

Eraste Bulaya Jumapili Kakule

Learning of Protestant church's leaders from global encounters

A qualitative empirical study
from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo



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Dedication

To you, my children – Providence Nzanu Bulaya, Bulaya Beneza Kahindo, Asha Bulaya Vira, Bulaya Faino Kabuo, and Blessd'A Bulaya Bwambale,

To you, my wife – Darlène Kanyere Sivitulera Muhasa Balerwa,

To you all, who are longing for positive changes to happen in the Church communities, the local and global societies,

To you, my mother – Donotianah Kaswera Muhima, who left this earth sooner after I embarked on this project,

I dedicate this work.

Executive summary

This study explores the learning acquired by the Protestant church's leaders with regard to partaking in global encounters. It was conducted in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, a Sub-Saharan country that has been facing heavy crises due to armed conflicts and unstable political institutions for decades. The study focuses on the church leaders' learning outside academy, as they get in touch with other people and places globally.

Context and problem of the study

For decades, the Democratic Republic of Congo – mainly its eastern part – has been characterized by unprecedented social crises and armed conflicts, causing death for millions of people on the one hand, and massive internal displacements of the affected population on the other hand. The country's political institutions newly set in place are still unstable and in transition towards democracy; the government is incapable to cater to its citizens whose situation is aggravated by the one of its neighbouring countries – which are unstable as well. This goes back to the genocide committed in Rwanda in the 1990s, as thousands of refugees settled on the Congolese national territory. The majority of Congolese people live in indescribable poverty and misery despite the numerous assets that the country possesses. In this situation churches play an intensive role as being beside families the only institutions providing social support. The Congolese churches are internationally linked, for example, to the catholic churches in the world or on the Protestant side to the World Council of Churches and other international church movements. By this, possibilities for encounters abroad are existing. Instead of losing hope because of a hard today and an uncertain tomorrow, people are involved in cooperation with others at different levels, especially regarding moving beyond the national boundaries. As churches are globally interlinked in their work for humanity, international learning and solidarity are an important resource for daily life. As a consequence, the church leadership is related

in an international framework and mutual learning is seen as possibility for the development of churches and personal growth.

The research discourse sums up what education or learning would be as “lifelong learning” (Aspin et al., 2012: ix; McGivney, 2006: 11-13; Edwards et al., 2006: 1-3). For church’s leaders from the Democratic Republic of Congo, so far no research has been conducted about their global and informal learning, their global encounter-related experiences and the implemented improvement ideas brought from abroad. The research focuses on Protestant churches.

State of research

This study is embedded in research on adult education and lifelong learning. People keep learning not only beyond school settings (Barros, 2012: 120) and need to network and to connect in order to keep pace with the continuous changes of the environment for individual and social transformation and prosperity (Brassey & Nick, 2017: 9; Maxwell, 2010: 15-19). In this regard, scholars interpret education as a landscape, by underlying learning with and from external environments through collaboration, networking and partnering with others at different levels – local, regional, national and international (OECD 2016: 1). Informal learning is a key component of lifelong learning, and one of its many learning opportunities for change is getting involved in encounters – exchange visits and travelling beyond national boundaries (Fullan, 2011: 5; Ministry of Education, 2007: 9).

There is so far no scientific study conducted on this kind of learning in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The analysis of the research discourse sustains such a need as it emphasises the importance of learning by encounters, mainly with regard to shaping organisations, individuals’ lives, and the global community.

Research questions

This study intends to provide an answer to the research question “How do the leaders of the Protestant churches in the Democratic Republic of

Congo perceive international travels or exchange visits?” This main question is operationalized under three specific sub-questions, namely (1) What do the Democratic Republic of Congo Protestant church's leaders learn from other members of the church international network during travels and stays abroad? (2) How beneficial is the acquired knowledge to the individual church leader, the society and the church? And (3) What are the challenges church's leaders report to face as they implement the acquired knowledge? (chap. 1.2)

Research methods

Basing on its overall purpose (Merriam & Grenier, 2019: 4; Gorman & Clayton, 2005: 3), the scholarly recommendations with regard to researching individual perspectives of persons – mainly their actions and experiences, and the little amount of knowledge upon informal learning in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo (Norton, 2009: 166), this study was conceptualized as a qualitative empirical research (chap. 3.1). Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with 28 Protestant church's leaders who were selected from three major Protestant church denominations in the area of study, using theoretical sampling techniques (by referring to gender, age, educational level, church belongingness, church location, status of visited country, exerted ministry in the local church, and number of travels abroad). The data collection and data analysis took place in a simultaneous but iterative way so to take advantage of the qualities of people in the field. Depending on the educational level of the participants, interviews were done either in French or in Kiswahili before being transcribed and translated to English to facilitate both their analysis and collaboration with the interpretation group, for quality control's sake. For the same purpose of ensuring quality, interview intra-coding was followed by inter-coding within the expert group. In an iterative and deductive-inductive approach, a qualitative content analysis was used for data analysis. A coding system, primarily made of deductive codes, was designed and progressively completed with inductive ones throughout the

analysis process. All the 28 interviews were coded using MaxQDA software. The data had been condensed to the interviewees' portraits, and with reference to the abduction process, to criteria of comparison. These criteria, in their turn, enabled the emergence of ideal types of learning from global encounters as experienced by the Protestant church's leaders from the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Findings

From the empirical data, five criteria were developed, that is (1) experience during travel, (2) self-reported learning, (3) ways of transfer including individual purpose, (4) transfer benefits for society, and (5) challenges. Referring to these criteria, five ideal types of learning from global encounters emerged, namely the personal well-being-oriented learning, the own ministry-oriented learning, the local society-oriented learning, the organisational change-oriented learning, and the world society-oriented learning. The personal well-being-oriented learning typifies a church leader who acquires learning with his/her own welfare in mind, and therefore grasps aspects relating to ways of improving one's own life as a human being who has both a range of inherent needs to meet and a nuclear family to cater to. The own ministry-oriented learning is typical of a church leader who, as he/she acquires knowledge, reflects ways of improving his/her ministry (job or workplace). The local society-oriented learning features a church leader who, from global encounters, learns in the perspective of one's local civil society that he/she keeps comparing with the global one, especially by finding out some commonalities and differences. For such a leader, bringing some improvement within one's local society is the idea behind any learning acquisition. As for the organisational change-oriented learning, global learners aim at bringing some improvement within their local churches (organisations) at different levels; whereas for the world society-oriented learning, the focus is on the global world realities, and how to cope with them in an appropriate way for better connection with people and/or places globally (chap. 4.3 & 4.4).

