

MASTER
EDUCATIONAL
QUALITY
IN DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES



IMPEQ NEWSLETTER

Summer Issue June 2023

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IMPEQ

Educational Quality in Developing Countries

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Dear IMPEQ students,
dear IMPEQ Alumni,
dear friends of the Master's program,

This newsletter comes to give you an update about the activities in the last year.

We are very happy and grateful that due to the funding of Bread for the World, IMPEQ VI will start in September 2023. This IMPEQ program will be a transitional one as we do hope that our partner universities in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo; in Butare, Rwanda, and in Mbo, Cameroon, will take over the program into their own Master Programs starting with IMPEQ VII. There is still a way to get the accreditation of the respective master Programs, and the IMPEQ team is working hard to make the transformation of the program possible.

As the Program of IMPEQ V has been starting later than usual, we will have now for the first time the experience to host the last phase of IMPEQ V and the first phase of IMPEQ VI at the same time. I think this will be a unique peer learning possibility and I am sure that this will be very good experience for all of us.

An important change in the process of IMPEQ is that Dr. Susanne Röss left the program as she got a possibility for a guest professorship in Berlin. Such a position will definitely be a further step in her career. We are happy that Dr. Susanne will come back to IMPEQ in September to finish the mentoring of Master thesis. By this, students do not need to change the mentor at the last meters before submission. A big thank for all the impulses Dr. Susanne gave to the program and all the hard work done.

We welcome Lea Markus to the team of IMPEQ! Lea has already gained experience in IMPEQ during her student time. She holds a Master in education and wrote her Master thesis about how the educational system in Rwanda dealt with the Covid 19 pandemic. She will now continue in the position of the scientific coordination of IMPEQ together with Frederick, Dr. Christine, and Claude. Welcome to the team Lea!

In September, IMPEQ will be 10 years old. This is surely a reason to celebrate! In these 10 years, we achieved a lot. By 2023, IMPEQ has trained over 100 educational leaders from different Sub-Saharan countries -Burundi, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Madagascar, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Zambia -, and realized over 100 in-service training workshops, which reached over 25.000 teachers and principals. As a result, IMPEQ has grown into a very dynamic alumni network that ensures the sustainability of the program's impacts. Six alumni already finished their Ph.D. We are very happy and proud of these achievements. We hope that this newsletter gives another insight into these dynamics in improving educational quality.

Annette Scheunpflug
Bamberg, August 2023



IMPEQ V: PROGRESS AND NOW IT IS COMING TO AN END



The semester in Rwanda was the last meeting of the IMPEQ V students before the final semester in Bamberg. Students from Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Zambia have experienced a semester in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

May 2022, marked the official kick start of the IMPEQ V learning journey that will come to an official end in September 2023. The IMPEQ V cohort that comprises of 21 students (10 women and 11 men) drawn from 4 different countries (Rwanda, DRC, Cameroon and Zambia) has shown commitment and dedication in progressing along as a group. Before presenting the level of progress so far, the navigation of the students through different periods of attendance and modules is first described.

Learning journey

This learning journey has followed the IMPEQ blended learning programme, which combines six periods of attendance, four face-to-face (in Rwanda and Germany)

and two online/hybrid, with online mentoring and self-study. During the first attendance period in May/June 2022, the students learnt and reflected on questions connected to the debate on the framework of educational quality and scientific writing and documentation covered in four Modules; 1, 2, 3 and 6. From these modules, they gained an introductory understanding of theories and scientific discourses on educational quality (Module 3). The systematic dimensions on normativity of education was explored with narratives linked to diversity of relations including theories of religious and secular foundations of schooling and what this means for schools in development cooperation and for the glo-

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bal society (Modules 1 and 2). The students also deepened their knowledge about science, different forms of knowledge alongside the role of self-organization and time management in academic and professional engagements (Module 6). Besides the afore-mentioned regular modules, students were introduced to the virtual campus of the University of Bamberg, IT support, library and general support from members of the Chair of Foundations in Education at the University of Bamberg and the support team at PIASS all of which facilitated the adaptation to the IMPEQ rhythm. Through the visit Wittenberg, the town of Martin Luther and also to Bread for the World head office in Berlin, students enriched and expanded their horizon in development cooperation. Students equally experienced learning in a hybrid setting as a few students who could not obtain the visa to Germany actively joined from PIASS. Between the first and second periods of attendance, students received online mentoring, constructive feedback and coaching while writing their papers.

HOW TO DEVELOP QUALITY IN CLASSROOM

The second attendance in Rwanda in September-October 2022 explored specific situations of developing quality and the understanding of the philosophy of science, studied in four modules: 4, 7, 8 and 9. Through Module 4, students explored and gained the understanding of developing quality in the classroom, while module 9 enhanced the competences of system quality development and how to bring about change. Related aspects to school quality development and global social justice such as inclusion, digitalization in education, democracy and peace education, added value and opened the debate on different aspects of shaping the quality of education in precarious context. This stay also provided the opportunity for students to deepen on academic writing and documentation and differentiate between various approaches to scientific research as well as explore evaluation and system monitoring (Modules 7 and 8).



Activities that required active participation during the lessons not only kept the students interested, but also provided them with material that they could use in their own lessons.

All of the four modules provided a strong foundation for the take-off in the writing of Master thesis for which students reflected the first ideas on the subject, research questions and research approach for their thesis. The third study period in January 2022, organized online by zoom addressed quality in school system levels in the framework of theories of educational quality (Module 5) and school quality development in difficult conditions (Module 10). This was also a period for intensive writing workshop. IMPEQ students based on Module 5 gained the competence to understand the function of different system levels of education (early childhood,

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Students learned new techniques and skills through the “learning by doing” method and demonstrated their competences in all lessons.

primary, secondary, vocational and higher education) and how to shape quality at each of the levels. They have equally understood and realised important factors of interplay that influence quality such as transitions, retention, repetition and school drop-out and how to deal with them in appropriate way as well as the basis of monitoring educational quality. As Module 10 dealt with issues of school development in difficult conditions, students gained the understanding from research on school development in the unstable environments of Sub-Saharan Africa. (e.g. schools in difficult or unstable environments) and addressed the challenges of providing quality education in these circumstances. The debate on

developing non-state faith-based schools and leadership under difficult conditions was deeply explored and the students are able to criticise, judge and/or evaluate different development priorities in different contexts. Through this module also, students have gained competences to discursively reflect on professional leadership and leadership responsibilities, giving a school a mission, the importance of communication and constructive, evidence-based feedback and how to connect these with own professional context.

During the fourth period of attendance in March 2023 in Rwanda, teaching included Modules 12 and 13 as well as the oral exam for Module 11 and writing workshop/counseling for Master thesis (Module 15). Module 11 connects

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IMPEQ V: PROGRESS AND NOW IT IS COMING TO AN END

the scientific discourse on quality education from the competences in all the modules to students' professional experiences. It enables students to integrate and assess their experiences in light of the knowledge acquired during their studies as well as critically and discursively reflect how to bring about change. The exam also evaluates students' ability to argue between different rationalities such as educational science, educational policy, religion, and everyday life and their specific linguistic registers.

NEW CONCEPTS FOR TEACHER TRAINING

Module 12 was concerned with theory and practice of project planning, presentation, and evaluation. It gives students the opportunity to gain experience and skills by developing a project on school quality and considering the project results based on the concept of learning by researching. On the other hand, in Module 13 students plan a project on quality development in schools, such as a small research project, a concept for teacher trainings, the organization of a specialist conference, the creation of a communication platform on quality development, the development of a documentary or the scientific guidance of a school development project. The project plan considers aspects such conceptualization, output and outcome objectives, didactical plan, evaluation and financial planning. The project can also be used as an intervention for the MA thesis. After the implementation, the project report would be written as Module 14 that is not taught.

FINAL STAY IN BAMBERG

The fifth stay, in July 2023 is organized as face-to-face study groups and supported by face-to-face and online mentoring, is dedicated for the writing retreat of the master thesis. During this stay, lessons from the writing workshop are reflected in the writing process, taking into consideration different aspects such as the structure of the Master thesis and the understanding of the purpose of each chapter. The sixth and final stay is planned for September 2023 in Germany during which students would submit the thesis. This is also the period to celebrate the milestone of accomplishing the learning journey through a symposium and graduation.



IMPEQ students are performing various learning practices.

Almost all IMPEQ students have successfully completed and validated Modules 1 to 13. All IMPEQ V students succeeded in the written exams (Module 4) and oral exams (Modules 4, 8 and 11). All the students who have completed seminar papers (Modules 5, 6, 7, 9 and 12), portfolio (Modules 2 and 10) and project plan (module 13) have passed. The execution of projects is ongoing to be reported in Module 14 by June while the collection of data for MA thesis is ongoing and expected to be completed by June. This means that in July, students focus on writing the master thesis. It is worth noting that all the IMPEQ V students have worked very hard and on record time, ensuring that no one is left behind in spite of the challenging context of war and natural disasters in the context where most of them work and function. The consistent system of mentoring by the IMPEQ team and various mentors described as the IMPEQ power bank alongside peer support has contributed significantly. The same commitment and results are hoped for during the writing of the MA thesis (Module 15). These milestones registered so far are recognized with encouragement while anticipating the ultimate celebration in September 2023 for the completion of the learning journey. *By Frederick Njobati, reporting from Bamberg*



FROM THE EYES OF STUDENTS

LEARNING IN A PEACEFUL ENVIRONMENT IS THE KEY TO EFFICIENT EDUCATION

While the IMPEQ is in full swing, the last semester of study in Rwanda in March satisfied all students, Kaunda Mambwe and Makarios Ngantchui Fandio, have shared their observations and impressions of the busy period for the newsletter:

As the adage goes, 'No pain no gain' so was the March teaching in Rwanda. It was a tiring but very fruitful semester. So packed was the semester that students were killing two birds with one stone, working on the seminar papers, and attending lectures. The teaching during the stay was interactive and encouraged active participation. The most intriguing part was the daily individual mentoring by different mentors. This was very fruitful in that it enhanced student development by tapping into the knowledge and experience of the different mentors. The mentors not only supported and provided constructive feedback to the students but also advised and helped them to define and reach their goals.

EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

The meeting in Rwanda enabled the students to reunite once again. The social interactions, working in groups, and spending time with fellow students were very beneficial. The learning environment was conducive. It allowed the free exchange of ideas, thoughts, and skills among mentors and students. The condition of the hostels, as well as the classrooms, was suitable for learning. The classrooms had sufficient space, good lighting, clear acoustics, high air quality, and a balanced temperature. The high internet quality was just superb. The hospitality of the people at PIASS was excellent and as students, we felt at home.

