to continue our training courses in 2025, aimed at a wide range of audiences.

# Missions

## In the DRC and Iraq

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 psychosocial workers (Hari-karas) was “Psychosocial support for traumatized children in conflict zones”.

Our program, specially designed to meet the needs of the field, covered key themes such as aggression management, addictions, suicide, as well as support for children who have survived after being abducted by Daesh.

In November, the CPE team travelled to Bukavu (DRC) to conduct the latest training module in collaboration with WAPA and Médecins du Monde. This latest learning cycle focused on therapeutic management of traumatized children and its scientific foundations.

During this mission, we also supervised the setting up of the community library, the running of professional training courses and the implementation of Income-Generating Activities (IGA) at the Nyota Center and Maison Dorcas.

The CPE Belgium team organized 3 training missions this year. The aim of each visit was to build the capacity of local teams, meet our partners in the field and supervise ongoing activities.



In April, Cathleen and Laura travelled to Bukavu (DRC) to run a training course for psychologists and psychosocial assistants from various organizations, as part of our partnership with WAPA.

The training brought together teams from BVES, Médecins du Monde, Maison Dorcas, the Panzi Hospital and Foundation, and was marked by dynamic exchanges and the sharing of experiences.

The involvement and enthusiasm of all participants contributed greatly to the success of the training.

In addition to acquiring knowledge, we were keen to promote networking between these organizations, sharing common themes and proposing complementary interventions, in order to encourage collaboration.



# Academic collaborations

## On sexual violence



One of CPE's missions is to pass on knowledge about sexual violence in the context of conflict, and to raise awareness of the consequences of childhood psychotrauma. To achieve this goal, our association works closely with several universities, both in Belgium and abroad, to build the capacity of mental health professionals.

As part of these partnerships, CPE was invited to speak at a course organized in Bukavu (DRC) by the Center for Humanitarian Studies at the University of Geneva. The theme of the course was “Preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict and emergency situations”. This collaboration continued in September with the launch of a pilot module on “Responding to the needs of children born of sexual violence in conflict zones”.

CPE is also pursuing its long-standing partnership with the University of Liège. Together, we produced a research report commissioned by the Sexual Violence Care Centers (*Centres de Prise en Charge des Violences Sexuelles - CPVS*) and the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men in Belgium. The study focused on best practice in therapeutic support for under-age victims during the first six months following the occurrence of sexual violence.

# Partnerships

In Belgium and elsewhere

We are delighted to announce that, since 2024, the non-profit organization Children of Panzi and elsewhere has been a member of the CNCD-11.11.11! The CPE teams are delighted to be joining this incredible network, which will enable us to develop our advocacy and awareness-raising work, and finance our psychosocial support programs with our partners in the South.

The National Center for Development Cooperation (CNCD-11.11.11) is an alliance of over 70 NGOs and a citizen's movement that has been active for over half a century in the service of international solidarity, promoting a just and sustainable world!

**CNCD**

**11.11.11**



Les Enfants  
de Panzi et d'ailleurs



# Event

## A glimmer of hope for Congolese youth

In aid of Children of Panzi and Elsewhere, an exceptional evening was organized on Monday June 10 at the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren, to meet the famous Doctor Denis Mukwege, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and fervent defender of human rights, interviewed by Kathryn Brahy, Delegate General in charge of Culture for Wallonie-Bruxelles International.

The evening debate, followed by a cocktail reception, brought together mental health professionals, humanitarian associations and political figures to discuss a key issue: youth.

In conflict and post-conflict zones, young people are a driving force for lasting and significant change, in order to build a future of hope, peace and prosperity for all.

In the face of global socio-economic, political and ecological challenges, young people represent an immense potential for the future.





## Challenges in 2024

- Security instability in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Iraq continues to compromise CPE's actions.
- Logistical difficulties make access to remote areas difficult.
- Our financial resources are limited to extend our programs.
- The news is worrying in many parts of the world, endangering the rights of women and children, and the number of rapes used as weapons of war continues to rise dramatically.

## Outlook for 2025

- Extend our activities to new villages in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- Strengthen CPE's presence in training programs for psychosocial workers.
- Increase awareness and prevention campaigns.
- Intensify fund-raising efforts through events in Europe and elsewhere.
- Expansion of the CPE Belgium team.
- CPE's 10th anniversary!

# Acknowledgements



On behalf of the entire CPE team, we would like to thank you for your invaluable support in 2024!

Thanks to you, hundreds of children were given access to psychosocial support, schooling, vocational training, community activities and a multitude of books and games!

You've left your mark on their year, and on those to come.

We look forward to seeing you in 2025, to present new projects, support more children, and introduce you to our partnerships around the world.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to every member of our team, our volunteers, our donors and our institutional partners.

Your commitment, large or small, is the essential driving force behind our collective success.

*The team of Children of Panzi and Elsewhere (CPE)*