In addition, this research shows that the travelling church leaders learned effectively from getting involved in encounters, and that the benefits of their learning go beyond the individual person, doing good to the individual, the leader's family, the church, the local and global societies. The church leaders have a limited understanding of the host churches' wealth, assuming that it is gained thanks to church members' offerings and tithes only. Besides, the study reveals that applying locally the globally-acquired material is not only challenging, but also that all types of learning do not impact the society equally, nor do they contribute to learning and social development in the same way (chap. 5.1)

Discussion

Basing mainly on the informal learning for adult people and church leadership and/or management, the analysis of the results for this study highlights a variety of facts on global learning beyond national boundaries (chap. 5.2). The study gives evidence not only on the role of travels and exchange visits for global learning and change, but also it points out reflexivity coupled with critical thinking as being the key characteristics one should possess as he/she embarks on learning within a global era. The study highlights that valuing diversity, thanks to its enriching feature, is central for church leadership and strategic management today. Meanwhile highlighting the importance of financial empowerment for sustainable finances in the church and the church leader's home, it argues that the latter should act as role model both with regard to his/her own self-reliance, and that of the church organisation in which he/she is serving.

Implications of the study

The findings of this study suggest venues for further investigation. These relate to the need of conducting a qualitative research on informal learning in the Democratic Republic of Congo as a whole, the understanding of the enabling conditions for better learning from global encounters, how church leaders deal with the issue of diversity in their churches, the

church transnational partnerships and networks, in addition to the distribution of the five types that emerged from the data dealt with herewith.

For practice, having church leaders put at their church members' disposal a set of tools for continuous education and learning, managing efficiently the church finances, reflecting on ways for their self-reliance and the one of their churches, involving church members in the church differing life aspects, organising conceptual exchanges on church finances and social justice with other churches globally are more than recommended by the study on the church leaders' behalf. The need of getting familiar with the informal learning in which students (and pupils) are engaged beyond school, of networking with other educational institutions, and of urgent restoration of security and peace all over the national territory are of great importance for effective global and informal learning. In addition, the study underlines the need of putting in place mechanisms to value informally-acquired knowledge, as well as of seeking ways of promoting informal learning within other learning venues, even recognising the students' prior learning and competences that are being developed beyond the school settings.

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Eraste, K. Bulaya Jumapili

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List of abbreviations

AEGEE	Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l’Europe
APA	American Psychological Association
CBCA	Communauté Baptiste au Centre de l’Afrique
Chap.	Chapter
CLA	Classification of Learning Activities
CLCs	Community Learning Centres
COMET	Competence Development and Assessment in TVET
CSEW	Centre for the Study of Education and Work
dvv	Deutschen Volkshochschul-Verband e.V. (The German Adult Education Association)
EAPRIL	European Association for Practitioner Research on Improving Learning
ETFO	Elementary Teacher’s Federation of Ontario
EU	European Union
Fhi	Family Health International
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GENE	Global Education Network Europe
GTZ	German Technical Co-operation
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIS	Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques

ITB	Institut Technik und Bildung (Institute, Technology and Education)
JSSLL	Journal of Social Sciences, Literature and Languages
KMK	Kultusministerkonferenz (Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs)
LLC	Limited Liability Company
MaxQDA	Max (Weber) Qualitative Data Analysis
MONUSCO	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo
MTD	Management Training and Development Ltd
n.d.	No date (sine annum)
NACCCE Education	National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education
NALL	New Approaches to Lifelong Learning
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NYSAN	New York State Afterschool Network
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OGL	Open Government License
OISEUT:	Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto
SEM	Structure Equation Modelling
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
TALIS-PISA	Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) and Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UEM	United Evangelical Mission
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESCO-BIE	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation – International Bureau of Education

UNESCO-IIEP	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation - International Institute for Educational Planning
UNESCO-UIL	UNESCO-Institute for Lifelong Learning
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WSKS	World Summit on Knowledge Society

1 Introduction

The study at hand explores the out-of-class learning of the Protestant church's leaders in one of the Sub-Saharan African countries, the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is about the learning gained by the latter from partaking in encounters beyond national boundaries.

