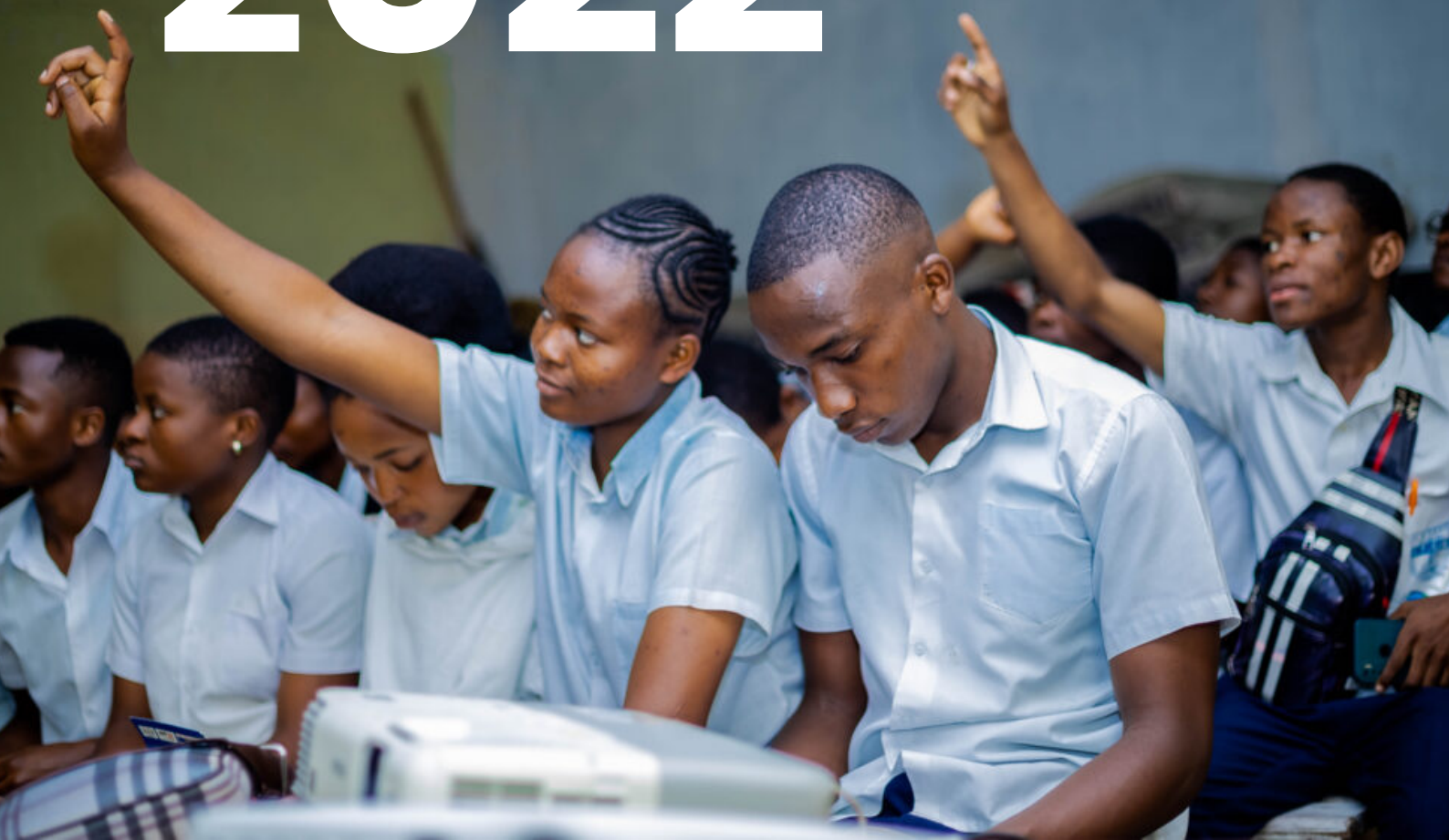




ANNUAL REPORT 2022



“By teaching youth about integrity, we give them the knowledge, skills and behaviors to fight corrupt practices and establish new behavioral norms and values for society.”