PREPERATION FOR THE THESIS

During the March semester, the able IMPEQ team of lecturers and mentors led three more modules in their usual jovial but serious mood. Such that before the end of the stay all the students had come a long way with clear topics for the Master's thesis, comprehensible research questions, and definite research methods. Claude's unique way of teaching created an open envi-



Group discussions is a vital part of the learning during Rwanda stay.

ronment that let us as students feel at ease communicating and being involved in PC colloquium and Power-Point presentations as we honed our presentations on how to apply the knowledge learned in our respective work capacities.

HEART-STOPPING EXPERIENCE

Generally, the semester was a success but for a somber moment when one of the students got heavily sick. Fortunately, the swift intervention of the IMPEQ team managed to keep the situation under control.

Finally, the visits to Rwanda would have been incomplete without taking a pilgrimage to the memorial centre of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Possibly one of the darkest, starkest, grimmest, most shocking sites I have ever seen is the Murambi genocide. The experience is heart-stopping, gut-wrenching but awesome at the same time. By Kaunda Mambwe, reporting from Zambia



FROM THE EYES OF STUDENTS

FINALLY, A SMALL LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL



Hawks circling in the sky, sparrows flying around, white crows standing on branches and roofs, a gentle autumn breeze blowing through the air and people whispering a melodious language. Students of the Impeq V cohort are gathered again in Huye on 2 March 2023 for the 3rd attendance. Dr. Christine Nyiramana's smile is reassuring and Frederick Njobati's composed but cheerful mood indicates that things would get serious again. It was a happy moment to see each other after the last stay in September/October 2022.

MOTIVATION FOR WRITING

The welcome ceremony with the IMPEQ and PIASS team was solemn and cordial. For 25 days, three modules and preparatory writing sessions for the Master's thesis were scheduled. This was another marathon session. Both Njobati and Nyiramana set the ball rolling, with the accompaniment of mentors from IMPEQ alumni at PIASS. Claude Ernest Njoya led the PC colloquium on PowerPoint presentation in his usual jovial and serious mood. The teaching sessions were generally very practical, productive, and concrete as each student came up with drafts of seminar papers and workshop projects. The stay was punctuated by a visit to the Murambi genocide memorial, 26 km from Huye. Louise Ohlig's pedagogical techniques helped the group to face the harsh reality of the genocide and to draw lessons for peaceful coexistence and peace education.

The second part of the stay, under the supervision of Dr. Susanne Röss, was devoted to the exercise and preparation of the Master's thesis writing. Her direct and rigorous approach was a source of motivation. Mentoring was brilliantly provided by the 'female power bank' of IMPEQ alumni, consisting of Dr. Semerita Kamundu, Sitima Joyce, Jusline Kavugho, and Siberi Kivatsi. In the end, the output was satisfactory: clear research topics, precise research questions, sharpened research tools, and well-elaborated workshop projects.

SUPPORT FOR ALL

During the last part of the stay, Prof. Dr. Annette Scheunpflug completed the teaching team. Her presence accelerated the steam towards the PowerPoint presentation exam of module 11 that closed the Huye Impeq V session. Overall, it was another intensive session that ended with a little light at the end of the tunnel of the IMPEQ V journey.

Despite the health problems of some students, nobody was left behind as the students continuously supported each other in the form of a learning community. On a cold and drizzling Sunday morning, 26 March 2023, we said goodbye to Huye, Rwanda, and shared the message, see you in Bamberg, Germany coming September. *By Makarios Ngantchui Fandio, reporting from Cameroon*



FROM THE EYES OF MENTORS

MENTORING: AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF IMPEQ TRAINING

The students' biggest supporters during their hard work were their mentors. Essaw Samgwa'a (P.9-10) and Jusline Kavugho Madirisha (P.11), who are also IMPEQ alumni, have written about their experiences for the newsletter.



Mentors, who were themselves students a few years ago, spend time with students outside of classes, discussing their difficulties and helping them learn. As it has been experienced in previous years, mentors stand out as people that students feel more comfortable talking to and asking questions about things they find difficult to understand.

Training in the International Master Programme of Educational Quality (IMPEQ) requires that students take ownership of their learning. Consequently, they need individual support and mentoring, which has been proven scientifically to be an effective and quality method of meeting the needs of learners in a heterogeneous setting. Mentoring is the 'neurons' that help IMPEQ students connect the different modules which constitute the IMPEQ pack. It is an effective way to improve and enhance students' learning through repetition. In the IMPEQ learning journey, therefore, mentoring is exceedingly beneficial for students as they seek ways to improve their assignment writing, meet deadlines, and navigate themselves through the requirements of the different modules.

IMPORTANCE OF WORKING WITH MENTORS

Mentoring in IMPEQ provides students with the support they need to progress in their learning journey and

gives them the much-needed thrust to reach their full potential. It helps to enhance confidence in the students and prepares them not only for exams but for the increasingly transformational workplace demands as well. Through the mentoring process, students can have a clearer path to set and achieve their goals. Working with mentors in IMPEQ helps students to develop a more nuanced understanding of concepts and theories of educational quality, to have a clearer and more focused perspective in the process of constructing knowledge, and building competencies. In the mentoring process, thus, students acquire interpersonal and collective problem-solving skills as they benefit from a shared repertoire of knowledge.

According to the Canadian self-help author and lecturer, Bob Proctor, "A mentor is someone who sees more talent and ability within you, than you see in yourself, and helps bring it out of you." A good mentor, consequently,

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FROM THE EYES OF MENTORS

MENTORING: AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF IMPEQ TRAINING

guide students to attain their full achievement levels by assessing where they are against their objectives and looking for gaps in their skills and experiences that are holding them back. In IMPEQ training, the visible gap is observed in the area of abstracting the understanding of theories and concepts and situations through scientific writing. Mentoring is the oil that lubricates students' preparation for the evaluation of their learning achievements. Students, therefore, need support through concise advice about how to close those gaps within the context of the knowledge already acquired in the studies.

MY EXPERIENCES WORKING WITH MENTORS AS A STUDENT

The IMPEQ programme opened a new horizon crowded with anxiety and uncertainty when it became evident that embracing new pedagogic concepts was to be the one way and the only way out. It was then that the power of mentoring became irreversible as it prepared me to embrace with confidence, things that were hitherto strange to me such as "Portfolio" and "Seminar paper". Throughout my years as an IMPEQ student (September 2017 to July 2019), I worked very closely with mentors both in-person and online. The different mentoring sessions provided a window where effective repetition and consolidation of material learned was possible.

Thus, it was the mentoring experience that helped shape my reflection vis-à-vis assignments, written/oral exams, seminar papers, portfolios, projects, integration of work experience into the IMPEQ training, and finally the quality of my Master Thesis, which is published in the IMPEQ monograph series (New Perspectives on Quality Education in Sub Saharan Africa). Through prompts, exchanges, and repetition from different perspectives, my reasoning was finetuned in the path of scientific abstraction. Then, I was able to abstract my experiences and understanding of concepts and situations as I integrated into the world of scientific writing.

WHAT THE MENTORING EXPERIENCE BRING TO ME

Learning is a continuous process, just as my mentoring experience has been a learning experience. The mentoring experience filled a void during my training days, which I am only seeing now, and recalibrated my focus toward the pursuit of quality teaching and leadership. I have learned the art of active listening and effective communication, which are embedded in effective mentoring. Hence, the process of assisting students to circumvent the different challenges related to their studies has sharpened my listening, communication, leadership, problem-solving, and analytical skills.

FEEDBACK IS INVALUABLE

My ability to reflectively perceive things from different perspectives is because of my interactions with students from diverse backgrounds and abilities as a mentor either through one-on-one mentoring or group mentoring. Within the frame of my practice, feedback is invaluable. My *modus operandi* is rooted in the experiences that I have built as a mentor in IMPEQ and what such experiences mean is what informs my professional life as a teacher, a secondary school principal, and a teacher trainer.

TOWARDS SOCIAL CAPITAL

REINFORCEMENT THROUGH MENTORING

Leveraging mentoring to nurture collaboration and connection can create an increased sense of belonging, thereby reinforcing social capital, which is essential for practice. And so, building networks with students, mentors, and teachers within the IMPEQ circle and beyond is a visible fruit of my participation in IMPEQ as a mentor. My interactions with other mentors have been invaluable in supporting my own career development and have made me better equipped to support the learning of my students. Besides, planning together and sharing reflected feedback on the peculiar challenges of individual students in the mentors' conclave has proven to be vital not only for the students but equally for the mentors. By



Essaw Samgwa'a, reporting from Cameroon

FROM THE EYES OF MENTORS

MENTORING: SHARING EXPERIENCES, OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES TOGETHER

The first moment of attendance at any school level is a delicate period as the learners have to face new and complex situations. They are subjected to new teaching and learning strategies and different methods of performing tasks. Quality education wants the learner to be individually supported to improve the competencies development. Thus, one of the criteria of quality education is individual support of the learner linked to the diagnosis of knowledge and competencies, the freedom of choice, and diversification of tasks as well as constructive feedback. It's the role of mentoring to check the above responsibilities.

FOLLOW-UP IS THE KEY

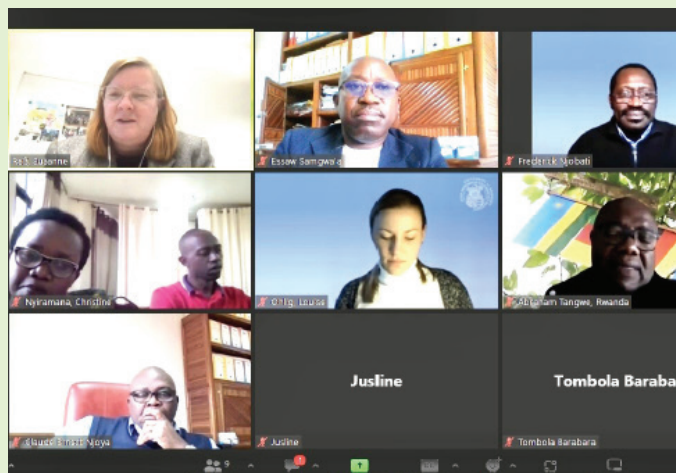
Indeed, mentoring is an activity to lead and help learners in competencies acquisition related to content and domains. It usually plays a dual role as both the learner and the mentor complete and improve knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In mentoring, constructive feedback, clarifications, diagnosis, and follow-up related to the targeted competencies form the basis of activities.

WHAT ARE THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS?

Learners have enough time of expressing themselves about what they already know, what they can do, and the need for clarification and improvement. In this way, mentoring fills the gaps related to insufficient understanding of the contents, the process of competencies development, and task completion. In my mentoring experiences, the needs of the students are related to the process of completing the tasks and how to find specific solutions to their learning problems.

