

## ART AGAINST VIOLENCE

Art and Ethics in Therapy and Prevention of Sexualized Violence – a Pilot Cooperation Project between Bonn (G) and Bukavu (DRC)



REPORT for the period from January 2024-December 2024

Project description

### Initial situation

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), armed rebel groups have been terrorizing the Congolese population for decades. Sexualized violence against women and children is systematically used to destroy families and destabilize communities. The holistic treatment model for victims of sexualized violence established by gynaecologist and Nobel Prize winner Dr. Denis Mukwege in Bukavu, South Kivu (DRC), has gained worldwide resonance, recognition and support. The pilot cooperation project sponsored by the Rotary Club Bonn Kreuzberg supports Mukwege's successful initiative and combines art therapy with medical ethics.

### Objective

Together with the psychotherapists at Panzi Hospital, art therapy initiatives are being developed to support victims of sexualized violence and give them the opportunity to bear witness to their experiences. In addition to strengthening female identity in a patriarchal environment, art therapy is intended to support

the lengthy rehabilitation process following stigmatizing violence. The artistic and narrative testimonies created in the therapeutic encounter are the product of ethical reflection in the historical-political context of the conflict and will be presented in exhibition spaces both on site and virtually. In the conviction that the documentation of individual, traumatic experiences can contribute to collective memory and can be used as an educational and preventative tool, the project pursues both a therapeutic and an ethical goal. Art therapy is used for individual trauma treatment and to strengthen the wounded identity. It is intended to counteract the social stigmatization of victims.

### **Activities to date**

The interaction between psychotherapists, art therapists and medical ethicists from Germany and Congo began in February 2024. Further virtual meetings took place in May, July, October and December 2024, in which the cooperation partners and psychologists from Bonn and Bukavu participated. The virtual meetings are held in hybrid formats.

A central purpose of the meetings was the teaching of the basics of art therapy and the presentation of art therapy exercises. WEB designer and art therapist Farida Fares has created a multifunctional platform for this purpose. By clicking on a link, the psychotherapists at Panzi Hospital can watch the videos recorded by Kathrin Seifert, in which instructions for and demonstrations of art therapy exercises are provided. Text material in French explaining the art therapy exercises, which encourage painting and the creative use of various materials (paper, watercolors, brushes, clay, paint, etc.), is also stored on the platform. The same platform is also designed for uploading image and video material, texts and audio sequences.

With the funds provided by the Rotary Club Bonn Kreuzberg for the year 2024, three initiatives were realized. 1. The web designer and art therapist Farida Fares, who was involved in all sessions, created a "virtual atelier". 2. The materials necessary for art therapy were purchased (paper, watercolors, chalk, clay and tablets). Tablets enable the art therapists to use the platform and create the digital copies that are uploaded. 3. An art therapy training workshop, led by the Congolese clinical psychologist and art therapist Lerick Baleke Mudekereza, was financed. The art therapy training workshop took place in December 2024 (see photo documentation). This was in response to the psychotherapists' wish to acquire the necessary skills to integrate art therapy measures into their therapeutic approaches. In addition, the project leaders from Bonn are in process of producing a publication together with the Congolese scientists and project partners from the fields of clinical psychology,

psychotherapy and bioethics, in which the use of art therapy in the treatment of victims of sexualized violence in Africa is explored and evaluated. The publication is intended to create a basis for publishing the results generated by the ongoing project in the future.



Fig.1 In the virtual art studio, art therapy exercises along with possible exercises and creations are demonstrated: "art du papier".

### DER ZUFALL

#### Material:



DIN A4



Fineliner



Tinte  
(verschiedene  
Farben)



Papiertuch  
(zum Abtupfen)



Föhn  
(zum Trocknen)

#### Zeit:



30-45 min.



Ein ruhiger, ungestörter Ort

Fig. 2 For each exercise, the necessary requirements and materials are listed. A brief description follows.