CERC ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2022

In the pursuit of a corruption-free Congo, the **Centre de Recherche sur l'Anti-Corruption** (CERC) proudly unveils its Annual Report for the year 2022. This document stands as a testament to our unwavering commitment to combat inefficiency and corruption within public services, and to advocate for positive change.

Throughout the year, CERC's dedicated team, in collaboration with our esteemed partners and the vibrant youth of Kinshasa and South Kivu, worked tirelessly to advance knowledge on the causes and consequences of corruption. Through innovative initiatives, such as the establishment of 204 Integrity Clubs and the direct training of 3060 school children, we empowered the next generation to monitor and demand improvements in their educational environments.

Moreover, we equipped 278 teachers and 138 principals with the necessary tools and knowledge to combat inefficiency and corruption within 150 secondary schools. The impact of these efforts is reflected in the successful resolution of 33% of identified issues, ranging from inadequate classrooms to sanitation facilities, demonstrating the tangible difference that can be made through collective action.

This report also includes the fund accountability statement, meticulously prepared in accordance with our Articles of Association and Accounting and Reporting Procedures. It serves as a testament to our unwavering dedication to transparency and responsible stewardship of resources.

As we reflect on the past year, we are inspired by the progress made and invigorated for the challenges ahead. Together, we envision a Congo where government, public institutions, politics, businesses, and civil society stand united against corruption. Thank you for joining us in this transformative journey.

Sincerely,



Heri Bitamala
President CEO

WHO WE ARE

CERC is a DRC-based nonprofit organization that empowers youth and local communities to solve complex corruption-related problems.



OUR MISSION

Our mission is to advance knowledge on the causes and consequences of corruption and support the development of new anti-corruption policies and initiatives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We believe in the power and potential of young people to create solutions to some of the most pressing challenges of our time. Driven by this belief, our secondary mission is to empower young people with skills and tools to create positive change towards a more accountable, open and inclusive institutions and public services”.

OUR VISION

CERC is working towards a Congo in which:

- Government, Politics, Businesses, Civil Society are free from corruption.**
- Individuals and groups are empowered with knowledge and skills to take action to claim and defend their human rights and the rights of others.**
- Local leadership capacity emerges to influence decision-makers and hold governments accountable to the needs and aspirations of citizens;**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2022, CERC made significant strides towards its mission. 138 school principals and 278 teachers underwent extensive training on integrity-building and anti-corruption measures within the educational system. This comprehensive initiative aimed to instill a culture of accountability and ethical conduct within schools.

Furthermore, as part of the USAID-funded Youth Excel Project, CERC facilitated the socio-economic reintegration of 45 unemployed and underrepresented youth in Kinshasa. This initiative not only provided tangible support to these individuals but also contributed to broader efforts in combating corruption and inefficiency.

A pivotal aspect of CERC's work in 2022 was the training of 2250 schoolchildren on mechanisms to foster accountability within their educational environments. This investment in the younger generation empowers them with the skills and knowledge to actively participate in monitoring and advocating for improved educational services.

Collaboration was also a cornerstone of CERC's efforts in 2022. The organization joined forces with the Network of African Parliamentarians against Corruption to draft and submit two bills to integrate integrity clubs and integrity education into the DRC's education curriculum. This strategic partnership represents a significant step towards embedding anti-corruption measures within the educational framework of the country.

With this revised strategy, CERC demonstrates a commitment to innovation and a willingness to take bold steps toward achieving its mission of holding the powerful accountable for the betterment of society. Despite operating in highly challenging conditions, CERC remains resolute in pursuing a corruption-free Congo. The organization is poised to face the forthcoming years with determination, buoyed by the continued support and generosity of longstanding and newly engaged donors. This collective effort ensures that CERC's vital work continues unabated.

Highlights of the year included:

In 2022, CERC achieved several notable milestones, demonstrating its unwavering commitment to combating corruption and inefficiency in public services. Some of the highlights of the year included:

- **Comprehensive Training for School Principals and Teachers:** CERC conducted intensive training sessions for 138 school principals and 278 teachers. This program focused on integrity building and imparting anti-corruption measures within the educational system, equipping them with essential skills and knowledge.
- **Socio-Economic Reintegration of Underrepresented Youth:** Through the USAID-funded Youth Excel Project, CERC played a pivotal role in the socio-economic reintegration of 45 unemployed and underrepresented youth in Kinshasa. This initiative

not only provided tangible support to these individuals but also contributed to broader efforts in combating unemployment.

