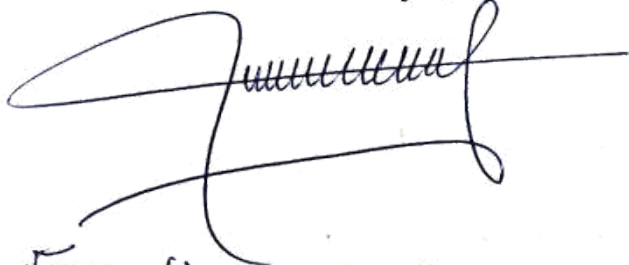


Heri Bitamala, Jérôme.



Executive Director.

CENTRE DE RECHERCHE  
SUR L'ANTI-CORRUPTION.

2019

# ANNUAL REPORT



EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

Centre de Recherche sur l'Anti-Corruption

# MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER



*Over the last few years, we have seen an increase in corrupt behavior in all public sectors. Media, on national scale is saturated with stories of corruption involving leaders from government, the private sector and civil society. We have witnessed an increase of corruption cases in the mining sector, as well as the continuing threat against those who are brave enough to denounce corruption. In our country, we have also observed how the abuse of power and the misappropriation of public funds can jeopardize development and democracy. It is for this reason that we have realized the need for our organization to become a voice for voiceless.*

When we opened our doors 2 years ago, we knew that the task ahead would not be an easy one- but with the dedication and commitment of our small team, as well as the support we received from the donors, media and select groups within the public and private sector, we have significant strides in the field of anti-corruption.

From mobilization campaigns to capacity building workshops at a grassroots level – it has been a busy but fruitful two years for our integrity heroes. But, the real heroes of our story are the courageous 1000 people who have join us to date.


We celebrate integrity builders who have risked their lives like Integrity Club's members who travelled every month close to 5km from Luberizi to Tengetenge to monitor the rehabilitation of Irrigation Canal and report mismanagement in its

implementation, and the Integrity Club member who compromised their school participation to expose graft at their school in Sange. We also acknowledge CERC staff members who reported several cases of corruption in road traffic in Uvira and has been continuously victimized and harassed for their assistance in helping us highlight the corruption. These are only a few examples of the courageous, but difficult journeys that our integrity heroes had to travel when facing corruption. These individuals are key to the work that we do at Centre de Recherche sur l'Anti-Corruption. They enable us to speak with authority of the public and to amplify the experiences of the ordinary members of our community. Our Integrity heroes have assisted in strengthening our democracy and in ensuring that public resources are deployed in the public interest.

We are also continuously overwhelmed by the support that we receive from the general public. Many people might not have a case of corruption to report to us, but still express interest in our movement.

We are grateful to all those that have shared the fruits of our work across all social networks, have engaged with us and joined our mobilization campaigns, as well as the donations that we received in their biggest or smallest forms - we are thankful. It is through this support that we continue with our work for the next few years to come and provide a key service to the Congolese people.

2019 was a politically charged year. Corruption in presidential and legislative elections, and of governors, the overwhelming files of corruption involving the government officials are all examples of the growing dissatisfaction of the general public who are seeking change from the current state of leadership.

Heri Bitamala, Jérôme  
  
Heri Bitamala  
Founder and Executive Director  
Executive Director.  
CENTRE DE RECHERCHE  
SUR L'ANTI-CORRUPTION.

## ABOUT US

OUR VISION IS FOR CONGOLESE'S TO LIVE IN  
A SOCIETY FREE OF CORRUPTION.

### HISTORY

CERC was created in 2017 by the Heri Bitamala with the aim of empowering youth to fight against corruption and build integrity in their communities.

CERC has grown into a network of 1000 young people supporting each other and their efforts to monitor vital projects and services where they live, and to solve the problems they find.

### MISSION STATEMENT

We believe in the power and potential of youth to create solutions to some of the most pressing challenges of our time.

Driven by this belief, our mission is to **“support youth to create positive change towards a more accountable, open, inclusive society”**. We do this by providing skills development, capacity building and technical supports.

# WHAT WE DO

## ANTI-CORRUPTION

We are committed to fight corruption and helping create a corruption-free society by:

- **Encouraging and enabling people to expose corruption** by asking them to report their experiences and knowledge of corruption to us;
- **Encouraging people to refuse to participate in corruption**, through mass media campaigns that inform the public about their rights and the negative consequences of corruption;
- **Building networks of integrity heroes** and creating environment that does not tolerate corruption;
- **Making every effort to ensure that those who engage in corruption will be punished**, by referring our reports and investigations to law enforcement authorities;
- **Using our communication platforms and our partnerships** with the media to name and shame perpetrators of corruption;
- **Actively participating in public campaigns** to improve the policy and legislative environment, and
- **Gathering data that we are able to identify corruption hotspots** and provide the public with information that enables them to hold their leaders to account.

## YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

We believe development works best **When** youth participate in decision-making in their own communities. **When** youth work with their leaders to ensure their needs are met and public commitments are fulfilled. We strive to ensure youth have the knowledge, skills, abilities and tools to make that a reality.

### 1. Give youth a stake in their own communities

Our programs help youth engage in the planning and monitoring of government programs in their communities. Youth gain and share knowledge to help communities make decisions, along with the skills to constructively engage, with authorities and hold public officials accountable. Increased youth participation also means more public oversight and less opportunity for corruption.

## 2. Community feedback mechanisms

For youth to exercise effective accountability, they need a set of standards that those responsible are expected to meet, indicators against which performance is measured, and monitoring frameworks to produce data that assesses performance. Most of our programs use community monitoring on the quality of services to improve their effectiveness in achieving intended results, involving a range of instruments, including citizen reports and community scorecards, citizen budget monitoring and expenditure tracking, and using media pressure.

## 3. Connecting citizens to their local governments

Our programs encourage dialogue between youth and their governments. Citizens and service providers commonly have a shared objective of improving the quality of public services. Many of our programs focus on improving citizen feedback to service providers, supported by hard evidence and data and the preparation of authorities to receive citizen feedback. The result is better communication, better decision making, and better development results.

# WHY WE FOCUS ON YOUTH?

**Promoting integrity is an intergenerational process. At CERC, we focus on young people as catalysts for change for several reasons:**

- 1. young people are more mobile and dynamic.** We can develop their know-how and their ability to make decisions in order to generate new ways to support the promotion of transparency;
- 2. young people are often marginalized by hierarchical, opaque and unequal decision-making structures** and are better placed to change these systems if they have the tools, knowledge and resources they need;
- 3. More than half of the Congolese population is now under 35 years** and it is imperative to engage this group in the development of a system that works better for them;
- 4. Young people today are more connected than ever thanks to the tools that allow them to discuss, share and collaborate.** This offers an unprecedented comparative perspective in the society and the replication of good practices from one place to another online and offline;

# CERC IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS 2019

Led by local people, we tackle the causes of corruption at the root, and rebuild hope after decades of widespread corruption and mismanagement that undermined the social services in South-Kivu. We are dedicated to making integrity a practical option for as many people as possible, and these figures highlight some key successes in 2019.

## STUDENT ACTING FOR HONESTY INTEGRITY AND EQUALITY



In line with its strategic plan 2017-2021, CERC has since its inception left no stone unturned to engage youth in the promotion of integrity and good governance by adopting novel and impact-oriented approaches. One of these approaches gearing towards grooming a new breed of reasonable citizens has been the setting of integrity clubs in secondary schools since 2017.

The philosophy behind the project is that youth must be empowered and provided with right opportunities to engage in the fight against corruption because they have power to change socio-economic setting. ICs are such platforms where youth can reflect on the problem, voice out their views and interact with through a myriad of community monitoring activities.

In 2019, the project has gathered momentum and reached 55 clubs which are now operational in secondary school in Uvira and Bukavu (South-Kivu). From feedback received, impact has been visible in the short term, in very many schools, for example students and staff are more cautious about their behaviour and promote their right conduct. We have also seen a growing number of young people participating actively in anti-corruption activities such as debate, sketch, painting, production of short films etc. Clubs members are now being encouraged to consider moving out of schools' boundaries to promote integrity and organise inter-ICs activities.

**“With Integrity Clubs established in 55 secondary schools in Uvira and Bukavu, students, parents and the whole community have better ability to hold schools accountable for quality of education services provided.”**

**Heri Bitamala, Executive Director**



A series of initiatives have been undertaken by the CERC to boost up the Integrity Club project. In 2019, a training of School Facilitators (educators designated by Principals to guide members and assist the clubs) was conducted in January and February 2019 to empower them on the essential of the anti-corruption legal framework, and discuss ways and means to render ICs more interactive and visible.



Over and above a series of interactions on the concept of “Integrity”, the CERC so organised a march against corruption at provincial level with 100 members of ICs in December 2019 in response to high-level corruption in education and key social sectors in South-Kivu. The ICs member led by the CERC handed over the memorandum of demands to government officials, which

included a demand for government intervention in the fighting corruption in the

education sector. The ICs members also urged the government to rehabilitate and equip the schools to allow the little Congolese to study in the best conditions.

More so, after leaving school, members are encouraged to pursue their engagement against corruption via other established platforms such as **“Les bâtisseurs de l’intégrité”** and the Independent Agency Against Corruption. We expect that the youth, imbued with the principles of integrity, demonstrate resistance and intolerance to corruption and malpractices.

ICs members of Institut Guido Maria Conforti conceived a painting sensitizing parents, students, teachers and school officials to fight corruption in school.