The study is thus embedded in adult, lifelong and global reflections on learning as quality outcome of any educational action, as stressed by the Global Education 2030 agenda in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Elfert, 2019: 538). In fact, inclusive and equitable quality education for all through lifelong learning opportunities is emphasized by UNESCO, thus awakening hopes for a stronger role of adult learning and education in global education agendas and policies (English & Mayo, 2021: 15; UNESCO, 2016: 14). Research recognises that adult learning and education is a "core component of lifelong learning" (UNESCO, 2016: 6; Boyadjieva & Trichkova, 2021: 36). Lifelong learning is required of every human being so to cope with the constant changes that the world is now going through, and therefore be able to survive and flourish (Boyadjieva & Trichkova, 2021: 268; Orji, 2021: 43; Bertram, 2016: 2; Skilbeck, 2006: 48). Constant update of knowledge and skills is very important to cope better with the complexities of a fast-changing world (Zhang & Semple, 2016: 215). Although the majority of researches on learning have focused on the institutionalized and structured formal education and training, evidence is that much learning takes place out of the educational institutions (McGivney, 2006: 11; Edwards, 2006: 1). Learning in domains outside the academy has not received much attention. There is no way of separating living from learning (Findsen & Formosa, 2012: 24; Skilbeck, 2006: 49); so even social interaction like travelling and visiting a friend abroad leads to participating in a learning, although the way in which such practices are conceptualized is still subject to controversy (Skilbeck, 2006: 86; Edwards, 2006:2). However, as it is for teachers and learners, so on-going learning is the norm for leaders (Onyefulu, 2021: 184; Orji, 2021: 24). Learning and leadership go together; leaders need to take time to learn from each other's experiences (made of both successes, setbacks, failures, and so on), namely for improvement ideas (Saleh &

Khine, 2014: 5; Thatcher, 2012: 12; Maxwell, 2011: 76; Trilling & Fadel, 2009: 123; Dotlich et al., 2009: 71). Being diverse, life-wide and lifelong, informal learning presents as an iceberg; hence the many difficulties of researching it. Researchers assume that the challenge to investigate such a type of learning is due to the fact that there is no way to assess its full extent with accuracy; and learning is not the primary motive of engaging in social activities – the motive is the activity itself – nor is it recognised as learning or described as such, for being incidental and unplanned (McGivney, 2006: 13).

The study is reflecting the practices of churches, being an international network. In Sub-Saharan Africa in general, the Democratic Republic of Congo in particular, Christian churches were established in the 19th century by missionaries. Ever since, the relationship between indigenous church's leaders and the overseas mission (missionary's sending church) was more asymmetrical than mutual. On one side have been the rich and powerful overseas churches – the giver; on the receiving end, the poor and weak churches, with little or no chance to influence the taken decision (Reed, 1997: 125). Very often, such a situation has led to unnamed complaints, protests, and frustration for local church leaders. Nowadays, things have evolved; partnerships – where parties have equal rights and responsibilities, encounters and exchanges of experiences have become an important practice in the field of churches. Good leadership in parishes and churches is very important in carrying out the gospel mission (Robert, 2009: 22). Not only, leaders display much concern and care for their church members, but also all parties feel engaged and satisfied, and the funds raised to carry out church's activities are well managed (Sinek, 2014: 26, 127; Neffinger & Kohut, 2013: 17-19; Maxwell, 2009: 88; Heward-Mills, 2002: 19). In fact, according to Alikin (2010), the word “bishop” initially used to designate the church leading people means “one who watches over, overseer, guardian, supervisor” (p. 71). Church leadership today is embedded in international networks. Mutual learning, encounters and visits of other realities are therefore a contribution to a professional church leadership.

In this opening chapter to the thesis, I describe the context and problem of the study (chap. 1.1). I also deal with the research questions (chap. 1.2) before tackling the methodological approaches (chap. 1.3). As well, I outline the significance of the study (chap. 1.4) and the structure of the thesis (chap. 1.5). A short summary will put an end to the chapter.

1.1 Context and problem

As mentioned above, this study explores the learning of the Protestant church's leaders from the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo with regard to partaking in global encounters. It is framed by the global learning and education movement and, therefore, considering the international educational development today is worth describing (chap. 1.1.1) before coming to the context of the country (chap. 1.1.2) and outlining problem research problem (chap. 1.1.3).

1.1.1 Education today

At the beginning of the second half of the 21st century, be it at national or international level, attention has been directed to education – both with regard to quantity (Education for All) and quality (its meaning, its measurements). Education is a human right, nobody should be left behind (Af-founh & Bourgos, 2021: 11; UNECO, 2013: 1). In developing countries, most policy-makers limit their attention to school access or enrolments. The results are not satisfactory: access to school is not sufficient to make the enrolled children learn the basics; and still millions are out of education systems (Sifuna & Sawamura, 2010: 15). In other words, although the gains of massive enrolments have been tremendous in many parts of the world including Sub-Saharan Africa, education quality proves to be still low, and dropout rate very high. The Jomtien Framework for Action (in Tailand, 1990) recommended, in addition to education for all, that all the nations should put in place strategies to improve learning achievements. This would mean that all the factors affecting learning should be reconsidered for educational quality improvement, namely curriculum implementation, learning materials, instructional time, teachers, and schools (Acedo et al., 2012: 1; Sifuna & Sawamura, 2010: 28; Trilling & Fadel,

2009: 124-136). With the World Education Forum held in Dakar, in Senegal in 2000, ensuring educational quality was found necessary to complement educational access, to the extent that from that year on, quantity and quality of education would go hand in hand (Sifuna & Sawamura, 2010: 15). Then, can only education contribute to the development of the individual and society. Recently, UNESCO (2015b) adopted seventeen resolutions (Sustainable Development Goals), of which the fourth is with regard to “ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all” (p. 14). On the one hand, this emphasizes the fact that education is one of the pillars of our modern society (Donkers, 2010: 1) and therefore education and its quality make up an important topic. On the other hand, education and learning are no longer the business of children and youth only, but of adult people as well. Lifelong learning comprises all learning from cradle to death, including formal, non-formal and informal learning provisions; in consequence to this, the European Union in 2007 summed up all education and training programmes under the “overarching title of lifelong learning” (Aspin et al., 2012: ix). Usher & Edwards (2007: 35-37) put it in another way as they opine that, although lifelong learning has differing meanings, some aspects are worth retaining, namely the fact that it can mean anything and everything that is educative at a variety of levels – both formal and informal, for many different purposes, and with almost no limitation on outcomes; and it takes place in a variety of settings in and outside the formal education and training systems that people know.

