

Sister Angélique Namaika



Sister Angélique Namaika is a Roman Catholic nun who has been working in the Orientale province in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since 2003. She is the founder and coordinator of the NGO Centre for Reintegration and Development, in the town of Dungu.

Since 2005 Sister Angélique has helped young women and girls who were forcibly displaced and abused by armed groups during the conflict in the area, to build up their lives again. The Centre for Reintegration and Development that she set up in 2008 has so far helped approximately 2,000 women and girls by assisting them to start a small business or go back to school. Many of them had often been ostracized by their families and communities.

The Centre has provided a safe haven, as well as reintegration support, literacy instruction and vocational training. It also serves former child soldiers. Its programs assist former abductees in overcoming their trauma, countering the stigma attached to rape, and rebuilding their lives with newly-learned trades.

The campaign of terror waged by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in the north-east of the DRC created severe and long-lasting trauma for both the abductees and the hundreds of thousands of people still too afraid to return home. An estimated 320,000 people have fled the Orientale province since 2008, in some cases several times, according to a report by the UNHCR and the IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre).

In 2013 Sister Angélique was awarded the Nansen Refugee Award by the UNHCR, for her support to survivors of violence. The Nansen Refugee Award is bestowed to a person or group for outstanding work on behalf of the forcibly displaced.