- **Empowering School Children:** 2250 schoolchildren were empowered with knowledge and skills to foster accountability within their educational environments. This investment in the younger generation is crucial in building a culture of vigilance and advocacy for improved educational services.
- **Strategic Collaboration with African Parliamentarians:** CERC forged a strategic partnership with the Network of African Parliamentarians against Corruption. Together, they drafted and submitted two bills to integrate integrity clubs and integrity education into the DRC's education curriculum. This collaborative effort represents a significant step towards embedding anti-corruption measures within the country's educational framework.

These accomplishments highlight CERC's dedication to its mission and the positive impact it continues to have on the youth, educational institutions, and the broader community. Despite the challenges faced, CERC's strategic vision for 2022-2025 incorporates robust measures to not only address immediate concerns but also prepare for potential future crises. This forward-looking approach reflects the organization's commitment to holding the powerful accountable for the betterment of society. With the support of donors, both longstanding and new, CERC is poised to continue its vital work in the years to come.

CERC STRATEGIC GOALS

In 2022, we directed our attention towards four prioritized and strategic objectives. We envisioned them as interlinked components of a unified endeavor, with each one bolstering the others. These four prioritized endeavors influenced four pivotal facets of Congolese society: the populace, ethical principles, institutions, and legal frameworks.

GOAL 1: Diagnose corruption issues and use findings as a reference to stimulate more informed debates and formulate further projects on anti-corruption.

GOAL 2: Build and support partnerships and coalitions of civil society organizations to fight corruption more effectively.

GOAL 3: Engage citizens and young people in promoting integrity more actively.

GOAL 4: Build governance foundations and operational structures and processes for scaling up anti-corruption and integrity-building works in other provinces.

PROGRESS IN 2022

GOAL 1 **DIAGNOSE CORRUPTION ISSUES AND USE FINDINGS AS A REFERENCE TO STIMULATE MORE INFORMED DEBATES AND FORMULATE FURTHER PROJECTS ON ANTI-CORRUPTION**



In 2022, CERC embarked on groundbreaking initiatives in corruption research and studies. This involved conducting consultation workshops with senior education officials and other influential figures in the education sector. Through these workshops, CERC delved into the root causes that contribute to corruption and the mismanagement of public funds. These findings serve as a crucial foundation for fostering informed discussions and shaping future endeavors to combat corruption Education, Health, Public Administration, and Justice sectors.

Additionally, CERC's comprehensive survey, which encompassed 2,250 students across 150 schools, played a pivotal role in understanding the level of young people's involvement and their motivations for championing integrity. This survey provided essential insights that helped in crafting a tailored and sustainable approach to engage young individuals in the promotion of integrity.

RESULT 1 :

CERC FACILITATED A CONSULTATION WORKSHOP ON INTEGRITY EDUCATION WITH 96 SENIOR EDUCATION OFFICIALS INCLUDING 3 MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT IN BUKAVU AND KINSHASA

In 2022, CERC facilitated a crucial gathering, bringing together 96 participants including senior education officials, parliamentarians, Journalists, representatives from Teachers' Union and Schools Founders. The purpose of this event, held under the Students Acting for Accountability and Quality of Education in DRC project, was to evaluate the effectiveness of CERC's approach to anti-corruption in the DRC education sector.

One of the foremost outcomes of this workshop was the establishment of a memorandum of understanding. This document represents a notable milestone, signifying the incorporation of integrity clubs into every secondary school in South Kivu and Kinshasa. Notably, this agreement received formal endorsement from the Ministry of Primary, Secondary, and Technical Education, with representation from the Provincial Directorate of Education of South Kivu 1, as well as CERC.



Figure 1 : Senior officials gathering for a workshop in Bukavu, discussing strategies to combat corruption in public services. Photo: CERC Bukavu

This collaborative effort represents a significant stride towards fostering a culture of accountability and integrity within the DRC educational landscape. The incorporation of integrity clubs in education sector will serve as a powerful tool in empowering students to actively participate in the improvement of education quality and the eradication of corruption.