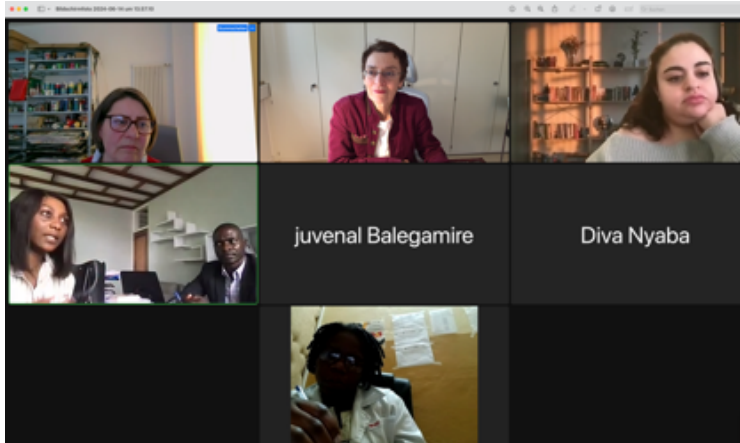


Fig. 3 Art therapy meeting in October 2024:  
Discussion of the exercises

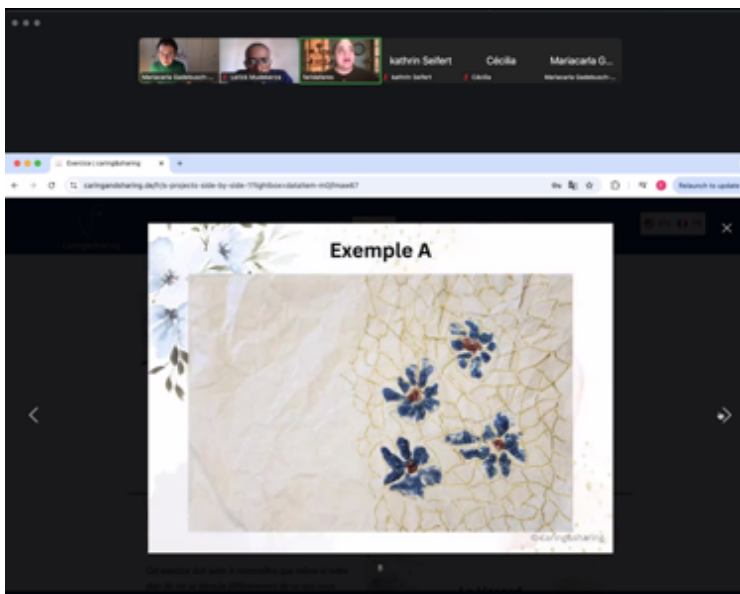


Fig. 4 Virtual discussion of an exercise with the art therapy  
trainer in Bukavu, where the WEB platform is explained to him.

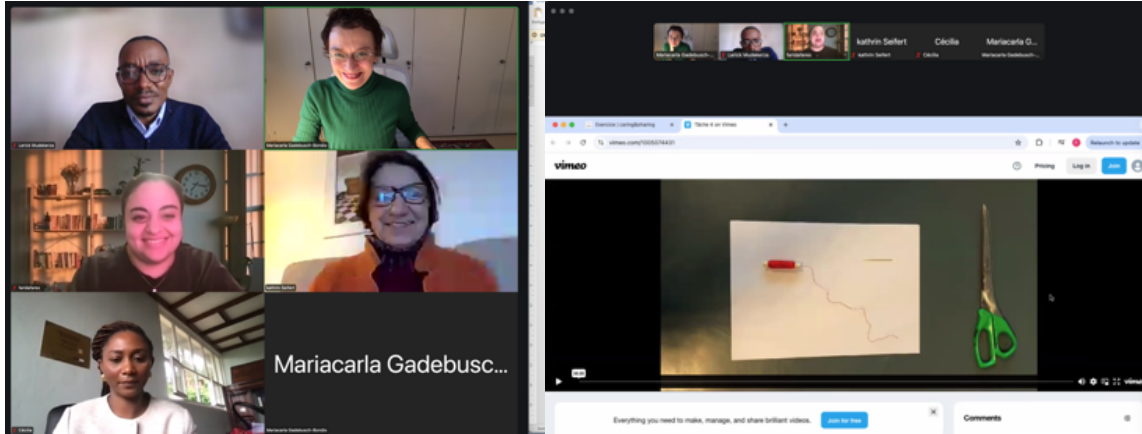


Fig. 5 Meeting to prepare for the art therapy training workshop in Bukavu on December 13, 2024

Fig. 6 Meeting for the preparation of an art therapy training workshop in Bukavu on December 13, 2024: video demonstration

Art therapy training workshop for psychotherapists in CEDEM | Bukavu (19.-21. 12.2024)









Fondateur, PDG & Art-thérapeute  
**FARIDA FARES**

Farida Fares est la fondatrice de "Caring&Sharing" et une art-thérapeute dont l'objectif principal est l'adaptation aux nouveaux environnements, l'anxiété, la dépression, le TDAH, le syndrome d'épuisement professionnel, les troubles post-traumatiques et les réactions au stress.



Art-thérapeute  
**DR KATHRIN SEIFERT**

Kathrin Seifert est art-thérapeute et professeur au HKS-Ottersberg. Elle se concentre sur le traitement art-thérapeutique de la dépression et des troubles anxieux, de la schizophrénie, des maladies neurodégénératives, des troubles addictifs, de la personnalité, des troubles obsessionnels compulsifs et post-traumatiques ainsi que des réactions de stress, des crises de sens et de vie ainsi que du syndrome de burn-out.



Éthicienne Médicale  
**DR MARIACARLA GADEBUSCH BONDIO**

Mariacarla Gadebusch Bondio est philosophe et historienne de la médecine. Elle dirige l'Institut des sciences humaines médicales à la clinique de l'université de Bonn. Son travail scientifique se concentre sur les dimensions éthiques et épistémiques de la recherche et de la pratique cliniques. L'empreinte culturelle et le conditionnement historique de la santé et de la maladie, la qualité de vie, l'espoir, l'autonomie et la vulnérabilité constituent un autre champ d'investigation qu'elle étudie sur la base de témoignages de personnes concernées et de témoignages numériques de patients\* en réseau.