DEFINING THE STRENGTHS

Before IMPEQ, my studies were characterised by ineffective and inefficient mentoring. In the case of the follow-up in the realization of scientific or other tasks, the supervisors should inform me about what was wrongly done without specifying my strengths and the strategies for improvement. Also, sometimes the text did not contain any remarks, and orally, nothing was said. So I



Before their assignments, the mentors were briefed in detail by the IMPEQ management, as well as having discussions amongst themselves to share their past experiences and discuss what needs to be done.

was the one to reflect alone on what I should consider an improved version of my tasks. In ignorance of the power of the professional learning community, I should ask my colleagues what was to be done.

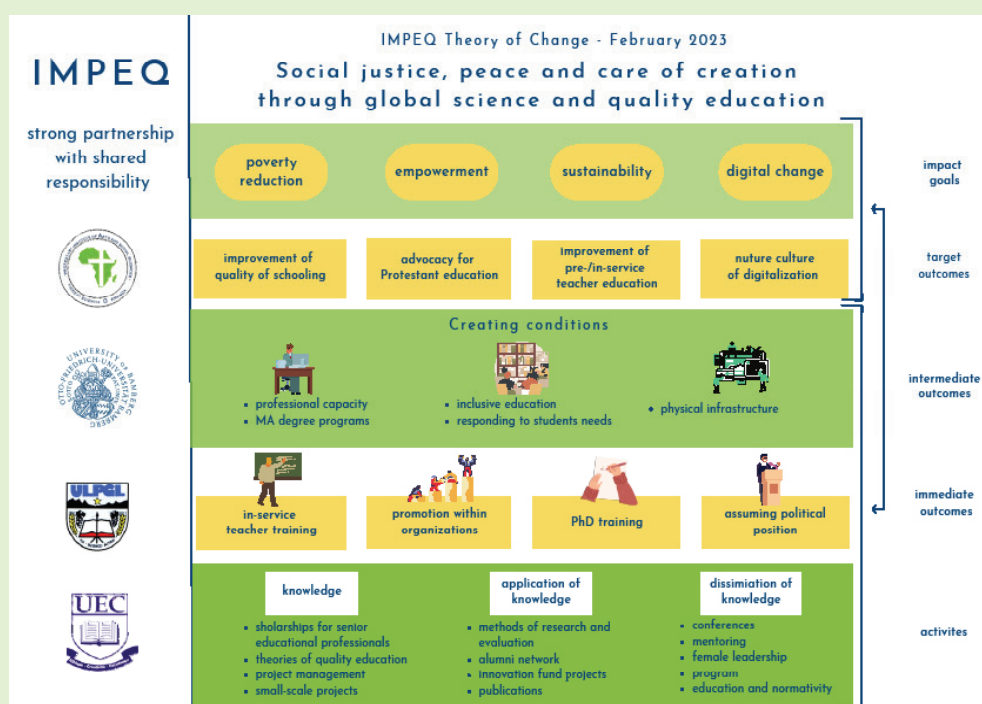
LEARNING WHILE MENTORING

With the mentoring experiences in IMPEQ, I have learned that by respecting the indicators of the individual support of learners, the implication of good learning for change is visible. The opportunities of IMPEQ have helped me to develop and improve competencies in many ways and domains related to mentorship. So nowadays my experience is the discussion related to freedom in the choice of works and constructive feedback. In this way, it is the student who starts the mentoring session by showing in a general way what will be discussed, and specifically the needs for improvement. Mentoring is productive when the student interacts and takes responsibility for his learning for change. *By Jusline Kavugho Madirisha, reporting from DRC*



IMPEQ THEORY OF CHANGE

In 2023, IMPEQ celebrates its 10th anniversary and the proud achievement of over 100 graduates. It also starts the 6th cohort of the program. Therefore, it was time to refine and describe the work of IMPEQ in a systematic way. The IMPEQ team with the help of a student assistant from the Chair of Foundations in Education at Bamberg University developed a graphic that explains IMPEQ's theory of change (See graphic). Overall, IMPEQ contributes to social justice, peace, and care of creation through global science and quality education



tion through a strong partnership with shared responsibilities among the four universities: PIASS, ULPGL, UEC, and UNIBA. To achieve this overall objective, IMPEQ organizes activities for the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge through scholarships to senior educational professionals funded by Bread for the World, quality education projects during and after the MA program (i.e., Module 14, Innovation Fund), mentoring, workshops, female leadership platform, scientific publications (e.g., IMPEQ monograph series), and network events (e.g., conferences). After their participation in the IMPEQ program, alumni continue to organize in-service trainings for teachers and headteachers. They are promoted within their organizations, assume political positions and some carry on with a PhD training (immediate outcomes). As a consequence, IMPEQ alumni help create the conditions for quality education through professional capacity building in science and

project management, inclusive education, improving physical infrastructures, and the nurturing of cultures of change and digitalization (intermediate outcomes). IMPEQ alumni target the improvement of the quality of schooling in their countries, advocate for Protestant education, improve pre-/in-service teacher training, and nurture cultures of change and digitalization (targeted outcomes). The overall impact that IMPEQ aims to achieve includes poverty reduction, empowerment, sustainability, and digital change (impact goals). IMPEQ's theory of change highlights the diversity of IMPEQ activities and outcomes. It also serves as an appreciation of the many hands and minds that have been contributing to IMPEQ achievements over the past ten years, expressing the commitment and hope for the next ten years. *By Dr. Susanne Röss, reporting from Bamberg*



SELECTION OF IMPEQ VI CANDIDATES AND WELCOME TO THE NEW COHORT



Officials from universities and institutions working in partnership for IMPEQ have held meetings to assess the impact of the program.

At the beginning of 2023, between January and March, the IMPEQ Steering Committee with support from the IMPEQ team has selected the incoming students for the 6th cohort of the IMPEQ program, which will start in September 2023 with anticipated graduation in 2025. The call for applications for the 6th IMPEQ cohort was opened in November 2022. The extended application deadline was 28.02.2023. In total, IMPEQ received 116 applications from 13 countries including Bangladesh, Burundi, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mexico, Nigeria, Tanzania, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Zambia. The majority of applications came from Rwanda (31%), the DRC (29%), and Cameroon (19%). From this rich pool of applicants, the Steering Committee selected 23 students from seven countries. The IMPEQ team is delighted to share that more than 50 percent of the selected students are female (n=13). Four additional candidates have been selected for the waiting list. In the coming four semesters, students will study together intensively to learn about indicators, principles, and strategies of

quality education in schools, universities, and at the system level. Over the coming four semesters, during a total of five mandatory periods of attendance organized in Germany, Rwanda, and online, students will reflect on normativity and education with a special focus on the Protestant profile of education. They will discuss how to translate their ideas of quality and change into classroom practices and effective leadership approaches. They will ponder over questions of classroom discipline, communication, learner-centered teaching approaches, pre-concepts of numeracy and literacy, and many other aspects that are central to the enhancement of quality in education. The students will immerse themselves in research methodologies, time management, and work organization, and theories of change to create projects and finally write a Master thesis on a topic related to quality education. We are excited to celebrate this new cohort of students and are looking forward to their important work. Please join us in welcoming the new students! *By Dr. Susanne Röss, reporting from Bamberg*

IMPEQ VI INTEGRATES NEW MA PROGRAMS AT PIASS, ULPGL AND UEC

The International Master Program in Educational Quality for Developing Countries (IMPEQ), which is a joint Master offered by the University of Bamberg in cooperation with three universities in Africa (PIASS in Rwanda, ULPGL in DRC and UEC in Cameroon), have been operational since 2013. The funding has mainly been through a scholarship scheme offered by BMZ and Bread for the World. By September 2023, IMPEQ will register its tenth anniversary and having graduated over 100 students in five cohorts. IMPEQ VI that follows from September 2023 shall mark the last cohort in this scheme and more importantly it will prepare the transition into three Master Degree programs in the three partner universities in Africa.

Transformation process for the MA programs

This transformation is based on the understanding that from 2025 onwards, adequate local expertise would have been trained in the problematic sub-Saharan Africa region. The transition strategy has the vision for sustainability and will facilitate the offer of three quality Master's Studies Programs in education at the level African universities that comprise of the following:

University	Title of the MA program
Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS), Rwanda	Master of Education in Educational Quality Management (MEQUAM)
Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs (ULPGL), DRC	Master in Education, Leadership and Sustainable Development (MAELD)
Université Évangélique du Cameroun (UEC)	Master in Education, Peace and Sustainable Development (MEPSD)

While the Master at PIASS (MEQUAM) would mainly be the continuation of the existing IMPEQ modules, MAELD at ULPGL and MEPSD at UEC would be respectively developed towards "leadership" and "peace and sustainability". In order to facilitate the integration process of these MA programs in IMPEQ VI, a Technical Committee had been created by the IMPEQ Steering Committee to take charge of this development. This committee meets regularly and has as resource person, Prof. Dr. Annette Scheunpflug, with representatives from the three Universities, PIASS,

ULPGL and UEC as well as the IMPEQ coordination team. Besides the follow-up to ensure that the MA programs commence together with IMPEQ VI, this committee also reviews the wider strategy in regards to the conceptual framework, management and collaboration. Conceptual framework for the master's programs

The framework that guides the conceptualization of the Masters at the three universities addresses what is necessary to shape both quality and sustainability. Therefore, these MA programs try to reflect a long term plan with further aspects of cooperation. With respect to the quality dimension, each of the Master needs to have a complexity in the conceptualization and structuring of modules. Even though the three MA programs are different in focus, there would be cross-cutting modules such as those connected to research, measurement and documentation, project management and foundations to quality education. This therefore requires collaboration amongst the three universities on how to effectively teach such modules jointly.

