

Panzi Hospital - Newsletter # Dec 2010



We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope that you all will continue to support the work of Panzi Hospital and help us to improve the situation for the Congolese people during 2011.

Day of activism at Panzi

If there is going to be a change in the unstable situation in DR Congo women have to be involved for real, on every level in the society. In the politics, in the churches and in the rest of the civil society.

That was the message from the participants in the contribution from Panzi Hospital to the “16 days of activism”. From November 25 to December 10 each year the world celebrates

this campaign against gender violence. The theme 2010 was “The fight against militarism as an aggression against women”.

By using theatre Panzi lifted different areas in women’s daily lives where they encounter violence and also ways out of it.

Several representatives from churches, authorities and NGOs were invited and took part in the debate about the role of women in the peace process.

The major of Kadutu, madame. Nzigire Migabo talked about the guarantee of security for every human being, and women’s own responsibility to show their knowledge and skills.

- Women have to fight and contribute to their own safety, but with help from the rest of the society.

Major Honorine Munyole talked about the increasing domestic violence. Recently several cases have been raised but she pushed for the need of more attention on this matter, both from authorities and from private organizations.

The debate ended up with several recommendations, to continue the fight for the same rights for education for girls and not use customs as an excuse for the rejection of women from different tasks in the society.

- The governor is with you and he is working for solutions to ensure the security and fight the suffering from violence that many Congolese women are

experiencing, not the least in the South Kivu, said DC Mwanza, minister of health, gender and family.





Raising awareness and decrease the stigma about fistula

Tanganyika is one of the 5 districts in the Katanga Province, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is one of the chosen outreach areas for Panzi Hospital and the project sponsored by the Fistula Foundation. Tanganyika has many cases of fistula, one of the main reasons is premature births since girls as young as 12 to 14 years are being forced into marriages. For two weeks in November a team of doctors, an anesthetist and an assistant nurse went to Tanganyika to raise awareness in the community about fistula and the risk living with it untreated. By giving information in local churches, NGOs on the radio and in schools the team, in collaboration with the local health centers, reached different groups and ages. The overall goal is to, step by step, decrease the stigma connected to fistula and by so improve women's health.

-During this outreach activity the patients came in big number, there is no gynecologist in their area and the women told that they had suffered for a long time, says Bercky Masheka Zihindula.

The outreach team also met with the responsible doctors of the health zone, the district and with the Central Health administration.

Combined with the awareness the outreach team performed medical treatment on site and transferred those who needed to Panzi hospital for more advanced assistance and surgery.

Conference about reintegration

A team from the SSV-project (Survivors of Sexual Violence) participated in a conference in Goma about reintegration of female victims of sexual violence in Eastern DR Congo. The conference was arranged by the Swedish NGO "Kvinna till Kvinna".

During the conference representatives from different organizations in Rwanda, Burundi and DR Congo, and Monusco, met and discussed the challenges regarding women's rights and them being a part of the solutions of the current situation.

During the first day the conference participants came up with recommendations for the Congolese authorities, for example;

- more collaboration with NGOs, more women on decision making levels in the society and that the Congolese government consolidates the peace and security in a durable manner in the country.

Kvinna till Kvinna collaborated with Panzi Hospital / PMU two years ago when the movie "Women's war", an exchange Between Bosnia and Dr Congo, was made.

A follow up of the documentary is being produced and will be shown for the UN in New York March 8 2011.

Trainings at Panzi

As a way of extend the specialist competence of Panzi Hospital Doctor Denis Mukwege on regular basis holds trainings for medics in gynecology. Doctors from North and South Kivu participated in the latest three months long course based at Panzi, founded by Engender Health.

- By getting more generalist doctors skilled in women's health we can prevent a lot of illnesses and suffering. These doctors don't become specialists at the same level as the staff here at Panzi. But some of the more basic gynecological care can be done in hospitals and health centers in the region, says Doctor Denis Mukwege.



Campaign for volunteer testing for HIV/ Aids

To get more people tested for HIV/Aids and to raise awareness against the use of traditional medicines. Those are two of the main goals of a campaign held this month in Kamanyola in Uvira in South Kivu. This is a collaboration between the HIV/Aids project at Panzi Hospital, founded by Stephen Lewis Foundation, and the health zone of Nyangezi.

- There is a great need of volunteer testing in all of Uvira, it is an area where we know that people are getting the information they should use traditional medicines to get healed, says Bercky Masheka Zihindula, project manager.

On the World Aids day, December 1, a team from Panzi hospital, persons living with HIV/Aids, Survivors of Sexual Violence and health staff, took part in the demonstration held in Bukavu, arranged by the national program against HIV/Aids and the Provincial government.

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The General Referral Hospital of Panzi (GRHP) is located Bukavu, capital city of the South Kivu province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The hospital was inaugurated in 1999 and has specialized in gynecological disorders, specifically trauma from sexual violence and fistulas. Panzi Hospital provides services in Obstetrics, Pediatrics, and Internal Medicine, general and specialized Surgery, Ophthalmology, Dental and Nutritional. It also boasts its own laboratory, radiology, ultrasonography and endoscopy units.

Panzi Hospital is a private hospital run by CEPAC (Communauté des Églises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale).

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