

Interest from Rwanda in vocational training



In the light of the current global travel restrictions, it seems like a story from another decade - but in fact it was as recently as end of January 2020 that a high-ranking delegation from Kigali Independent University (Université Libre de Kigali) accompanied by representatives of the Rwandan office of Sparkassenstiftung für internationale Kooperation embarked on a study trip to Germany. In the previous year, ULK and Sparkassenstiftung established a partnership with the aim of integrating practice-oriented financial

management curricula and innovative learning methods into the university degree programs in order to better prepare students for their professional life.

Sparkassenstiftung für internationale Kooperation was founded in 1992 to systematically transfer know-how. The organization aims at contributing to the development of prosperity and stable economic structures in selected countries. In the implementation of this objective, German savings banks and regional savings banks associations play an important role.

For more than ten years, Sparkassenstiftung has been working with various partner organizations in Rwanda with the aim of strengthening the microfinance sector on the supply and demand side as well as fostering vocational training and creating sustainable solutions suited to local needs.

The first stop of the journey was the University of Applied Sciences in Kempten, the partner university of the ULK in Germany. Representatives of both universities and the Sparkassenstiftung substantiated their plans for a joint summer school and master program for students from both countries. A special highlight for all participants was a meeting with the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Dr. Gerd Müller and the Federal Minister for Education and Research, Anja Karliczek, who also visited the university.



The trip continued with a visit at the Ministry of Culture in Stuttgart with valuable impressions regarding the dual training system in Germany. During the following days, discussions on a possible transfer of the system to the Rwandan context were further deepened at the Sparkassenakademie and the Partnersparkasse Heidelberg. The guests were particularly impressed by the range of offered training programs and the infrastructure of the association's headquarters. The visit to the partner savings bank Heidelberg completed the successful week by making the needs of persons in demand for initial and continuing vocational training tangible.



The delegation from Rwanda was convinced by the system of strong interconnectedness of in-company and school/academic training which was presented by various actors in Stuttgart and Heidelberg. In this regard, the representatives would like to integrate parts of it in the degree programs which are offered at Kigali Independent University in the future. Through closer cooperation between the university and local companies, students will be given a broader insight into professional practice already during their academic careers.

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