RESULT 2 :

CERC CONDUCTED A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON ITS INTEGRITY CLUB MODEL IN SOUTH KIVU AND KINSHASA

In 2022, under the Students Acting for Accountability and Quality Education initiative funded by the Global Partnership for Education, CERC conducted a comprehensive KAP Survey on its Integrity Club model in South Kivu and Kinshasa (in the Democratic Republic of the Congo). This study aimed to identify effective delivery models and map out the key stakeholders for successful implementation and community support.

The research was strategically designed to align with the 4E approach to behavior understanding and influence: **ENABLE, ENCOURAGE, ENGAGE, and EXEMPLIFY.**



Figure 2 : Integrity Clubs members during a workshop in Bukavu, discussing strategies to combat corruption in public services. Photo: CERC Bukavu.

KEYS FINDINGS:

The key findings emerging from the data for South Kivu and Kinshasa are given below:

- Youths recognize the importance of integrity and are motivated to improve the society in which they live and the schools in which they are taught. However, it is acknowledged that the rate of change will be slow in communities with strong traditions and that collective effort will be required compared to an individual.
- The opportunity for personal development is a motivating factor for becoming a monitor. Participants have acquired new knowledge and skills to tackle integrity-related issues such as corruption by participating in Integrity clubs.
- In schools with active focal teachers and supportive headteachers, the climate for monitoring is positive, and there is some engagement in extracurricular activities organized by the Integrity Clubs. Confidence levels and awareness of civil rights have increased for youth involved in monitoring activities.

- CERC has provided some support; however, this is considered inadequate in frequency and content. This has acted as a demotivating factor and, in some cases, contributed to the loss of trust.
- Lack of family support remains a challenge, particularly for youth from more financially disadvantaged backgrounds. However, when families had attended sensitisation sessions, they were more likely to support monitoring activities.
- Competing school priorities and a lack of time are also factors that deter students from volunteering their time.
- There is a lack of political engagement, whereby local political representatives lack the commitment to the activities undertaken by the youth. This is linked to low engagement from the project leads of the projects the youth are monitoring and from community members. Low engagement affects the motivation levels of monitors considerably, and the low prioritisation of monitoring acts as a deterrent to non-monitors.
- Within the school Integrity Clubs, there were complaints of low attendance, immaturity, and low engagement of youth, particularly over a long period. This loss in the momentum of the groups can be attributed to several factors, including low peer engagement, low teacher engagement and low levels of engagement from partner organisations.
- Actions have been taken to incorporate some monitoring activities into student's everyday life. For example, putting in place mechanisms to monitor the punctuality of teachers.
- A long-term barrier to maintaining engagement in monitoring activities across all youth is the prospect of migration for employment, further studies, and marriage (for female youth).
- Despite the desire to see the change in schools and in the community, there is little evidence of monitors integrating long-term mechanisms to monitor. There is no mechanism to track the activities of ex-monitors, and therefore it is difficult to understand to what extent they are continuing to engage in monitoring and the impact of this.

GOAL 2



BUILD AND SUPPORT PARTNERSHIPS AND COALITIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS TO FIGHT CORRUPTION MORE EFFECTIVELY

Fighting corruption by any means in DRC is still very dangerous. Doing so safely requires a joint effort of many institutions and individuals from all different societal spectrums, including state and non-state actors and individuals.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

In 2022, CERC partnered with the African Parliamentary Network Against Corruption to formulate two legislative proposals aimed at incorporating anti-corruption protocols into the education sector of the DRC.

Through active engagement with Members of Parliament, CERC effectively influenced policymaking at a legislative level. This collaborative effort guarantees that integrity education is not only included in the curriculum but also reinforced by the legal framework. This significant milestone lays the foundation for a systematic and standardized approach to instilling values of integrity within educational institutions throughout the Democratic Republic of Congo.

GOAL 3



ENGAGE CITIZENS AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN PROMOTING INTEGRITY MORE ACTIVELY

In February 2022, CERC initiated an 18-month project, generously funded by the Global Partnership for Education, with the objective of establishing Integrity Clubs in 150 secondary schools across Kinshasa and South-Kivu.

The project's focus extended beyond imparting awareness about the detrimental impact of corruption; it also sought to equip youth with the requisite skills and knowledge to actively engage in monitoring the reform outlined in the DRC Education and Training Sector Strategy 2016-2025.