According to Elfert (2019: 538), there exists a strong link between lifelong learning and adult education, that is any organised education process, whether formal or informal, undertaken by adults. Contrary to primary or secondary students, adult learners are considered as being purposeful, self-directed and voluntary learners. Their overall objectives are, among others, the need for social integration (through acculturation and bringing about social change), transformation, acquisition of technical competences and skills, and building social responsibility, or citizenship (Sifuna & Sawamura, 2010: 145). Most of the time, adult education/learning is associated with literacy/community-based education or on-the-job

learning/continuous learning from which a number of benefits at the individual, organisational or societal levels are expected. Weber (2020: 83) remarks, however, that adult education/learning is not about skills and qualifications only, but also about identities and lifelong development of capacities and attitudes. As lifelong learning is ubiquitous, it stands for the global learning, qualified as “a high-impact educational practice” since it aims at producing globally-minded people who think about the world in its interconnectedness, and are willing to learn from any society (Wahl & Pelser, 2020: 23). Two interconnected identities – the local and the global – are thus likely to mingle herewith within individuals, but aligning these interconnected identities for the common good within both the (adult) learner's community and other communities in a global world is the main purpose of global learning (Wahl & Pelser, 2020: 24-27; Mooney, 2017: 45).

The study at hand addresses the ubiquity and universality of lifelong learning in connexion with adult people, within the international churches' network. It is thus an adult, global/informal learning in a framework of global partnership/network, focussed on learning outcomes. Collaboration between institutions and/or communities influences greatly learning outcomes, social development, and a sense of well-being (Lingam & Lingam, 2020: 165).

1.1.2 Research context

This study explores the informal/global learning of Protestant church' leaders of the Democratic Republic of Congo, namely those of its eastern region.

The Democratic Republic of Congo in general has been suffering from a political and social crisis and armed conflicts for more than 30 years. So, the systems which should provide services for all aspects of life have been weakened, to the extent that most of the population seems to be left on its own. In connexion to a transition towards political democracy still too recent, the government can hardly perform essential tasks such as protecting citizens, guaranteeing law and order, and providing social security. In particular, the provinces of North-Kivu, South-Kivu and Ituri

are considered unstable. The instability in the whole region of the Great Lakes, where endless wars, internal conflicts, kidnapping, increasing permanent insecurity, and massive killing is particularly often experienced. For example, at the national level, according to the International Rescue Committee (IRC), 4.5 to 5 million people are reported to have died as a result of direct or indirect effects of wars in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, from 1998 to 2008 (Observatoire de la Prospective Humanitaire, 2018: 3). Such a report leaves apart the recent massacres which are perpetrated on the local populations in North-Kivu (Beni area especially) and Ituri provinces for about ten years now, and which have caused thousands of people to die, and forced many others to internal displacement or refuge in the neighbouring countries. According to OCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), in the first semester of the year 2021, more than 1,470 civilians were killed by armed groups in Ituri, North-Kivu, South-Kivu and Tanganyika provinces (OCHA, 2021: 8). Peace is thus far from being recovered despite the prolonged United Nations' presence through MONUSCO (United Nations Organisation Stabilization Mission) (Banque Africaine de Développement/Fonds Africain de Développement, 2013: 2).

Being a vast country with unstable political policies, the central/provincial government faces challenges to cater to inhabitants, to the extent that basic adequate infrastructures (clean water, electricity, roads, schools, ...) are missing in most of cities, territories and provinces. Nine countries share borders with the Democratic Republic of Congo, those on the Eastern (Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania) and the Northern-Eastern part (South Sudan and Central African Republic) being unstable as well or so, which aggravates the situation of the Congolese people. The situation in Rwanda, starting with the genocide in 1994, has huge influence in the Democratic Republic of Congo related to refugees, military interventions and the exploitation of natural resources. The contrast is that the country is rich by natural resources, but most of its people live in indescribable poverty and misery despite the many assets the country has, nationally, regionally and globally (Kasomo, 2022: 90). In fact, the underlying causes of poverty or violent conflicts manifest at certain locations may

be linked to other regions, nations or even the global society, as well as to internal factors namely structural, organisational issues, weak quality of governing principles and institutional capacities and lack of infrastructures (GENE, 2018: 8; Observatoire de la Prospective Humanitaire, 2018: 3; Ngayihembako, 2018: 13; Banque Africaine de Développement, 2103: ii; Wiek et al., 2013: 19). Therefore, the majority of the population loses hope, as the future seems to be full of uncertainties.

Despite this critical situation, cooperation at the local, regional and/or international levels remains characteristic of most of the Congolese people, especially with regard to moving outside the national boundaries. For example, the prolific commerce and trade undertaken within neighbouring countries cities (Kampala, Kigali, Gisenyi, Dar-es-Salaam, etc.) or the mid-East/far-East (Dubai, China, India, Jakarta, etc.) is noted on behalf of the people living in the eastern part, thus making them relatively intercultural, transnational and global citizens (Wild-Wood, 2008: 53).

There are more Christians than Muslims in the country, and so most people travel beyond regional/national boundaries basing on the Gospel. Two main religions are visible in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Christians and Muslims. In accordance with the data from the Report on International Religious Freedom (2020: 1), the Congolese population numbers 101.8 million of whose 95.8 per cent are Christian. These can be broken down as follows: Catholics 47.3 per cent (or 46,129,041 people), Protestants including Kimbanguists 48.1 per cent (46,909,236), and revival churches 4.6 per cent (4,486,122). As for Muslims, their share is 1.5 per cent of the population (1,527,000). Therefore, churches play an important role within the Congolese society, where they run more than 70 % of public schools, in addition to health centres, hospitals, social services and development projects (Kasomo, 2022: 90; World Bank, 2010: 10). The North-South church relationship and the international churches' network to which most churches belong are additional opportunities of getting in touch with one another. Therefore, many people move abroad, at times, for regional or international meetings, conferences, colloquia, and assemblies, namely within the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), the

United Evangelical Mission (UEM) Communion of Churches, or the World Church Council (WCC).