NEXT STEPS

By understanding the conceptual framework and content of the Masters, other aspects such the module credit systems, forms of certification, financial calculations for students' individual fees and measures for quality control are progressively being developed. The fruition of the three MA-programs would be a great milestone for IMPEQ. This requires a speed up of preparations at the individual universities and close collaboration amongst themselves and the University of Bamberg to establish a structured foundation. The platform for collaboration is also expected to address aspects such as perspectives of online teaching/learning, library management support, digital platforms, zoom facilities, and orientation in information and communication technology. Envisaged in this collaboration is also room to source for different forms of bursaries. The end of IMPEQ VI would therefore mark the wishful birth of three MA programs captioned under "IMPEQ VII". By Frederick Njobati, reporting from Bamberg

NEW AT UEC: MASTER IN EDUCATION, PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

As part of the ongoing search for quality education in developing countries, IMPEQ's partner universities have decided to integrate the various Master's programmes. To this end, following the guidelines of the IMPEQ steering committee, prior technical work has made it possible to agree on a number of important aspects, including the structure and content of the Master's programme, the timetable and stages of its implementation, and the issue of certification. It is in this context that UEC has decided to set up a Master's degree in Education, Peace and Sustainable Development (MEPSD). The present article outlines the planning of this Master's programme, highlighting its presentation, what it consists of, the specific aspects of quality that it covers, and its future prospects. The UEC Master's programme is mainly structured around three themes, namely Education, Peace and Sustainable Development (EPSD). The programme is aimed at students at Bachelor level. In its description, it consists of three main parts: (1) the general profile of the course, (2) the teaching schedule, and (3) the course description. As with any training programme, it is open to improvement and can therefore be modified in line with scientific and technical advances.

As far as the general profile of the course is concerned, it is a blended course which should combine academics and professionalism. Its objectives are to enable students, at the end of their course, to: develop academic and professional skills, acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to intervene effectively in a professional environment dedicated to education, conflict management and the promotion of sustainable development, and finally to use their abilities to set up and manage projects linked to the development of educational resources and the promotion of peace and sustainable development. To achieve these objectives, a combination of approaches will be used to teach the topics in each module: lectures, tutorials and self-study. The different types of work will be carried out individually and/or in groups.

The examination system is designed to be adapted to the

specificities of each teaching unit. Students will be examined orally or in writing, whether it is a diagnostic, formative, summative or certificative assessment. It is expected that the exams will take place either face-to-face or at a distance.

Concerning the certification, the Master degree in Education, Peace and Sustainable Development of the Evangelical University of Cameroon is delivered by the Ministry of Higher Education of Cameroon. The respect of the training standards is controlled and if necessary adjusted by the State University of Yaoundé 1 through the Higher Teacher Training College which ensures the supervision in accordance with the regulations in force.

About the courses, the Master in Education, Peace and Sustainable Development consists of 12 modules that will be taught in four semesters: one in semester 1, three in semester 2, five in semester 3 and three in semester 4. As for the content of the courses, the modules that are related to Education have been borrowed from the IMPEQ Master and are intended to be taught transversally with PIASS and ULPGL. These are: Theories of Educational Quality, Measuring and Documentation, and Project Modules. The modules on Peace are specific to UEC: these modules cover the Dimensions of Peace, the Complexity of Peace and the Culture of Peace. As far as the Sustainable Development dimension is concerned, UEC has already developed all the related modules: Background and Evolution of Development, Theories of Development, History of Sustainable Development, and Foundations of Sustainable Development. It remains to work with ULPGL to examine their transversality.

In conclusion, it is important to underline that in order to hope for an effective start of this programme after the IMPEQ VI cohort, it is essential to overcome the two main challenges that the UEC Master is currently facing: the allocation of courses to appropriate teachers and funding. *By Claude Ernest Njoya, reporting from Cameroon*



IMPEQ TRANSFORMING TO MAELD AT ULPGL GOMA, DRC

Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs (ULPGL) Goma, which is in close collaboration with the University of Bamberg for IMPEQ, is launching a new master's program called "Master's for Education, Leadership and Sustainable Development" (MAELD) for the continuation of IMPEQ.

CONTEXT AND MOTIVATION

For more than five years, ULPGL in the DRC jointly with the University of Bamberg in Germany, the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Science (PIASS) in Rwanda, and the Evangelical University of Cameroon (UEC) has maintained a partnership around the international Master's program in Quality Education in Developing Countries. More than 100 laureates have benefited from training from 12 African countries including the DRC, Rwanda, and Cameroon, and are resources that contribute to education in their respective countries and the world through teaching, research, management of education systems, and education projects.

The different cohorts of IMPEQ have benefited from the financial support of the German partners Bread for the World and DAAD under the coordination of the University of Bamberg and PIASS. In order to promote the visibility of the program and the partners involved, a master's program from each of the aforementioned institutions is envisaged. This will lead to the launch of an IMPEQ VII master which will have to operate at PIASS before the launch of IMPEQ VII at ULPGL Goma. In the specific context of ULPGL Goma, a Master's Degree in education, leadership and sustainable development (MAELD) will be organized, the description of which will cover the training, the profile of the students, supporting faculty, research framework, and necessary finances to guarantee the sustainability of the programme.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MAELD

The Master in Education, Leadership and Sustainable Development (IMPEQ VII) will be launched in 2024 at ULPGL Goma with local human resources available and

others from partner universities of the IMPEQ program. Through this program, it will be possible to develop the skills in the education system, leadership and sustainability that society needs for its development. This training appears as a response to the context of the Great Lakes region, particularly that of the eastern part of the DRC marked by a lack of qualified resources following the recurrent armed conflicts having an impact on the education system in its entirety, together.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Provide candidates with in-depth knowledge and skills in education, leadership and sustainable development,
- Make available qualified resources working in the education sector,
- Contribute to the sustainable development of the Great Lakes region and sub-Saharan Africa through quality education and pedagogical innovation,
- Promote research in the field of education, leadership and sustainable development in order to evaluate the processes of change in the education system in developing countries such as the DRC.

THE DURATION AND CREDITS OF THE PROGRAM

For four semesters, students will undergo a program of 120 credits to be validated before obtaining a Master of Arts degree which will be issued by the Ministry of Education. It was proposed during the meeting of the technical committee of January 04, 2023 that a scientific and educational committee be set up which will have to supervise all its programs in order to ensure the quality of the training in accordance with the standards of the University of Bamberg. Another problem was revealed, namely that related to the disparity in the values of the credits according to the universities. Harmonization on this subject is necessary in accordance with international standards.

LIBRARY, RESEARCH AND TEACHING

Beyond the virtual library, which remains a necessity, it will be necessary to strengthen the documentary funds

Continued Page 17

IMPEQ TRANSFORMING TO MAELD AT ULPGL GOMA, DRC

available at ULPGL Goma. This will not only facilitate research but also mobility within the region and beyond. Candidates for the program will also be able to benefit from online teaching through multimedia devices available at ULPGL benefiting from the contribution of the digitalization of the teaching program funded by Bread for the World and the DAAD. Considering that the program is scheduled to start in 2024, there is a need for the renewal of the projects financed by Bread for the World and the DAAD. The need here is for the development of infrastructure (rooms available) and internet and electrical connection devices. The teachers, who will be involved in this program, must first benefit from pedagogical preparation (continuing education) in order to adapt and effectively support the students. Students as well as teachers will benefit from teaching and research mobility in the university network of RUPA in order to facilitate learning through international exchanges and the exploitation of the resources available in the diversified contexts.

PROGRAM PROFILE

Future students of the MAELD-program will have the acquire skills in particular:

- Management of classes and staff in primary, secondary and vocational education (EPSP) focused on quality education;
- Education planning from primary level to university as well as vocational education;
- Develop leadership skills focused on quality education for sustainable development,
- Practice management focused on non-violent communication in the workplace
- Develop strategies to circumvent the impact of armed conflict on education,
- Develop the culture of peace and conflict resolution in a context of participatory governance.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The rector of the university Prof. Dr. Joseph Wasso Misona, and academic secretary general Prof. Dr. Kennedy Kihangi Bindu will be in charge of the programme.



ULPGL Goma and its team is ready for a new Master's Program called "MAELD" which will be a successor of IMPEQ.

Teaching staff from the university will be Ass. Prof. Kavira Kamundu Semerita, Ass. Prof. Muhindo Binzaka Roger and Tcheusi Sadiki Françoise.

Other than internal staff, there will be external teaching personnel, too. In this regard, IMPEQ laureates from the DRC; Dr. Jean Kasereka Lutswamba, doctoral students Eraste Kakule Bulaya Jumapili and John Tombola Barabara, Rosy Kyakimwe Kaliki, Gérard Kasereka Tuvere, Pierre Murhula Kaheto will teach different modules. From Rwanda Dr. Christine Nyirimana, Dr. Abraham Tangwe and doctoral student Emmanuel Niyibizi will join. From Cameroon doctoral students Claude Njoya and Frederick Njobati and from Madagascar Dr. Onja Tiana Raharijaona will share their expertise as the need arises. *By Prof. Dr. Kavira Semerita Kamundu, reporting from the DRC*



WORKSHOP

PERSPECTIVES ON QUALITY EDUCATION IN PUBLIC TERTIARY EDUCATION IN THE DRC

With financial support from “Bread for the World”, a workshop has been organized in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for Teacher Training College staff. Pierre Murhula Kaheto, IMPEQ alumni of 2017, and currently Rector of UBC-Goma (Universite Baptiste au Congo/Goma), a protestant church-based university, organized the event in the TTC (Teachers’ Training College) ISP-Bukavu, in DRC.

LACK OF COMPETENCIES

Five TTCs were invited to attend the workshop on cognitive activation by complex tasks as a tool to enhance teaching quality in DRC. This topic was chosen regarding the reports by the World Bank which have mentioned the lack of competencies in the Congolese education system. Research has shown that even though there is access to education, the quality of education is still critical; deteriorating at all levels (World Bank, 2005; 2015). Being aware of the great role of teachers in education; teachers play a determining role in helping students to learn (Dembelé & Gauthier, 2004) thus teachers should consider themselves as having a great impact on students’ learning; as they are the main positive change agents for students (Hattie, 2012).

THE ROLE OF TEACHERS

The great role of the teacher is to help students gain competencies hence education quality being aware that TTCs are responsible for both basic teacher training and in-service teacher training, I notice it is worth training TTC teachers first who have a great impact in both tertiary and secondary education in DRC. The TTC Bukavu is one of the biggest teachers’ training colleges in the DRC, which started in 1954 and has been training secondary school teachers in 10 different departments: mathematics, physics, chemistry, commercial sciences, computer sciences, history, biology, French, English, and tourism.

Pierre Murhula Kaheto, a TTC graduate himself, noticed that TTC Bukavu may help to enhance students’ competencies to reach quality teaching in the DRC. 23 persons have attended the workshop among them seven professors, six



doctorate researchers, and seven senior lecturers. The participants were from TTC Bukavu, TTC Uvira, TTC Kaziba, TTC Walungu, TTC Kabare, and TTC Idjwi. Participants in the workshop were very happy to discover IMPEQ, quality teaching criteria, complex tasks and their usefulness in teaching, some cognitive methods, and the conception of complex tasks in their teaching-learning process. Being at the early stage of the LMD System (Bachelor-Master-PhD), the participants have recommended to TTC Bukavu to start a long-term project of in-service university and teacher training for the whole DRC because it is highly needed to strengthen teaching quality in the DRC.