This endeavor targeted six municipalities in South Kivu and six municipalities in Kinshasa, striving to ensure that all students, particularly girls, have access to accountable, inclusive, and equitable quality education services.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

300 SCHOOL-CHILDREN TRAINED ON MECHANISMS TO BUILD ACCOUNTABILITY IN SCHOOLS

Empowering our youth to fight corruption begins with ensuring that they understand how to recognize it. One of CERC's most impactful initiatives in 2022 has been the establishment of 204 Integrity Clubs in South Kivu and Kinshasa. These clubs empower 2250 students, ages 14-19, with the skills and resources needed to monitor education services in their schools. This innovative approach not only cultivates a sense of civic responsibility among the youth but also empowers them to hold their leaders accountable. This initiative not only improves the quality of education but also sets a precedent for ethical leadership within the educational system.

CERC's dedication to the cause has not gone unnoticed within the communities they serve. The success of student-led advocacy efforts, which resulted in the resolution of 33% of identified problems, speaks volumes about the organization's effectiveness in mobilizing and empowering the youth. This tangible impact underscores CERC's ability to translate their vision into practical, positive change on the ground.



By teaching youth about integrity, we give them the knowledge, skills and behaviours to fight corrupt practices and establish new behavioural norms and values for society

The integrity Education program in schools recognizes that transformative change can only occur when young people are encouraged and equipped to act with integrity from an early age. To do so, CERC works through local schools, which actively engage students through **Integrity Clubs** to find out what concerns them the most and where education services and infrastructures can be improved. Students are trained on how to gather evidence and how to advocate with school officials to identify and implement solutions to education crises.

138 SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND 278 TEACHERS TRAINED ON INTEGRITY BUILDING AND ANTI-CORRUPTION MEASURES IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

CERC's training programs for teachers and principals from 150 secondary schools in South Kivu and Kinshasa are a testament to their holistic approach. By equipping educators with the knowledge and resources to combat inefficiency and corruption in education services, CERC is fostering a collaborative effort to create an environment conducive to learning and growth.



Figure 3: A workshop participant signing the memorandum of understanding. Bukavu, March 2023

GOAL 4 **BUILD GOVERNANCE FOUNDATIONS AND OPERATIONAL STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES FOR SCALING UP ANTI-CORRUPTION AND INTEGRITY BUILDING WORKS IN OTHER PROVINCES**



For CERC to fight corruption successfully, we must be equipped with the necessary skills and expertise. Therefore, one of our prioritized areas for 2021 was to build the capacity of our organization and its core staff members.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

Tapping into the national expertise and resources, 19 CERC staff members including trainees benefited from a series of training, including **Program Development and Management, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, Advocacy and Policy Engagement, Finance management, and Finance Audit**, delivered by the **Group d'Etudes et Capacitation en Gestion (BEAG)**.

PLAN FOR 2023 :

As CERC will progressively develop and monitor its institutional capacity, it will gradually be seen as a bridge to national anti-corruption resources and expertise on anti-corruption in 2022. It will begin to transform itself to be one of the capacity development institutions in anti-corruption work for DRC.

EXPECTED RESULTS IN 2023

- CERC's Board of directors comprises eminent individuals from diverse backgrounds and expertise (development, human rights, democratic governance, youth development, private sectors, and capacity development).
- CERC's Executive Director and Board are given opportunities to participate in regional and international anti-corruption events to learn from and network with other partners and international experts.
- Mutual understanding, trust, and confidence between Congolese institutions and CERC are improved.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE, AND MANAGEMENT

The organization started as a Non-Profit Association in 2017. Today its operations are governed by its Statutes dated April 15, 2017 (as amended in May 2021). Centre de Recherche sur l'Anti-Corruption is registered under Law 004/2001 as a Public Utility Organization under registration number F92/42579.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

The governing structure of our local organization is transparent and conforms to relevant laws. We seek to follow the principles of best governance practices.

