

THE LIGHT

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**Rwanda
catapults
onto ILO
governing
body**

RWANDA'S healthcare

**Impressive
achievements
registered in
7 years**



OPINION:

**Africa's race against
the machines**



FOCUS:

**Health Centers in
the City of Kigali**



BY PROF. VINCE SININING

Quality education crisis in Rwanda

Crisis in education in the whole of Africa has prompted government leaders to take actions. In Rwanda, many students are in school [from primary to tertiary level] yet some of them are receiving education of poor quality.

In Rwanda's higher education sector, many institutions have offered degree programs with inappropriate facilities. Many students have graduated but learning

too little and many are still incompetent to practice in the real world. I have the opportunity to serve as a Vice Chancellor of one of the universities for one academic year. In that short period of

time, I experienced the current efforts of the Higher Education Council in seriously monitoring the delivery of programs and status of facilities and infrastructure of each Higher Education

Institution [HEI]. Truly, a good beginning in moving forward towards providing Rwandans a better quality in their pursuits of higher education.

My year-long stay in Kigali provided a new insight and understanding on higher education in Africa, and a hands-on experience on how the government is moving forward towards the quality of education and learning achievement. I was very impressed of the development of most sectors in Rwanda, except education. As a former leader of a higher institution, I observed the slower pace of



Dr. Vince Sinining visiting schools and observing classroom activities.



development in higher education and the low quality of teaching and learning provided to students. Impressive enough, the government has started enacting programs to unlock the potential of HEIs. In March, the government passed and signed the Higher Education Law. In the same month, the Higher Education Council released its Audit Reports to HEIs conducted by external auditors. Many of the private schools were suspended as the government directed its attention towards the quality of education and learning achievement. In my personal view, the suspension of many HEIs was necessary to impose specific rules to HEIs in order to provide quality education to Rwandans.

Graca Machel once said, "Education has the capacity to break the intergenerational cycle

of poverty. Go to any poor rural village or urban slum and you will find Africans who share that view." I find this to be true in my experience visiting many poor rural villages in Rwanda. However, for education to be able to break the cycle of poverty, students must learn the core skills to be competent in the real world and schools have the moral obligation to provide this.

When schools deliver appropriate curriculum with qualified trainers

and sufficient facilities, students learn. And we all know that learning drives economic growth, fuels innovation and create jobs. But how many Rwandan graduates are competent enough to land into high paying jobs? How many of them actually get the skills after graduation that enables them to escape poverty and build prosperity? Did schools provide their graduates the power to build more secure livelihoods, enjoy better health and participate

in political process that affect their lives?

The crisis in education in Rwanda, and in the whole of Africa, is evident on the skills that students obtained from their training. The good news is that in Rwanda, the government is doing the right thing in working towards improving the quality of education and learning achievement.

It is time that we all focus on the "quality of education" we provide to our future generation of leaders instead of looking at these necessary changes as politically motivated. Too many of us are focusing on getting more students enrolled in our schools, yet we forgot to provide them the "quality of education" they deserve so they can have the power to improve their lives, enjoy better income, and actively get involved in the political processes that affect them.



Dr. Vince Sinining, visiting schools in the Southern Province.