THANKS TO IMPEQ

The Secretary of General Academics at TTC Bukavu, who participated actively in the workshop, has mentioned his satisfaction regarding IMPEQ programme which he thinks is a suitable way to enhance students’ competencies and therefore teaching quality in DRC. Professor Bapolisi Bahuga Paulin, the General Secretary in charge of research at TTC Bukavu, congratulates the merits of IMPEQ to introduce teaching quality not only in DRC but in the Great Lakes Region and the whole sub-Saharan Africa in general. Being himself an ordinary professor in educational sciences, he mentioned his satisfaction with the IMPEQ programme and insisted that the TTC Bukavu wishes to co-operate with IMPEQ alumni and the University of Bamberg to foster quality teaching and research in education quality.

By Pierre Murhula Kaheto, reporting from DRC



WORKSHOP

IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING IN THE PROTESTANT SCHOOLS' IN MADAGASCAR



Teacher Training Program in Madagascar

A teacher training programme was organised by the national department of the FJKM (Church of Jésus Christ in Madagascar) Protestant schools in Madagascar, in collaboration with the Suisse Romande missionary department, exchanges, and mission. Three IMPEQ graduates were among the designer-trainers within this programme, namely Jocelin Falimanana Raharinaivo (IMPEQ I), Onja Tiana Raharijaona (IMPEQ II) and Heriniaina Marie Nicole Andriamamonjy (IMPEQ III).

FIRST OF ITS KIND

As the majority of Malagasy teachers have not had any initial professional training before starting their work, in-service training is essential. Indeed, the training is provided to teacher-trainers as multipliers, preschool educators, primary and secondary school teachers, and administrative staff of the target schools. Apart from training in pedagogy, didactics, and administration, participants benefited from sessions on education and Christian values, using skills developed during IMPEQ and the promoting of Christian education globally, which is a project of Christian Reformed World Missions. Different active and participatory methods were used. The teachers' capacities are thus strengthened. To ensure the sustainability of their in-service training, communities of practice have been set up and are functional. Exchanges of practice have been carried out,

such as in Lausanne and Kigali, where IMPEQ graduates from Rwanda and Madagascar participated.

PROMOTING VALUES

Now, the three Malagasy IMPEQ graduates have different responsibilities in the field of education, training, and action research, at local, regional, national, and even international levels. Their activities focus on improving the quality of education and promoting protestant values as well as developing cooperation. In order to better implement the quality of education, systematic training has been organised for teachers and administrative staff, especially in the teaching of mother tongue and foreign languages. In addition, their role is important in in-service training, pre-service training, and distance learning of teachers. Their active participation through various workshops, online and/or face-to-face, promotes the sharing of good practices and the improvement of the quality of their work.

FOR EDUCATION QUALITY

In short, even if each IMPEQ graduate in Madagascar has his/her own responsibility in different governmental and/or non-governmental institutions, reflections, exchanges and collaboration continue to promote the quality of education. *By Onja Tiana Raharijaona, reporting from Madagascar*



WORKSHOP

IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING FOR CONGOLESE TEACHERS AT ULPGL

Quality is now at the heart of any educational system, where teachers play a key role (UNESCO, 2005). To ensure quality, policymakers need to pay attention among other aspects to teacher's ongoing training, in addition to their careful recruitment, intelligent allocation, and long-term retention within the system (UNESCO, 2014).

CLARITY IN SUBJECT MATTER

In this regard, in the framework of the International Master's Program in Educational Quality Innovation Funds, two universities from the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo—the Université Libre des Pays de Grands Lacs of Butembo (ULPGL/Butembo) and the Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (UCBC/Beni)—organized an in-service teacher trainings on educational quality within the first term of the current year. At ULPGL/Butembo, the training went from February 27 to March 4, 2023. Two projects as submitted to the IMPEQ team by Jusline Kavugho Madirisha and Kavira Kivatsi Siberi were implemented. They dealt respectively with clarity in subject matter and its structure, and constructive feedback and communication. Twenty-five teachers from local universities and secondary schools took an active part in the training.

NEW PERSPECTIVES

As for the one organized at UCBC/Beni it lasted two days, from March 31 to April 1, 2023. Submitted to the IMPEQ team by Josias Kakule Nyondo, it centred around establishing in-service teachers' training programmes within universities in Beni area. Twenty teachers, all from local universities, participated assiduously in this training. All three project leaders are alumni of IMPEQ, at the University of Bamberg. In either training session, Eraste Bulaya Jumapili, an alumnus of IMPEQ as well, was invited as a key facilitator. From this training, the participating teachers got new perspectives on their teaching work, especially with regard to increasing awareness of their place as a key factor in education.

Using a participatory approach, the evils that characterise the system are discussed, and quality education is intro-



IMPEQ supported a program for educational quality training in ULPGL, Butembo and UCBC, Beni for teachers from various schools.

duced as a panacea, for the re-foundation of society. As a result, the learning climate is likely to change for the better, as teachers reconsider the way they cope with learners. With this training, teachers not only learned more about quality education and how to set it in place but also challenge the difficulties in implementing these methods effectively and shared tips on coping with insufficient financial resources.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

As it became clear once again that continuing teacher education is at the center of improving the quality of teaching, the government and parents of students need to join forces to support education. Until then, resolutions are professional learning communities in every school, teaching how to learn, partnering and networking with other institutions, and focusing on students' learning should be given priority. By Eraste Bulaya Jumapili, reporting from DRC

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WORKSHOP

IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING FOR CONGOLESE TEACHERS AT ULPGL

Siberi Kavira Kivatsi (IMPEQ III) and Jusline Kavugho Madirisha (IMPEQ IV) organized a six-day teacher training seminar at ULPGL Butembo from 27 February to 4 March. The seminar, organized in partnership with the IMPEQ Innovation Fund, focused on the training of teachers, the quality of education, and in particular the criteria for quality teaching.

QUALITY TEACHING

The training focused on the quality of education and especially on the criteria of quality teaching. On the first three days of the training, the reflection was centered on a theme relating to clarity of subject knowledge with Jusline (IMPEQ IV graduate) as the main trainer. The last three days were devoted to constructive feedback with Siberi as the main trainer. The training was open to secondary and university institutions in the city of Butembo. A call for participation had been launched in which the criteria for choosing participants were specified: to be a teacher or in charge of the pedagogical administrative service within the secondary or university institution. Thus secondary schools and universities from different communities were represented: The Community of Baptist Churches in Central Africa (CBCA), Communauté épiscopale baptiste en Afrique (CEBA), Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs (ULPGL), UAC, ISDKY, ISP, ISTMPGL, including 25 participants.

ACTIVITIES AND METHODS USED

The continuous professional growth of teachers is essential for the improvement of the teaching function. The teacher should revisit acquired notions, test new knowledge, and share useful teaching practices with colleagues. The training was supported by an active methodology. Feedback was a central method, accompanied by others such as brainstorming, and expository methods followed by visualizations, individual reflection, group discussion, evaluations, and role play. This

allowed participants to practice how to give constructive feedback to students, in order to improve their results. But also how receiving it from the students, to also allow the teacher to improve his teaching-learning practice. The feedback as a method in itself has been implemented facilitating the execution of different tasks. The presentation of the themes was intersected by moments of reflection on the part of participants; they first presented their point of view concerning the various points, followed by an intervention and visualization on the part of the trainer. To say that, the training was based on intensive interactions between participants and trainers. Reflection activities on the practice of feedback and clarity in teaching material in the context of secondary and university institutions in the city of Butembo have been effective. This encouraged participants to develop improvement strategies in light of the knowledge on quality education learned. The closing ceremony accompanied by the awarding of certificates to 25 participants and family photos closed this brainstorming session.

LESSONS LEARNED

The training came at the right time and responded to the real needs of the participants, that of the desire to improve the practices of the teachers, to develop their skills provided that the learners also improve their results; thus gradually improving the quality of education. Collaboration and effective communication were important to facilitate the success of the training project. In addition, I would like to thank the IMPQ team and alumni for their support and collaboration, in particular Dr. Susanne Röss, for agreeing to open and close the training activities and Bulaya Eraste (IMPEQ II) as a partner during the six-day training. Both attest to the IMPEQ learning community. By Siberi Kavira Kivatsi, reporting from DRC



WORKSHOP

LAUNCH OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP PLATFORM IN IMPEQ



Senior female leaders meet in the IM-PEQ context for professional development and leadership capacity building:

On a special note, IMPEQ initiated a female leadership program, and the first workshop was conducted at PIASS University, Huye/Butare, Rwanda on 21 March 2023. The workshop brought together female alumni from Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Germany, and South Sudan. This workshop came in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Objective 5 of the 2030 development agenda for sustainable development which aims at increasing gender balance in decision-making.

OBJECTIVES

The workshop had three key objectives

- Conduct a personal analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and barriers,
- Help women acquire leadership abilities to expand their executive presence and increase their influence in the changing competitive world,
- Learn from the experiences and resiliencies of progressive senior role models.

The workshop was an effective self-mirror image and

self-reflection activity that encouraged the rising women with the skills, strategies, confidence, and connections they needed to achieve their professional goals. Different methods such as SWOT analysis, Think-Pair-Share, carousel, and group discussions were used to assess the concerns and barriers impeding female leadership. This exercise was aimed at enabling participants to learn from experiences of each other and what were unique and common traits among female leaders.

Developing shared questions

In the workshop, the female leaders deliberated on key issues and developed questions that were later shared with senior female leaders. Key topics generated during group discussions were:

- Self-worth and self-doubt
- How to deal with criticism? Constructively and emotionally.
- How to lead with authority and claim spaces that one is qualified to fill?
- Cultural dynamics
- Attitudes – being responsive without being exploited

WORKSHOP

LAUNCH OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP PLATFORM IN IMPEQ



Comments from workshop Participants

"I had never done a SWOT analysis of myself. Now, I know myself much more and learned from others' experiences. This will be my guiding tool when I want to evaluate my development goals."

"The workshop came at the right time. Reflecting on the discussions, I have learned that women really have some common characteristics especially being empathetic and not taking time to rest due to multiple tasks" said a participant from DRC."

ROLE MODELS

The above topics culminated in the development of three broad questions for further discussions and support from senior leaders and role models. Key questions developed were:

- 1-What is female leadership and how can it be claimed?
- 2-What are knowledges and techniques needed for successful female leadership?
- 3-What are strategies to balance leadership responsibilities and family obligations?