We have :

- **A GOVERNING BODY** that supervises and evaluates the executive director oversees the program and budgetary matters. It defines overall strategy, is consistent with the organization's mission, ensures that resources are used efficiently and appropriately, that performance is measured, that financial integrity is assured and that social commitment is maintained.
- **WRITTEN PROCEDURES** determining the appointment, responsibilities, and terms of members of the governing body, preventing and managing conflicts of interest.
- **A REGULAR GENERAL MEETING** with authority to appoint and replace members of the governing body. The Board meets quarterly. Its role is one of governance and strategic oversight. It approves the budget, operational and strategic plans, appoints the President and Chief Executive, and approves overall policy concerning staff employment. The Board contributes in many ways to aspects of CERC's work, for example, through sub-committees, approving strategy, approving new policies, and advising on fundraising. The Board also determines significant issues that affect CERC's public image - for example, whether to endorse campaigns promoted by other organizations, engage in fundraising forms that might be deemed sensitive, and any issues with significant legal implications. All other decisions are delegated to the Chief Executive, who consults the Board collectively or individually where they have the expertise to contribute or are thought likely to have strong views on a particular issue.

PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT

We manage our organizations professionally and effectively. Our policies and procedures seek to promote excellence in all respects.

- **FINANCIAL CONTROLS:** internal financial control procedures ensure that all funds are used effectively and minimize the risk of misused funds. We follow principles of best practices in financial management.
- **EVALUATION:** we seek to improve our effectiveness on an ongoing basis. We have defined evaluation procedures for our boards, staff, programs, and projects based on mutual accountability.
- **PARTNERS:** our organizational integrity includes ensuring that our partners also meet the highest standards of honesty and accountability and that they take all steps to ensure that they have no dealings with organizations or persons involved in illegal or unethical practices.
- **HUMAN RESOURCES:** our performance and success reflect the quality of our staff volunteers and management practices, and we are committed to investing in human resource development. Remuneration and benefits strike a balance between public expectations of nonprofit organizations and the need to attract and retain the staff that we need to fulfill our mission. Our human resources policies seek to conform fully with relevant international and national labor regulations, in addition to applying the best voluntary sector practices in terms of team member and volunteer rights and safety, health and hygiene at work, and work/life balance. Human resources policies include procedures for evaluating the performance of all staff regularly.
- **BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION:** human resources policies expressly prohibit acts of bribery or corruption by staff or other persons working for or on behalf of the organization.
- **WHISTLE-BLOWERS:** staff members are encouraged to draw management's attention to activities that may not comply with the law or our mission and commitments.

OUR POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

Our legitimacy is derived from the quality of our work and the recognition and support of the people with and for whom we work, in addition to our donors and the wider public. CERC is committed to openness, transparency, and honesty about its structures, objectives, policies, and activities, and we communicate actively to stakeholders and make information publicly available.

As a small organization, we know how difficult it is to formalize policies and procedures. So we're committed to sharing our policies for your use and will update the policies provided here on an ongoing basis. Feel free to use them and contextualize them for your organizational needs.

RECOGNITION AND THANKS



Dear Members and Supporters of CERC,

As we conclude the year 2022, it is with a sense of profound gratitude and accomplishment that we reflect on the strides made in pursuit of our shared vision for a corruption-free Congo. The tireless dedication of our team, the unwavering commitment of our partners, and the steadfast resolve of the youth involved have been the cornerstones of our progress.

Through our Integrity Clubs, we have empowered over 2250 young minds, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to monitor and advocate for improved education services in their schools. This grassroots initiative has not only fostered a sense of ownership among the youth but has also proven instrumental in driving positive change. Furthermore, our training programs for teachers and principals have been pivotal in arming the education sector with the tools necessary to combat inefficiency and corruption. By investing in the educators, themselves, we recognize that we are effecting change at its very source, ensuring a sustainable impact for years to come.

The numbers speak volumes - with the concerted efforts of our student-led advocacy, we successfully addressed 33% of the identified issues, ranging from inadequate infrastructure to sanitation facilities. These tangible outcomes are a testament to the power of collective action and the potential that lies within the youth of our nation.

As we move forward, let us remain steadfast in our pursuit of a Congo where integrity permeates every facet of public life. Together, we have shown that change is not only possible but achievable through concerted, principled efforts. Let our shared vision continue to inspire us in the days ahead.

With warm regards,
Heri Bitamala
Executive Director



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