



## You cannot buy pleasure – but you can buy digital transformation

### Six protestant schools in Congo and Rwanda in search of more empowerment and independence

Six protestant schools from the Congo and Rwanda have been known for their sustainable and successful pedagogy for many years. Now they are tackling a new project. The use of digital media will make students more independent, stronger and more communicative. Unfortunately, this cannot be achieved with a pioneering spirit and zest for life alone.

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Successful and sustainable educators from Congo and Rwanda are aware of the potential of their students. Digitization will play a major role here. For the project, three schools from the Congo and three from Rwanda have joined forces. Above all, training is required, to which local experts from the creative industries are invited. And of course, high-quality media are needed. If only the second choice is used, first-class results can hardly be expected.

Wouldn't Martin Luther be bursting with joy at the thought!

### If you want to read more:

In the district of Majengo the school community is proud of what it has achieved in the megacity of Goma. "We will not let anyone fall," explains Daniel K. Nzughundi. This is an essential principle of his school: "Once you are at the school, as a general rule you get a qualification." What the headmaster of one of the best secondary schools in the North Kivu province is setting out is not a given. Students from other Congolese schools often have to end their school career early because of underperformance.

The secondary school in the eastern part of the Congo exemplifies the educational approaches of the six institutions involved in the project.

The pedagogy at the Majengo Institute is based on a holistic approach. This has also inspired Jackson Kivuyirwa. "I already had a job," says the thirty-five-year-old English teacher, "but I was deeply motivated by their social standards and Christian values." The fact that he has to work hard does not bother him. After all, he has a mission: "It is important to us to inspire the students over and over again."

The teachers in Goma are not alone in this. Education with a view to the development of the community is a precious asset throughout East Africa. The life of Emmanuel Niringiyimana shows where this might lead.

In 2016, the young Rwandan had an idea. He wanted to build a road. He did not have much except his idea. The idea to build a road for his community came to him when he was working in a garden. He saw people struggling to take patients across Murondwe River to Kirinda Hospital because there was no road. Niringiyimana had to borrow hoe and spade. He dug, sweated and burrowed for three years. Today the road is used by all. "I wanted to contribute to the development of my country. Now everyone can benefit from this road", he explains his motive. And by the way: Emmanuel Niringiyimana sees his personal future less in road construction but rather in engineering.



While warmth and common sense in Central and East Africa often seem palpable, financial resources are often in short supply. Unfortunately, money is an everyday challenge. "The other morning there was a knock on my door," says Headmaster Nzughundi, "and my wife come and got me because a mother was standing at the door. She was crying and was in urgent need of financial support to pay her son's tuition. Within the GPENreformation network, there is a huge gap when it comes to financial resources. While school fees at Concordia International School in Shanghai are about \$ 3,000 a month, for some parents in East Africa it's around \$ 30 a year. But even that is a struggle for some. That morning Nzughundi could not get back to sleep. The man who says he is rather strict as a teacher mostly shows his warm-hearted side.

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However, they also know from recent experience: if a road does not exist yet, it just has to be built. Wouldn't Martin Luther be bursting with joy at the thought!



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