Three key female leaders from the academic arena provided responses and shared their leadership journeys with participants during the second phase of the workshop namely, Prof. Dr. Penine Uwimbabazi, Vice Chancellor of PIASS, Prof. Dr. Annette Scheunpflug, University of Bamberg and Prof. Dr. Astrid Rank, University of Regensburg

GROUP LEADERS SELECTED

After the first meeting, the following steps were agreed upon moving forward: Creating a group name, selecting group leaders, reflecting on group legality and explore project opportunities. *By Sitima Joyce Justin, reporting from South Sudan*



Floods destroyed schools in Kalehe region, DRC

Heavy rains caused massive destruction and damage in DRC and many other countries where IMPEQ students live. In this context, in the Kalehe region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the villages of Bushushu and Nyamukubi, floods caused by heavy rains have caused a major disaster. In this catastrophic situation many lives lost, many houses and schools damaged. The situation of the destroyed and damaged schools in the region, where IMPEQ students and graduates also serve, is as follows:

- 7 schools completely destroyed,
- 7 schools partially destroyed,
- 13 deceased teachers including 2 school principals,
- 874 dead and missing primary school students,
- 120 dead and missing high school students

School activities have just resumed but with psychological trauma and in a precarious context, uncertainty for the continuation of school activities: Students without a minimum of schooling and schools devoid of everything. *By Meschac Vunanga Karhakabire, reporting from the DRC*

PROFILE OF AN IMPEQ GRADUATE

FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN PROTESTANT EDUCATION

More than 80 IMPEQ graduates continue to make a difference in various roles in their home countries. One of them is Mimii Kwerakwiza Brown Rubindamayungi. As an ordained pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT), she currently serves as the Principal of the Nyakato Lutheran Bible College in the ELCT Diocese east of Lake Victoria. Mimii is also pursuing her doctoral studies at Tumaini Makumira University.

Mimii, who has been working in different departments and carrying out different activities in the church since 2007, has been involved in a wide range of activities such as Director of Christian and Secular Education, Advocacy Coordinator, Women and Children Coordinator, and Director of Diocesan Social Services Department. As board member of the ELCT Njombe Deaf school, Mimii is also an ambassador of the Global Pedagogical Education Network (GPENreformation) and an alumina of IMPEQ. As an IMPEQ graduate, Mimii shared her experiences and thoughts as a female leader in a male-dominated environment:

“Being a leader I have to focus more on empowering students to attain quality education. We have started different programs that give opportunities for our students to get qualifications to continue with their studies. Most of the students who are coming to study theology and evangelism at the level of certificate did not get a chance to get secondary education. Therefore, we have a programme that gives them the opportunity to do the National Examination. For the first time in the academic year 2021/2022, the students attempt the examination and they did very well. This year we have registered 33 students.

Women are being left behind in our society and experience different obstacles. We have introduced programmes of doing female bible studies and until today we have two publications where female students have reflected on their lives and written a book on how to change their environment and also a book that tells stories of women in the bible. Not only that but in some areas women are not employed and always regarded as volunteers. We have given



them skills of entrepreneurship so that after school they can be able to use their hands to do business and continue to volunteer in the church.

As a female leader in the church, I have learned that women are capable of holding different positions in the church and in the community. Although the community still holds patriarchal views, we have very good examples of good female leaders and particularly in Tanzania. I have learned that in Tanzania we had women who participate in struggling for independence like Bibi Titi Mohamed, we had a female King Teresa Ntare VI of Kigoma from 1946-1962, and so many others. And now we have a female president. This teaches us that women are capable to make changes in this world.

My advice to young female leaders is to reflect on our context and make sure we empower young women and men. When we sit at the table of decisions, we have to represent that woman, who can not reach that decision-making table, talk about their problems and find solutions. We should always think of those girls who are left behind because of early childhood marriage and early pregnancy and advocate for their right to education.” *By Mimii Kwerakwiza Brown Rubindamayungi, reporting from Tanzania*

NYAKATO: TEACHING FUTURE THEOLOGIANs IN TANZANIA

Nyakato Lutheran Bible College, where Mimii is the principal, is one of the three Zonal Colleges under the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT). The College serves the Western and Lake Zone dioceses of the ELCT in eight regions of Tanzania. The College teaches theologians at Certificate and Diploma levels. The college also trains parish workers to help with congregational work, especially for East of Lake Victoria Diocese's parishes.

In the academic year 2021/2022, some of the students got an opportunity to join the Qualified Test (QT), and others set for the form four national examination. This is because most of the students did not previously get an opportunity to attain secondary education and some, who did have an opportunity, for some reason could not pass their examination.

SUCCESS INCREASES EVERY YEAR

The result came out early this year and those, who were re-sitting their secondary education examination form four, passed very well. Among them, three will be able to join high school and nine are qualified to join colleges that are recognized and accepted by the Ministry of Education to continue with higher learning starting at certificate level to university level. Other students got few credits and will be allowed to resit this year for the national examination. For this academic year, a number of 33 students joined this program and the school expects four students to register for high school.

We are so proud of our students and the Finnish Evangelical Mission for the support of this program because most Tanzanian young people do not get a chance to attain secondary education and thus they can not get a chance for higher education. Through this program our students will have chances to continue with their studies. The Church and Tanzania community will have well-educated and competent workers and leaders.

Not only that we are celebrating the increase of female students in our college. Statistics show that in 2020-2022, female students increased to 32 out of 103 compared to the academic year 2016-2018 where female students were

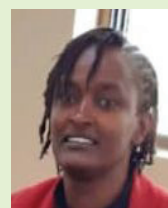


12 out of 66 where out of 12 female students, six were parish workers. The parish workers course has only female students due to the tradition that the course is intended only for women.

As an alumina of IMPEQ, I appreciate the courage, hard-working mentors, and leadership mentorship of Prof. Annette and the team, who taught me to reflect on my context and use my education to solve problems in my community. I am so thankful for this support and I am sure I will use the education quality competencies to continue to serve my church institutions and my country Tanzania.

MORE TRAINING FOR THE STAFF

Nyakato strives to ensure the Provision of Quality Education and Nyakato to be the center of research and publication. To achieve this goal Nyakato will do different activities such as addressing contextual misleading theologies, support for teachers to proceed with further education, Strengthening the zonal dioceses collaboration, improving our retention strategy, improving the performance of the library and improvement of library facilities, supporting evangelists, parish workers, and theologians to be qualified for Qualified Test Form Two and re-seat Form Four National Examinations. For better performance of the college, there will be training of staff on competency-based approach, reviewing and updating theological curriculum. Nyakato will also implement innovations for gender justice activities as we are giving students chances to get government academic accreditation. *By Mimii Kwerakwiza Brown Rubindamayungi, reporting from Tanzania*



IMPEQ GRADUATE ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH SUDAN ON THE RISE

This write-up provides a glimpse of educational programs performed by IMPEQ graduates in South Sudan. It also highlights upcoming events aimed at promoting educational quality by IMPEQ graduates. Until 2022, IMPEQ graduated one female and six male students from different cohorts and are currently placed in different educational programs in the country.

TOWARDS QUALITY EDUCATION IN SOUTH SUDAN

IMPEQ graduates play various roles in the educational field. The roles range from teacher training, implementing education in emergencies projects, implementing inclusive education activities, educational management and administration, and contribution to policy development. Four graduates work in a diocesan teacher training institution, contributing to the improvement of educational quality through teacher training.

Other graduates work in different educational settings enabling close coordination and collaboration with different stakeholders and advocating on issues affecting education in the country. Other activities include the management of education programs at different levels.

The graduates also sit on different boards as part of their contribution to developing policies for improving

learning at different educational institutions.

IMPEQ INNOVATION FUND

IMPEQ graduates applied for the innovative fund and some projects are successful. The projects were planned to promote educational quality by training school leadership on their roles, responsibilities, and management skills. The project end period is June 2023, and implementation will be done in collaboration with other IMPEQ graduates on the project site.

Community reactions to IMPEQ activities are very positive. Lubari Stephen told that “IMPEQ graduates are very useful and productive in their engagements. I give an example of Rev. Taban who has been very committed to teacher training and teacher engagements for better school development. This program has motivated teachers to get involved in school development programs.”

COOPERATION AMONG ALUMNI

As IMPEQ graduates, “creating a network of IMPEQ graduates in South Sudan” and “organizing regular meetings and programs to promote educational quality” are among the things we plan to do in the future.

By Sitima Joyce Justin, reporting from South Sudan.

IMPEQ 2024 conference will be in Cameroon

The next IMPEQ conference is planned to take place in Yaounde, Cameroon, in February 2024. It is the 8th IMPEQ conference and will focus on the “Advocacy for Quality Protestant Education.” The subject of the conference is very relevant for the context of Cameroon and sub-Saharan Africa in general where faith-based organizations are shaping the landscape of schools, yet functioning under difficult conditions with different forms of state-church cooperati-

on. It will target primarily Cameroonian IMPEQ alumni and IMPEQ V graduates as well as selected IMPEQ alumni from other countries. The precise dates and concept note for the conference shall be communicated subsequently meanwhile the conceptual work and organizational planning have already begun. The organization committee is led by Frederick Njobati (University of Bamberg) and Claude Ernest Njoya (UEC).

IMPEQ ALUMNI FROM DRC ON THE WAY TO PHD

More and more graduates are pursuing a PhD after earning an IMPEQ master's degree. John Barabara Tombola has also joined the ranks of those doing their PhD in Bamberg University. He has started a PhD on English language education in his native DRC and talks about his plans and goals.

How did you hear about the IMPEQ?

I learned and heard about IMPEQ from the School Coordinator of CBCA (Communaute Baptiste au Centre de l'Afrique) in South Kivu Province. In 2017, while I was still a teacher in one of the secondary schools under this coordination in Bukavu, an invitation was issued to me by the Coordinator. Arriving at his office, the Coordinator told me that I was invited to learn of a scholarship opportunity for which I had to apply. The application form was given to me and I applied for the second cohort of IMPEQ. After the selection, I was dismayed as I was informed that I was not taken for the scholarship. However, when the call for applications for IMPEQ III was launched, I received an email from IMPEQ Coordination encouraging me to apply again if still interested. I compiled my application documents and applied. In the end, I was notified about my selection for the scholarship and was highly excited.

How was the application process?

Applying for the scholarship is generally as easy as it may be thought about. The process for my first application was hectic as it was my first time applying for a scholarship. Compiling documents and filling out the application form took, of course, some time to ensure everything is done very well. But overall, my application process to IMPEQ was smooth because there were emails notifying missing documents or for example that the application is complete and this could enable the applicant to track the process.

What were your working colleagues' and family members' reactions when they learn that you start a master's degree?

