



2024 CCBE Human Rights Award

Lawyers of the Legal Clinic of the Panzi Foundation receive the 2024 CCBE Human Rights Award for their work in support of survivors of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

The CCBE decided to grant the 2024 Human Rights Award to the **lawyers of the Legal Clinic of the Panzi Foundation**. This award recognises their exceptional commitment to ensuring all victims of sexual violence as a weapon of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) receive comprehensive, non-discriminatory legal representation, and access to justice.

The CCBE President, **Pierre-Dominique Schupp**, will present the award during the CCBE Plenary Session on Thursday 21 November 2024, in Brussels. In conferring this award, the CCBE recognises the outstanding work of the lawyers of the Panzi Foundation's Legal Clinic in upholding the fundamental values of the legal profession, as well as defending and advocating for human rights and the respect for the rule of law, despite the ongoing conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The purpose of the CCBE Human Rights Award

The CCBE Human Rights Award aims to highlight the work of one or more lawyers or lawyers' organisations that have demonstrated outstanding commitment and sacrifice in protecting fundamental values. The award is granted to those who have brought honour to the legal profession by upholding the highest standards of professional and personal conduct in the field of human rights.

The CCBE President, **Pierre-Dominique Schupp**, declared today:

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All the lawyers at the Panzi Foundation’s Legal Clinic are truly deserving of this award as they have brought honour to the legal profession by upholding the highest values of professional and personal conduct in the field of human rights. The CCBE would like to pay particular tribute to the Legal Clinic’s innovative and unique model, which provides large-scale reception, care, support, rehabilitation, and reintegration of survivors of sexual violence. This model offers quality, person-centered services — including medical care, psychosocial support, legal assistance, and socio-economic reintegration — within a single ‘One Stop Centre’. With its strong commitment and compassion, the Legal Clinic of the Panzi Foundation serves as a powerful inspiration, empowering survivors and communities affected by conflict while upholding human rights.

About the award winner: the **Legal Clinic of the Panzi Foundation**



The **Panzi Foundation**, founded by Nobel Peace Prize laureate **Denis Mukwege**, is dedicated to supporting survivors of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Foundation’s mission is to provide survivors with comprehensive care, including medical treatment, psychosocial support, legal assistance, and economic empowerment programs. By addressing the physical, emotional, and social needs of survivors, the Panzi Foundation aims to help them rebuild their lives and reintegrate into their communities. Since its inception, more than 85,000 women suffering from rape or birth-related complications have been treated by their expert personnel. Additionally, thousands of survivors have benefited from their innovative holistic healing model, which includes medical, psychological, legal, and socio-economic support.

The **Legal Clinic of the Panzi Foundation** is a vital component of this holistic approach. It provides free legal services to anyone who have experienced sexual violence, including legal advice, assistance with filing complaints, and representation in court. This ensures that survivors can seek justice and hold perpetrators accountable.

In addition to legal support, the Legal Clinic plays a crucial role in educating women about their rights and raising awareness about the importance of legal documentation, such as registering children with the civil registry. The Legal Clinic is part of a broader effort to promote the socio-economic reintegration of survivors, offering comprehensive care that includes medical treatment, psychosocial support, and economic empowerment programs.

The work of the Legal Clinic is instrumental in helping survivors rebuild their lives and fostering a sense of justice and dignity within the community. By providing these essential services, the Legal Clinic not only supports individual survivors but also contributes to broader societal change, challenging the culture of impunity and promoting human rights.

Furthermore, the Panzi Foundation's impact extends also beyond immediate care to survivors by engaging in advocacy and awareness campaigns to address the root causes of sexual violence and to promote gender equality. In order to achieve this, the Foundation also collaborates with local and international partners to amplify its efforts and to ensure that survivors receive the support they need to heal and thrive.

Through this comprehensive and compassionate approach, the Panzi Foundation exemplifies a model of holistic care that empowers survivors and fosters resilience within communities affected by conflict and violence.