



PASMAE-ISME Sub Regional Burundi Conference 2–4 September 2024

Conference Venue: University of Burundi

Conference Theme: Promoting Music Education in Burundi

CONFERENCE REPORT

1. Overview

The PASMAE-ISME sub-regional conference in Bujumbura, was convened by Dr Justin Baransananikiye. It marked a historic milestone, as Burundi had not previously been affiliated with PASMAE, presenting a unique opportunity for growth, cultural exchange, and collaboration. Efforts to introduce music education in 2013 faced challenges due to a lack of expertise and resources. At present, the Music Institute of Gitega, operated by Baransananikiye, remains the sole institution offering music programs in Burundi; however, it functions without government support.

2. Introduction

The landmark conference took place from September 2–4, 2024, with the aim of addressing the challenges of music education in Burundi and revitalizing musical arts education within the country. The conference was centered around the theme: *Promoting Music Education in Burundi: Access and Strategies*. Despite encountering difficulties, including low levels of attendance, this ground breaking event has potential for long-term impact.

3. Programme

The three-day program helped participants to express their views and concerns, leading to valuable, unscheduled discussion sessions that provided a deeper understanding of the challenges facing music education in Burundi. Local cultural norms regarding punctuality contributed to a few delays and unscheduled sessions, though these proved instrumental in highlighting the need for cooperation between the existing private music education efforts and potential public sector initiatives.

4. Presentations

The welcome address was given by PASMAE President, Kalinde, who later presented a paper titled *Music Education in Zambia: A Critical Examination of Policy Frameworks*. The paper urged Burundi to reflect on its own policy frameworks to strengthen musical arts education.

The opening day's keynote address was delivered by PASMAE Secretary General, Benon Kigozi, on the topic ***Building a Foundation: Implementing Music Education from Scratch***. Talking through nine crucial points as follows:

1. *Understanding the Local Context*
2. *Building Partnerships*
3. *Securing Resources*
4. *Training and Empowering Educators*
5. *Developing a Curriculum*
6. *Establishing Pilot Programs*
7. *Promoting Community Engagement*
8. *Fostering a Lifelong Love for Music*
9. *Monitoring and Evaluating Progress*

The above nine points were well received, as they resonated with the audience, highlighting their relevance to local planning efforts.

On the second day, Caroline delivered the keynote titled *Burundi – Why Pasmae?*, discussing the support available through Pasmae and its international partners, such as the International Society for Music Education (ISME). She conducted a SWOT analysis, underscoring that Burundi possesses not only challenges but also strengths and opportunities. A senior representative from the Ministry of Culture attended the opening and closing ceremonies, delivering speeches that expressed support for enhancing music education in Burundi. Other presentations included papers by Caroline and Dawn Joseph, Mellitus Wanyama and a postgraduate student, Veronica Mwai. All sessions were highly interactive.

5. Dignitaries

The presence of senior government officials at both the opening and closing ceremonies was a significant endorsement of the conference's objectives. Their speeches expressed positive commitments, signaling a promising future for the development of music education in Burundi.

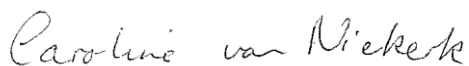
6. Budget

Budget expenses included promotional materials, such as posters and floral arrangements, venue rental and technical support. The conference was free for attendees, with no refreshments provided, and no musical performances took place. Presenters covered their own expenses, though they were offered bottled water and transport refund. The three international delegates were provided with private transportation to and from the airport and the City Hill Hotel-University of Burundi venue.

8. Follow-Up

Pasmae continues to collaborate with Dr. Baransananikiye and his daughter, Fidélité Bigirimana, who served as the primary local organizers of the conference. Pasmae extends its sincere appreciation to them and looks forward to continuing this collaboration to advance music education in Burundi.

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