When I announced my selection for the scholarship and that I was going to start a Master's program, both my col-



Tombola has started working on his PhD at Bamberg University.

leagues and family members were overjoyed. So, they emboldened me so much for the program. On the part of my colleagues, questions like "How did you get the opportunity, what does it require to apply, etc." were asked.

Were there any difficulties during the program?

During the Master's program in IMPEQ, some difficulties were encountered. When I came to Germany in 2017, the food was a big challenge for me but I had to sort out and could order food that I was a bit familiar with. There was difficulty in matching the program and the work. It was not actually easy to meet the deadlines given the exigencies of the work.

Were there any changes in your work since IMPEQ?

Soon after IMPEQ, I was promoted to secondary school Pedagogic Adviser in the CBCA school coordination. Duties related to this new position include reading minutes and

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IMPEQ ALUMNI FROM DRC ON THE WAY TO PHD

reports to provide feedback to school principals; carrying out school visits and producing reports to the hierarchy. So, since IMPEQ, I experienced a lot of changes. To list but a few, I learned to be focused on what I am assigned to. Giving feedback capabilities are improved. Good time management is a big positive change that came into my life and work. I also provide in-service teacher training workshops to teachers in the protestant sector. Briefly speaking, IMPEQ made me a different person in regard to competencies developed not only for my work but also in my life. That is how I contribute to change in my hometown, Bukavu in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Are you still in contact with your colleagues from IMPEQ?

In the third batch, we were twenty students. I had the privilege to be a representative in the last year of our Master's journey. As such, I had to entertain good relationships with my colleagues. From this framework and making use of the WhatsApp group we created, we remain connected from our respective countries.

How did the opportunity to do a Ph.D. come about? In which subject will you work?

After my graduation from IMPEQ, I took some months to rest. When I felt relaxed, I started reflecting on how my Master's topic could switch to a Ph.D. study. So, I was searching and reading literature connected to the topic of my master's thesis till I came to a preliminary topic. At this stage, I consulted elder IMPEQ alumni from whom I got input on how to write a Ph.D. proposal. I drafted a proposal and a CV for which I requested feedback. After addressing different comments, I submitted my proposal to Prof. Dr. Annette Scheunpflug. She integrated me into the Ph.D. learning community. When the proposal reached an acceptable extent, I was commended by Prof. Scheunpflug to apply for a Ph.D. scholarship from Bread for the World and the latter was awarded to me on a full-time basis. Currently, I am a student at the University of Bamberg. My research looks into the perceptions on oral communication in the classroom. I am thereof investing all my time and energy into the research. *By IMPEQ Team*



John Tombola and other Bread for the World fellows visit the Humboldt Institute in Berlin after a presentation of their projects.



DIDACTIC CENTRE OF PIASS GETS A NEW COORDINATOR

The senate meeting of the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Science (PIASS), which was held on 31 January 2023 in one of its resolutions appointed Dr. Abraham Tangwe as the new coordinator of the Centre for Didactics and Research in Education (CEDRE). This Centre had a pioneer coordinator, Mr. Emmanuel Niyibizi. The handing over from the pioneer coordinator took place on 24 February 2023, under the watchful eyes of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Academic Affairs at PIASS, Rev. Dr. Viateur Habarurema. The new coordinator was charged by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to devise strategies and take the centre to a new level that can give the centre more visibility and act as a reference training centre for teachers in Rwanda. He appreciated and congratulated the outgoing coordinator for his dedication, hard work, and the successful foundational strides he undertook to lay a solid base for the centre as well as wishing him well in his new office as the Director of Research in PIASS.

INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

The Didactic centre of PIASS started in 2018 with the following mission; contributing to the educational quality in PIASS through innovative research and didactics in classes, empowering and developing the teacher and his or her competencies, organizing seminars and workshops for the academic staff and other educational stakeholders with the sole purpose of contributing to educational quality, restructuring all facets of examination organisations, grouping the teachers per department write and publish at least one or two papers for each academic year and creating networks and initiating exchange visits.

SUPPORTING SCHOOLS

With this mission, the objectives of the centre were crafted among which were; stimulating knowledge creation, diffusion, and use through the promotion of innovative research and pedagogy, supporting schools and educational institutions in regard to educational quality improvement, strengthening professional development opportunities for



Emmanuel Niyibizi (L) handed over the job to Dr. Abraham Tangwe (R) and Vice Deputy Chancellor Dr. Viateur Habarurema witnessed the event.

teachers and other educational stakeholders, and above all, offering a platform for networking researchers, policymakers and practitioners in order to regularly reflect on quality improvement at all levels of education.

The Centre for Didactics and Research in Education with this ambitious mission and objectives has been successful in carrying out different training seminars and workshops. CEDRE has organised seminars and workshops for the academic staff and other stakeholders that are aimed at enhancing educational quality, workshops on quality internships for school leaders, seminars for student teachers in the faculty of education in PIASS, and seminars on examination moderation among others. *By Abraham Tangwe, reporting from Rwanda*



SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN PRECARIOUS SITUATIONS

I have been asked to write a few lines on school leadership in precarious situations for the IMPEQ Newsletter. This prompts me to present a summary of the thesis I defended in Bamberg on 28 November 2023 on the subject: “Heroes in the Shadows: School Leadership and Quality of Education in precarious situations (the case of North Kivu in the Democratic Republic of Congo) under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Annette Scheunpflug and Prof. Dr. Kai Nonnenmacher.

The context of the DRC

Located in Central Africa, the DRC is one of the countries that make up the Great Lakes region, and for more than thirty years, the country has unfortunately been experiencing a multifaceted crisis with the consequences of the precariousness of living conditions of the populations and a generalized destruction of physical, social, and economic infrastructure, including schools. According to the UNDP report (2014), this state of insecurity and instability is fueled, among other things, by successive waves of armed conflict, particularly in the east of the country (as in the case of the massacres in North Kivu and Ituri since 2016), chronic humanitarian crises, serious human rights violations including sexual violence, illegal exploitation of natural resources, interference by neighbouring countries, impunity decried by all and at all times, inter-community rivalries, the insufficient capacity of the army and police to effectively protect the national territory and guarantee public order, and the weakness of the judicial and penitentiary systems. As a logical consequence, the country is in a state of development characterised by the lowest human and social development indicators in the world. The education sector has not been spared at all. Since the 1980s, the education sector had gradually ceased to be a priority for the Congolese government. Teachers receive a derisory salary from the state, school infrastructure is dilapidated, equipment is insufficient or non-existent for most schools as highlighted by the UNDP 2014 report, parents continue to support their children’s schooling, which excludes those

of poor parents, etc.

Problem

The problem raised by the study is the questioning of strategies to be put in place by school heads to develop the quality of education in an environment of precariousness as described above. Indeed, the said context places the head teacher in front of several challenges at the same time: the poverty of the pupils, the poverty of the school (lack of infrastructure and adequate equipment), volunteer or poorly paid teachers, pressure from parents and school authorities, unfair competition from other schools, etc. With very few resources, it has to deal with a complexity of problems. The question that arises in this study is therefore the following: what strategies or leadership are school heads in the DRC putting in place to develop the quality of education in this context of precariousness?

Main results of the study: Typology of school leadership in a precarious situation

Using a qualitative approach and a theoretical sample of 30 semi-structured interviews with school leaders, the study was conducted under grounded theory in terms of data collection. From the abductive analysis of the data, five ideal types of school leadership emerged to develop the quality of education even in precarious situations.

Type 1: Pedagogical or instructional leadership.

From the analysis of the interviews, it was revealed that in order to aim for academic success, some school leaders in North Kivu in a precarious situation state that they focus on the teaching-learning process. As academic success is a factor that attracts parents and children to school, this (along with school fees) helps to meet needs such as infrastructure and equipment.

Type 2: Distributed leadership

The abductive analysis of the interviews showed that some head teachers claimed that they could emphasise collegial management of the school to overcome precariousness. This means sharing the vision, goals, planning and evaluation with all stakeholders in the school institution:

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teachers, pupils, parents, and other educational partners.

Type 3: Entrepreneurial leadership

This type describes school leaders who admit that they apply entrepreneurship to fight against precarity in their schools. This refers to developing creativity in several areas of school life such as the production of teaching materials locally, variation in teaching methods; advocacy with partners for improved infrastructure, and increased school facilities. In some cases, the difficult circumstances make some head teachers „jacks of all trades“: pedagogue, carpenter, decorator, farmer, breeder, etc.

Type 4: Situational leadership

The analysis of the perceptions of the school heads interviewed has sufficiently shown that in situations of precariousness, situational leadership is one of the strategies for improving quality education. Indeed, in the face of unexpected and sometimes disturbing situations, it emerged from the interviews that some head teachers show flexibility and adaptability in order to find or suggest solutions to problems. Here, they adapt the leadership style to the staff and community they manage and to the circumstances.

Type 5: Inertial leadership

The analysis of the interviews also revealed inertia leadership in some school leaders. Indeed, the statements of some interviewees betrayed the absence of a clear vision of the development of the school, the fact of indulging in the status quo, in conformity, in formalism or routine; the fact of making others feel guilty. According to the interviews, such leadership can lead to staff boredom, fatigue, conflict, and lack of credit for the leader, which, ipso facto, can hinder the development of a school.

Discussion of the results: Which leadership for which quality of education?

This part of the discussion chapter focuses on the interpretation of the above results by comparing them with the scientific discourse on leadership and quality education. It covers 7 points, of which only four are mentioned here for reasons of economy:

a) Precariousness and quality education

Two aspects should be emphasised: Firstly, precarity is often presented as an obstacle or an excuse for quality education. Those who hold this view are not at all wrong on the one hand, given the requirement of means for quality. However, the study, through the perceptions of the head teachers interviewed, has shown that by applying instructional leadership plus appropriate strategies such as the development of a vision and strategic plan, investment in human capital, transparency, teamwork, and entrepreneurship, there is room, even in a precarious situation, to find ways to develop quality education. Secondly, quality education is an ideal and no one can claim to master it. The effort to be made is, according to UNESCO (2005), to reduce as much as possible the gap between the social ideal and the reality of the pupils.

b) School leadership: motivating teachers differently.

While the scientific discourse emphasises the level of salary as a motivating factor for teachers, the study revealed, through the statements of the school leaders interviewed, the capital importance of social relations, a good working climate, transparency, good communication, and credibility for the motivation of teachers, especially in precarious situations. In other words, there is reason to affirm that with the limited means available to schools, quality teaching is possible if and only if school leadership works on the intrinsic motivation of teachers. Investment in human capital plays a crucial role in such a system.

c) School leadership and change: quality education to contribute to school development.

In the context of the DRC, the study showed that many schools are born into great poverty, into great precariousness, to the point of asking how to develop quality education in such destitution. The contribution to the discourse is to show that quality education can generate financial and material resources, contrary to the discourse according to which resources are needed first to develop quality education.