Recently, the Democratic Republic of Congo joined the East African Community. This will probably increase the number of transnational encounters, as moving within this economic platform is likely to be free both for goods and people. All these social activities are mere opportunities of learning in a global world, although the primary motives are not with regard to acquiring knowledge.

1.1.3 Research problem

It is widely accepted that parts of the learning take place not in educational centres or institutions, but in informal settings: the home (managing a home, raising family members, etc.), the workplace, the local community (social interaction, networking, active involvement in voluntary groups, leisure time, cultural activities, politics/religion related activities, and so on). But, as I mentioned it before, there are few scientific researches on informal learning, both at local/regional and international/global levels (McGivney, 2006: 11-13; Edwards et al, 2006: 1-3). With regard to the topic relating to Protestant church leaders' global and informal leaning in the international churches' network, as far as I know, there is no research conducted. Many churches' leaders are involved globally in partnership and networking; and, therefore, they have been travelling to the Global North or Global South – which is a source of informal/ global learning. A lot of charges have been covered for such travels and exchanges of experiences on the one hand; some new ideas from abroad have been implemented in local churches on the other. Accountability concerning the content or the gained benefits, both to the local churches and the network to which they belong, the changes they have been experiencing and the challenges they have been facing as they implement the improvement ideas got from abroad, and many other facts are rarely systematically investigated. Basing on the fact that organising travels and/or exchange visits is a great opportunity for change – especially from the best practices of others (Fullan, 2011: 5) – and therefore to attain individual and social trans-

formation for better life, this empirical study aims to clarify and understand the Protestant church leaders' informal and global learning in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo in general, its eastern part in particular.

1.2 Research questions

To carry out this empirical study, the researcher will be guided by the main research question as follows: How do the leaders of the Protestant churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo perceive international travels and exchange visits? For full understanding of the Protestant church leaders' learning within the international churches' network, the research seeks to answer the specific sub-questions: (a) What do the Protestant church leaders of the Democratic Republic of Congo learn from other members of the church international network during travels and stays abroad? (b) How beneficial is the acquired knowledge to the individual church leader, the society and the church? (c) What are the challenges church leaders report to face as they implement the acquired knowledge? The answers to these questions will shed further light – though little it may be – about types of (informal/global) learning of the Protestant church's leaders as development and change-oriented agents in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

1.3 Methods

The trial of exploration for full understanding of what Protestant churches' leaders are learning out of the academy requires a systematic process so one can be able to answer the research questions stated in the preceding section. Since this topic has attracted relatively little research regionally and globally, and due to the fact that it sounds totally new within the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo in general, its eastern part in particular, qualitative approach is adopted to search it. Referring to theoretical sampling, individual semi-structured interviews are used for data collection from the sample of Protestant churches' leaders. Through content analysis that relies on deductive and inductive coding of the interviews' transcripts, the data will be progressively, iteratively and

concomitantly analysed. The data will be generalized by abduction; and by this, knowledge of informal learning will be generated. Details on each step within this section are provided in chapter three.

1.4 Significance of the study

The need of conducting a study on the adult, global and informal learning of the Protestant churches' leaders in the context of the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo relies, on the one hand, on the scientific discourse on the global interconnectedness of the world, and the Protestant churches themselves as providers of learning and education (see chap. 1.1.2). Globalisation expects all people and their organisations to go on learning so as to keep pace with the rapid changes in a global, knowledge-based, economic, socio-political environment, and be equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to meet the challenges of the moment (Bertram, 2016: 1; Trilling & Fadel, 2009: 75; UNESCO, 2013: 2). In other words, the concept 'globalisation' implies an urgent imperative for organisations to learn in order to survive and prosper in a constantly changing world, as all other models of thoughts seem to be outdated. For any organisational success, leadership is a key factor (Sparrhoff, 2015: 75). Churches on their part, as spaces and venues for social activities, are producing differing forms of formal, non-formal, adult, informal learning globally. Besides, through their international encounters and in connexion with their global mission, churches work on international network-basis of learning and mutual empowerment both for their leading classes and the communities to which they cater. Therefore, the church leaders' experience over long years both locally and globally accounts a lot for the current internationalization of education, as it is for the global overall growth through which the world goes today. For these reasons, exploration with regard to how the Protestant church leaders' learning has been shaped in the churches' international network through trips and exchanges of experience is of great value.

The study aims at uncovering empirical data about the adult informal and global learning of the Protestant churches' leaders, by understanding their self-reported perceptions on the activities in which they have been

involved globally, and the related content, benefits, faced challenges in implementing the learned, and the changes brought about by what they learned therein. They will make up a start point for further research as people reflect on global and informal learning locally, so to enrich the scientific debate on the same issue globally. They will also inspire both local churches and their international partners and donors for further funding, as they realise to which extent networking and partnering is important with regard namely to global learning.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

Human being learns from cradle to death; this is a well-known evidence. Therefore, his/her lifelong and life-wide learning encompasses a range of learning as concepts arise from scholars, namely formal learning, non-formal learning, experiential learning, informal learning, community-based learning, and learning in the workplace. As shown earlier, in order to survive and flourish within a society of constant changes and uncertainties, everyone should become a lifelong learner.

Social transformation of society or important changes therein, updated skills and competences, values and attitudes relevant for the current century account a lot for it. This dissertation explores the informal learning of the DR-Congo Protestant church' leaders with regard to international travels in the context of partnership with other churches globally in seven chapters.

