

GIZ, Dr. Denis Mukwege and Panzi Foundations and ICGLR combine efforts to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence in the Great Lakes region

In the framework of the Regional Project on Peace and Security in the Great Lakes region co-funded by the German government and the European Union, GIZ is supporting the ICGLR Regional Training Facility (RTF) to strengthen its training approach to prevent and respond to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in ICGLR Member States¹. In line with Art 6(9), of the ICGLR Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children (2006), the RTF is mandated “for training and sensitising judicial officers, police units, social workers, medical officers and other categories of persons who handle cases of sexual violence in the Great Lakes Region”. To ensure a more holistic and harmonised training approach, a partnership was initiated in May 2019 between the ICGLR RTF, the Dr. Denis Mukwege and Panzi Foundations with the support of GIZ to integrate Panzi’s holistic model of care to SGBV survivors (medical, psycho-social and legal assistance and reintegration support) in the RTF’s training programmes with the idea to pilot the initiative in five pilot countries initially. These include the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Zambia, Rwanda, Uganda and the Central African Republic.

Several learning exchanges and pedagogical meetings took place between May and November 2019 between the RTF, Panzi and Mukwege Foundations, at both the ICGLR RTF Center in Kampala and at the Panzi Foundation in Bukavu. These meetings brought together a total of 60 trainers and experts from both institutions (38 male and 22 female) and allowed the respective teams to learn about the specific work carried out by each institution and the methodology and tools used. In addition, the meetings allowed the teams to agree on the modalities of combining their respective approaches namely the RTF socio-ecological model approach and the Panzi’s holistic model of care approach.

The first SGBV pilot training jointly delivered by experts from the RTF and Panzi Foundation, took place in December 2019 in Goma and Kinshasa in the DRC. As a result of the training, a total of 73 professionals (including 40 male and 33 female) involved in the SGBV response in the DRC, including medical and psycho-social personnel, judicial and police officers increased their knowledge and skills to handle SGBV cases more adequately and address the holistic needs of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

In 2020, the initiative will be further rolled out in Rwanda, Zambia and Uganda and CAR. In addition, the RTF will develop an online database with the profiles of SGBV experts in each of the 12 ICGLR Member States to facilitate access to expertise within the MS. A lessons-learned paper will be presented at a regional round-table towards the end of the project to share good practices with key stakeholders in view of a potential replication elsewhere.

¹ ICGLR Member States are Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Republic of South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Zambia