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d) School leadership and dysfunctional school system

With regard to the issue of a dysfunctional school system (in the case of the DRC context with the demotivation of staff, limited, inappropriate, and disparate educational provision, low budgetary allocation, etc.), the study showed, through the words of the school leaders, that it is sometimes necessary to learn to sail against the current, i.e. to question the system and to make a difference through one's own initiatives, one's own entrepreneurship. Here again, as mentioned above, the type of leadership counts as much as certain qualities such as resistance to adversity.

Implications of the research

Following the research results and their discussion, empirical and practical implications of the research were identified in the form of recommendations. This is the case with the recommendation for further research to ascertain the perceptions of teachers, students and parents on the leadership of head teachers. Conceptually, a comparative study could identify the quality of education in Protestant schools and other sectors such as Catholic education.

On a practical level, it was recommended, among other things, to organize training on school leadership and quality education for educational actors such as inspectors, school leaders, teachers, etc.

By Dr. Jean Kasereka Lutswamba, reporting from DRC



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“Precarity” as missing dimension in teacher professionalism

The crisis-induced precarity of teachers remains an under-researched aspect of teachers' professionalism. Moreover, most research has been conducted in highly developed countries characterized by stable education systems, focusing on individual-level aspects of precarity and neglecting teachers' embeddedness in wider systems. Frederick Njobati and Susanne Röss are developing a paper that investigates the contextual dynamics, which shape teachers' well-being in the Democratic Republic of Congo, specifically in the Kivu region, and in Rwanda.

COMPARATIVE STUDY ON COVID MANAGEMENT

It reports findings from a quantitative study conducted as part of a larger comparative study on COVID management and responses led by Annette Scheunpflug conducted in an international team of researchers. The entangled and complex histories of both countries have been marked by protracted crises such as ongoing armed conflicts (i.e., around natural resources), post-conflict conditions (i.e., ethnic violence), and various ecological and health crises (i.e., volcano eruptions, Ebola, flooding, and landslides) all of which have shaped teachers' wellbeing and professional performance.

WELL-BEING OF TEACHERS

The comparison of teachers' experiences during and following the COVID pandemic demonstrate heterogeneous dynamics of precarity at the individual- and system level. The paper further shows how individual and structural factors shaped teachers' responses to school closures (e.g., distance education). It concludes that educational theories of teacher professionalism should account for precarity as an influencing factor of teachers' well-being and professional performance. By Dr. Susanne Röss, reporting from Bamberg

INNOVATION FUND 2023 RESULTS ANNOUNCED; SUPPORT FOR 14 PROJECTS

In fall 2022, the IMPEQ team invited applications for the second round of the IMPEQ Innovation Fund established in 2020. The Innovation Fund represents an effort to strengthen IMPEQ alumni networks and to promote quality education in African countries through trainings, workshops, small research projects, and network events. The goal is to harness the competencies acquired by IMPEQ graduates to enhance collaboration among graduates within single countries and also across. The IMPEQ team received 19 applications from graduates in Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, and South Sudan. 68 percent of the applications were submitted by male alumni (n=13) and 32 percent by female alumni (n=6). The majority of applicants came from Rwandan (32%) and Congolese graduates (42%). Out of the 19 applications, 14 were selected for funding.

VARIOUS TOPICS

All of the six projects submitted by female graduates were selected for funding. Five projects needed revisions to improve the proposal quality, three of which were resubmitted and also selected for funding. The projects cover a wide range of topics including teacher trainings on high cognitive activation by complex tasks, subject knowledge, constructive feedback, inclusive education, trauma-informed approaches to sexuality education, classroom management, and non-violent communication as well as workshops for headteachers on effective leadership and management skills. One project proposed an evaluation to investigate the impact of IMPEQ on quality improvements in the DRC. For future rounds, the IMPEQ team encourages applications for projects involving alumni from more than one country to strengthen the international network of experts.

REVIEW PROCESS

The IMPEQ Innovation Fund 2023 selection process was accompanied by a novelty. Unlike during the first round, this time, the proposed projects were evaluated by peers from the IMPEQ alumni network through a peer-review process. A peer review is a process whereby referees, who are experts in the field, examine research work, manuscripts, or project proposals and decide on their appli-



cability. The objective of such a process is to reduce biases in the evaluation and, long term, to enhance the scientific quality of contributions. Reviewers provide feedback to the applicants and make suggestions on whether to select a project (or manuscript) for funding (or publication). In the case of the IMPEQ Innovation Fund, project applicants did not know the reviewers' names (single-blind) and, whenever possible, the reviewers did not know applicants' names (double-blind).

PEER-REVIEW PROCESS

In total 31 IMPEQ alumni responded positively to the invitation to provide peer review to their colleagues, from Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Zambia. 26 individuals completed reviews for a minimum of two projects, in some cases three. Each project was reviewed by at least two alumni, in some cases three. The process was organized online. Reviewers rated the quality of each project based on the following criteria: strengthen IMPEQ collaborations, enhance IMPEQ visibility, sustainability, impact, and quality of proposed activities and budget. The IMPEQ team is delighted to share the great success of the peer-review process thanks to the highly professional and very reliable support provided by IMPEQ alumni. *By Dr. Susanne Röss, reporting from Bamberg*

PROMOTING EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGH HANDBALL - GORILLAS IN KIGALI

For more than ten years, the Rwandan non-governmental organization “Gorillas Handball Club” pursues the goal of making handball a lively, inclusive, and widespread sport in the East African country. However, in addition to the promotion of handball, the Handball Gorillas Club addresses children from vulnerable backgrounds and aims to support them in a variety of issues in line with the idea of “Sport for Development”:

TOLERANCE AND FAIRNESS

Through sports, the club also strives to strengthen the willingness to take responsibility, teach life skills, and support the children in developing self-esteem in order to enable them to master difficult life situations and develop perspectives for their own future. A central element is also the promotion of democratic values such as tolerance or fairness and non-violent communication. To this end, the Gorillas Handball Club Sport implements various sports and handball initiatives combined with aspects of health promotion, violence prevention, hygiene, gender equality, and even environmental issues.

SUPPORTING THE CHILDREN

A particular focus of all activities, is the promotion of school education. Every child that is registered in the Handball Academy needs to attend school. Through regular follow-ups and individual support, the coaches and pedagogues help students struggling with poor performance in school and try to address the underlying causes. Concretely, they mobilise parents to provide scholastic materials to their children or even provide these materials themselves with the help of international funding. As Anaclet Bagirishya explains, the Handball Gorillas Academy takes over an important supporting function that the children miss at home, where poverty, drug abuse, and violence are normal. To execute this function, the Gorillas Handball Club also cooperates closely with a large number of schools in and around the Rwandan capital as well as with universities in Rwanda. In particular, they help children from the Handball Academy to get scholarships. Students who are particularly talented in handball play for the school or universities and can study for free in turn.



The Kigali Gorillas plays a role in the physical development of young people, as well as fostering team spirit and cooperation among them.

During the stay of Louise Ohlig's (Member of the IMPEQ family) in Kigali, she also visited the Gatunga primary and secondary school, which is one of the partner schools of the Gorillas Handball Club. At this school, handball is introduced as part of a new extra-curricular program with the aim of promoting the importance of play and physical activities for education. Although the students have only had a few months of training, they are already showing dynamic jump shots and gripping defense. However, the school lacks basic infrastructure and sports equipment, which severely limits the possibilities to achieve positive and sustainable effects in the field of education through sports and handball. Louise, therefore, handed over two sets of jerseys from her own handball club in Germany (TGS Seligenstadt) to the Gatunga School as well as a donation of 600 euros to the Handball Gorillas. *By Louise Ohlig, reporting from Bamberg*

NEWS FROM IMPEQ RESEARCH.

Change of perspectives in transformation processes: A case study of online teaching for under-served students in teacher education

When COVID-19 hit the world in 2020, teaching and learning across all levels of the education system was disrupted. As a consequence, schools and universities had to develop options for distance education. Scientific evidence has been mounting by now that the sudden shift to online teaching has reinforced existing social inequalities. Under-served student populations – cultural minorities, low-income students, students in remote areas, or at risk for dropping out – without adequate access to technology and technology skills were put behind in their education.

SWITCHING TO ONLINE TEACHING

Moreover, successful online teaching also depends on the quality of instruction, learning materials, and feedback. Achieving the twin objectives of access and quality are thus paramount for online learning. Aiming at both in moments of immediate urgency such as the COVID-pandemic was challenging even more so in under-resourced educational contexts. Dr. Susanne Ress and Frederick Njobati with support from Prof. Dr. Annette Scheunpflug developed an article, that reflects on the IMPEQ experiences of switching from a blended to a purely online teaching environment in response to COVID-induced lockdowns and travel bans.

RAPID TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

Based on this case study, the article contributes to the scholarship in teacher education by offering an in-depth reflection on the rapid transformation process addressing reflexivity, resources, and ethics of care as themes. The article brings together complex problem-solving and culturally relevant pedagogy literature to explore a model for change of perspectives in transformation processes targeting under-served students in teacher education.

By Dr. Susanne Ress, reporting from Bamberg

Insight into research: Governance in the DRC's education sector in face of the COVID-19 pandemic - crisis mode in a fragile state

Within the framework of the international research project "Education Systems and COVID-19 Management in Central Africa – EduCOV" funded by the German Research Society (DFG) we were looking for the governance modes during the pandemic within the education system of DRC. Interviews with stakeholders gave insights into leading ideas for school and education. Those ideas framed the agency while dealing with the situation, mostly the presidential decision to close schools in the end for months. The results show that school has multiple functions for society making school also an important steering instrument in the management of a crisis, e.g. as school is seen as a means for mass communication. Interviews strongly focused on health risks or economic needs. In particular, respondents seem to completely overlook the importance of education for long-term recovery.

CRISES STRENGTHEN THE AUTHORITY

Only a few interviewees bring educational concerns into the discussion: There is generally limited advocacy for education, especially on the side of state authorities, whilst networks and non-state actors' positions in society appear to be factors of robustness for the education system. Their local connection to people from different areas and their position within a religious global network facilitate them to be active and to take responsibility. The decisive point here, however, seems to be that these networks already existed prior to the crisis. Moreover, we see a strengthening of the state's authority in times of crisis mitigated by the education sector. Hence, we see a dilemma arising, especially for non-state actors between advocating the right for education by responding to educational needs and through this guaranteeing the education system's in its desolate constitution on the one hand and advocating a rather fundamental reform towards quality education. *By Louise Ohlig and Dr. Susanne Timm, reporting from Bamberg*

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