After presenting successively the context and problem, the research questions, the methodological approach and the significance of the study in the introductory part (chap. 1), I briefly review the existing literature on the topic under study – there is not any at the national or local level – by dealing with certain types of education and/or learning, the focus being on informal education (chap. 2). As for the process of methods of sampling, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, it is presented in chapter 3. The results of the study are presented in chapters four and five where I start by giving the profile of participants in terms of portraits (chap. 4.1), an overview of the data (chap. 4.2), and the types of informal

learning basing on the utterances of the travelling Protestant church leaders themselves (chap. 4.3). The findings are further summed up answer the research questions (chap. 5.1), and discussed in light of the theoretical, empirical and contextual discourses (chap. 5.2), before highlighting the contribution of the study to the scientific discourse (chap. 5.3). The sixth chapter deals with the implications of the study for further researches, provides some recommendations for practice, the limitations and the challenges encountered while conducting this research. The seventh chapter ends the study by giving a concise yet precise conclusion on the whole dissertation work.

1.6 Partial summary

In sum, this study on the “learning of Protestant church’s leaders from global encounters: a qualitative empirical study from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo”, intends to explore how the leaders of the Protestant churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo perceive international travels and exchange visits. Embedded in the adult lifelong, life-wide and global reflections on learning as key quality outcome of education on the one hand, and in the practices of churches within a global network on the other hand, the study focuses on the informal and global learning experiences of the aforementioned church’s leaders. Nationally, the number of Christians is beyond 95 per cent; and more than 70 per cent of public schools are run by churches, which accounts for the importance of this study. It is undertaken in a context of multisectoral crisis within the eastern part of the country, namely with regard to poverty and repetitive wars. Despite such a critical situation, most people – especially churches’ leaders – have been getting space for mobility outside the country, all the same. They have been partaking in international meetings and assemblies, together with exchanges of experience sessions. Such opportunities are true occasions of learning, though the persons involved in them may not understand it in that way, at first. Informal global learning is determining in the 21st century in order to keep pace with an ever-changing world as of today. For that reason, it does not only involve every person as a human right; but also, bypassing it is likely to lead to lagging

behind. A lot of new ideas from abroad have been implemented locally, and their contribution to social change may be apparent. Churches' leaders are influential change agents; their transformative learning is a salient factor for regional development in particular, the whole nation in general. Although no prior study has been undertaken in that sense, exploring what these people have been learning in the churches' international platform is important to get an idea about its impact both at the individual and church levels, at the level of the churches' international network, as well.

2 State of research

This study focuses on the experiences of church leaders in encounters. Encounters are studied in the field of learning. In fact, from long ago, it was recognized that people keep learning even after leaving school (Barros, 2012: 120), and UNESCO (2016: 14) has kept highlighting inclusive and equitable quality education for all, namely through lifelong learning opportunities. Today's world is not only a global one because of the interconnectedness of its people, but also it is characterized by unprecedented technological progress and social changes. To keep pace with the continuous changes, and thus change themselves so as to prosper, all people need to keep learning and connecting with others (Brassey & Nick, 2017: 9; OECD, 2016: 3; Maxwell, 2010: 15-19; Wohlstetter et al., 2003: 1). So, it seems utopic to pretend that initial education or training alone is useful throughout life, or help learners get academic results (Keevy & Chakroun, 2015: 27; Jacobson & Blank, 2015: 1). Thus, all the forms of learning and/or education should mingle within individuals in order to possess the knowledge, attitudes, skills, competencies and values with regard to living in the present global world (Wierenga & Guevara, 2013: 30; Cabezudo et al., 2008: 20; Hayden & Matthews, 2010: vi). Education is a landscape, and therefore it requires of all people the ability to learn with and from external environments, through collaboration, networking, and partnering with others (OECD, 2016: 1). However, there is no scientific study done on informal learning from global encounters in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In this chapter, after getting a clear comprehension of some key concepts (chap. 2.1), I am going to give an overview of the numerous writings on informal learning acquisition for adults (chap. 2.2), by considering particularly their learning motivations (chap. 2.2.1), the benefits informal learning brings about (chap. 2.2.2) and the learning from encounters (chap. 2.2.3) and by depicting the aspects relevant for answering the research questions outlined in the previous chapter (chap. 1.2). An overview will be given about research on educational quality within a global world, putting an emphasis on quality through networking and partnering with others (chap. 2.3). The aim is to get a clear understanding of what learning by encounters is, especially with regard to adult people, and to give an overview of different ways of acquiring knowledge and developing skills and competences today, so as to bring about change and transform our society. A partial summary will end the section (chap. 2.4).

2.1 Key concepts

A number of key concepts are worth considering briefly before proceeding with the thesis. These include education, learning, lifelong learning, global education or learning, adults' education, networking and partnering in education.

2.1.1 Education versus learning

Researchers distinguish education from learning. On the one hand, education, which derives from the Latin verb "educere" – which means "to lead forth" – implies the "presence of a teacher, someone presumed to have greater knowledge, and a learner or learners presumed to have lesser knowledge and expected to be instructed or led by the said teacher" (Livingstone, 2001: 2). Humanity finds in education, among many others, a way of responding to its numerous challenges, by alleviating poverty, combating exclusion, injustice, social inequality, oppression, wars, and so on, and thus reach its harmonious development (Delors et al., s. a.: 9). Only through education, sustainable development is enhanced, as learners are likely to acquire the required knowledge and skills that enable them to implement human rights and gender equality, and/or to live

