Maman Rose and Jason Hackmann, October 2015

FRONT LINE CONTACTS: DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Synergie des Femmes contre les Violences Sexuelles, based in North Kivu, DR Congo, works tirelessly to give survivors of sexual violence their lives and dignity back through medical care, psychosocial support and legal defense.

With help from Donor Direct Action, philanthropist Jason Hackmann has been able to donate tens of thousands of dollars to support Synergie's work. Jason made a dream come true for Congolese survivor Maman Rose, whom he met while visiting Synergie, by earmarking $2,000 for her seven children and one grandchild to all get through the rest of their school years. Here is Jason's account of meeting Maman Rose:

While visiting Synergie des Femmes, I met a woman called Maman Rose, who had suffered unimaginable atrocities. She and her husband had been working in their field when rebels came and took him away. She later learned that he had been killed. When she went to recover his body, she was raped. Soon after, she and a group of women and men were captured by rebels.

Maman Rose, like the other women, was tied to a tree, beaten and raped again. The rebels burned the men alive and hacked the other women to death with machetes, while Maman Rose was left barely alive. A man found her some days later, still tied to the tree, and he took her to safety. She went back to her village, but discovered she was pregnant. Her husband's family kicked her out of their home, and Maman Rose went to Goma with her children, where her daughter was raped and she too became pregnant.