

Dr. Adelin N'situ explains how his organisation APPS with HNI-TPO came to develop *Action Learning* as a mean of helping marginalized children, women and adolescents with psycho-social problems. Evaluations of previous projects showed that some aspects of life were not covered by the current *mental health* approach.

Psycho-social problems are still hard to bring up in the African context in Congo. A mental health diagnose has a great impact on the whole social environment of that person. He or she is stigmatized as 'crazy'.

Because vulnerable groups need help, HNI TPO and APPS searched for a way to treat these people with mental health problems like depression in a non-stigmatizing way.

Both organisations wanted to involve civil society organisations (CSOs) like churches and schools in their approach. They thought of a multiple discipline approach, so all actors can contribute from their own field to the solution of a person's mental health problem.

APPS acts as *facilitator* of the process while participants are responsible for a contribution. The existing local CSOs collaborate actively to develop a plan together, and to put it in practice together. As a result new and creative solutions for mental health problems occur. By working together, the relations between CSOs become stronger. Also they profit from each other's expertise and experiences.

During the workshop Adelin shows a video with testimonials of local workers about the new approach. They are glad with the training they received to become a *casemanager*. With this new knowledge it is easier to have a good overview on the progression of the cases.

Up till now, a number of lessons learned became clear: Counselors need to be trained well. They need support from their organisation and they need to have enough personal qualities to cope with the challenges as a casemanager. It is a challenge for all partners to keep on working together.