peacefully among themselves, in a culture of nonviolence and appreciation of diversity (UNESCO, 2016: 15; Denys, 2013: 8; Cabezudo et al., 2008: 11). International treaties present education as a fundamental human right in that it is essential for every individual to realize and benefit from his/her other (human) rights, so as to fully develop and participate in society (UNESCO, 2013: 1; Boasiako, 2012: iii; UNESCO, 2005a: 28). As a human right, it concerns all people irrespective of age, gender, nationality or skin colour. Every nation leading class should struggle to access its people to education. People are educated for a range of purposes, but in general they are educated to acquire knowledge (learning to know), to gain skills in order to be actively useful (learning to do), to be competent in certain domains of life (learning to be), and to live on earth as members who share a collective/common identity, as they belong normally to a common humanity despite diversity therein – learning to live together (Mooney, 2017: 45; UNESCO, 2015a: 11; Keevy & Chakroun, 2015: 46; UNESCO, 2005a: 30; Delors et al., n.d.: 18-19). In addition to the purposes stated above, education aims at helping people to “critique, to bring about change, and to care” (UNESCO, 2016: 19). So, among the outcomes of education, are questioning the hegemony or the routine of daily life, adequate leadership and entrepreneurship skills, being creative and resilient, getting easily connected with other people, places and species, and caring for the environment. Put otherwise, learning allows people to acquire life skills, that is, the necessary abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour so as to cope effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (UNODC, 2022: 2; Fhi360, 2007: 2)

On the other hand, in any education system, teaching works hand in hand with learning, and both concepts form the “key arena for human development and change” (UNESCO, 2005a: 37). The concept “learning” is defined in differing ways. For example, UNESCO (2013: 1) defines it as “the process by which people acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes”, whereas Strake (2004: 3) thinks that it is “the process by which an activity originates or is changed through reaction to an encountered situation”. On their behalf, Fry and collaborators (2009) opine that “learning is about how we perceive and understand the world, about making meaning” (p.

8). Students are said to have learned only when they have acquired certain knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, or better, they have mastered principles and facts, understood proofs, have been able to remember factual information, have tried new methods, techniques and approaches, have recognized, reasoned and debated a number of ideas, or have developed a number of behaviours that fit specific situations (Northwest Centre for Public Health Practice, 2014: 6). In other words, depending on the degree of formality or informality of how learning takes place, a given definition arises. It is widely recognized that learning today includes a triad – formal, non-formal and informal learning. According to Boyadjieva & Ilieva-Trichkova (2021), such a classification is based on four areas within its formality and informality, that is “the location of learning, the purpose of learning, the processes of learning, and the content of learning” (p. 36). Learning is linked with the outcomes of the educative action, and therefore with educational quality, in that it is concerned with how much exactly learners are absorbing from the education action, and how well they are being taught (UNESCO, 2005a: 28). Within a classroom setting, the learning outcomes are influenced greatly by the students’ aptitude and perseverance, their ability to understand instruction, the amount of time spent on learning, and the quality of instruction from the teacher (UNESCO, 2005a: 67). In a more specific and clear way, learning is self-constructed and cannot occur without change, in that the learner’s continuous exposure to new material produces improvement and transformation within his/her mind, as Fry and collaborators (2009) put it:

“The idea rests on the notion of continuous building and amending of structures in the mind that ‘hold knowledge’. These structures are known as schemata. As new understandings, experiences, actions and information are assimilated and accommodated, the schemata change. Unless schemata are changed, learning will not occur. Learning... is said to involve a process of individual transformation (...) we learn by fitting new understanding and knowledge into, and with, extending and supplanting, old understanding and knowledge. (...) without changes, or additions, to pre-existing knowledge and understanding, little learning will occur” (p. 9-10).

It is obvious that people learn by accumulating facts; still transformation, correction or change should also be brought by the teacher to the learners’

previous knowledge for refinement, as they are part of their learning. To fully learn, people who already have some knowledge adapt and/or change their old ideas to adopt new ones, instead of accumulating a series of factual knowledge, through rethinking those old ideas in order to come to new conclusions (Amineh & Asl, 2015: 11). Taking part in global encounters brings about such additional knowledge for church's leaders; it transforms from within, as they adopt new attitudes and values, and develop new skills. Its implementation helps to experience change in their institutions.

2.1.2 Informal learning versus formal and non-formal learning

Generally, basing on where they happen, three types are distinguished with regard to education and consequently three corresponding types of learning, namely (a) formal education/learning, (b) non-formal education/learning, and (c) informal education/learning (Woelke, 2017: 2; European Union, 2016: 14; Werquin, 2010: 21-22; UNESCO, 2009: 27). The first two are recognized as "organised" types of learning – they involve a providing agency or person (teacher/trainer) for learning facilitation, a method and a medium of instruction – whereas the third is not "institutionalized" (European Union, 2016: 11 & 28). The above highlighted literature and much more shows the following main differences among the three:

(a) The *formal learning* is the result of experiences in an education or training institution. Learning objectives and learning time are structured, all culminating to certification (UNESCO, 2009: 27). Compared to a "ladder", moving from pre-school to higher education through primary and secondary school, its nature is "propaedeutic" – each level prepares learners for the next one, and completing successfully a grade is a prerequisite to enter the following one (Schugurensky, 2000: 1).

(b) The *non-formal learning* is defined in differing ways. There is not a universally accepted definition of non-formal education/learning, many simply contrasting it with formal learning/education in the well-known tripartite categorization of education (Yasunaga, 2014: 5). Today it is questionable especially when issues relating to access to formal education and

professionalization are dealt with (Aitchison & Alidou, 2009: 59). Mainly, it refers to any type of organised educational programmes that take place outside the formal school system, where it intends to meet specific learning needs of particular sub-groups of people (Ekundayo, 2001a: 1). Most of the time, no prerequisite with regard to previous schooling is demanded, although sometimes a diploma which certifies attendance or the acquired competencies may be granted at end (Schugurensky, 2000: 2). Like in formal learning, there are still teachers, or better, instructors and learning facilitators, and a curriculum with various degrees of flexibility or rigidity. It caters mainly for out-of-school children, youth and adults – most of the time, those people in vulnerable situation (Yasunaga, 2014: 17; Aitchison & Alidou, 2009: 14).

Alongside adult literacy, non-formal programmes aim at providing its recipients with (a) a complementary and/or alternative primary and/or secondary education, and (b) the acquisition of new and updated knowledge and skills (UNESCO, 2006: 56). In other words, it functions as either complementary, substitute, supplementary or alternative to formal learning (Rose, 2009: 221; Hoppers, 2006: 94); so, it is one of the strategies of achieving the goals of Education for all (Ekundayo, 2001b: 28). With it, disadvantaged children, youth and adults are provided with equitable access to educational opportunities, individuals or the communities are empowered, participation to society development is promoted as knowledge and life skills are acquired and developed. In fact, the opportunities it offers mostly relate to life and living (English & Mayo, 2012: 77; Ekundayo, 2001a: xiii). Not only people are empowered so as to develop their values, skills and attitudes; but also, they define their role in their society and become active therein (Novosadova et al., n.d.: 33). For example, with respect to technical vocational education and training, they learn to acquire competences in order to act (Rauner et al., 2013: 2), as well as for employability to earn a living (Tchibozo, 2013: 115; English & Mayo, 2012: 77; Atchoarena & Esquieu, 2002: 83). For this reason, it is considered a panacea (a cure-all/a heal-all¹) for all the ills of a lot of societies, namely youth

¹ Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/panacea>, 08 June 2023.

unemployment therein (Oketch, 2014: 2; Kamil, 2007: 2) for further learning opportunities, well-being and improved livelihood (Yasunaga, 2014:16; Ekundayo, 2001b: 12).

Two main types of non-formal education and learning are worth distinguishing, namely “para-formal” education – in reference to those programmes sponsored by education authorities, and organised parallel to the formal education system – from “popular” education, which comprises, among other sub-categories, personal development activities and professional training (Hoppers (2006: 23-5). Short-term courses and vocational training find a place here. All these forms focus on disadvantaged groups or specific categories of people, a clearly defined purpose, and are flexible in organisation and methods. As the concept is not common in all policy-makers’ debates, some societies alternatively prefer *common education*, *community learning*, *informal learning* or *social pedagogy* (Kamil, 2007: 10). Concentrating on the poor/vulnerable, using a learning-by-doing approach, being constantly flexible and preoccupied to adapt the learning activities to the needs of the learners are among their common features (Hoppers, 2006: 25).

(c) The *informal learning* is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time, learning support or curricula; it results from daily activities related to work, family or leisure (UNESCO, 2009: 27). Werquin (2010: 22) relates it to existence where people are constantly exposed to learning situations; hence, it is a synonym of “learning by experience” or simply “experience”. In fact, it takes place, for either individuals or groups on a daily basis, in a much wider variety of settings than are formal or non-formal education, say anywhere, and at any time (Woelke, 2017: 2; European Union, 2016: 28; Cuinen et al., 2015: 3; Eraut, 2004: 247). With respect to this, it is not easy to determine learning periods, as opposed to other moments consecrated to social activities (Keevy & Chakroun, 2015: 27). In fact, people have no a priori intention of acquiring knowledge, and when something is learned, they are not aware that they have learned it (Schuguren-sky, 2000, 4); for this reason, dealing with informal learning at workplace, Kaija (2005: 18) opines that it is not only “incidental” and “ubiquitous”, but also it remains “unrecognized” by society, *what* and *how* one learns it

being determined by circumstances, other people, innovations, discoveries and experimentation. People thus learn informally within the family, their home or household, community, at workplace and for general interest (Livingstone, 2001: 14); so, it is not only “lifelong” but also “life-wide” learning (Ministry of Education, 2007: 14; Barros, 2012: 124). In fact, people acquire knowledge, attitudes, values and skills not only during their lifetime, continuously or periodically, but also in all areas of their life, in all its aspects. To a certain extent, this requires doing, thinking and reflecting, communicating (Cuinen et al. 2015: 3) as well as personal strategies with regard to questioning, reading, listening, and observing (Cristol & Muller, 2013: 16; Delourmel, 2013: 22). In addition, a sufficient dose of enterprise, persistence, resilience, curiosity, reflection, testing, assessing, and failure overcoming mind and intrinsic motivation should characterize the learner so as to successfully learn (Cristol & Muller, 2013: 16; Trilling & Fadel, 2009: 33; Robinson et al, 1999: 108). Put otherwise, it is implicit, unintended, and opportunistic by nature; the learner does not rely directly on a teacher or trainer (Eraut, 2004: 250; Livingstone, 2001: 3). Informal learning functions as a complement or reinforcement to the learning acquired formally or non-formally, where it is *additive* – it adds knowledge, improves skills or strengthens the existing knowledge, skills and values one possesses, or *transformative* – the experiences it provides lead learners to challenge their assumptions and values, in order to change their existing prior knowledge and approaches (Scheunpflug, 2017: 12; Herod, 2012: 10; Fry et al., 2009: 10; Schugurensky, 2000: 6).

As for the different forms of informal learning, researchers are far from coming to a common ground. For example, some think that informal learning is “implicit” – there is lack of awareness and explicitness of what is being learned, “reactive” – learning occurs during an action people accomplish without thinking a lot and, at times, “deliberate”, when gained with a final goal to learn (Cuinen et al., 2015: 3; Eraut, 2004: 250). Some others distinguish informal “taught” learning – the one people get through coaching and guided visits, from informal “non-taught” learning – which occurs through self-learning, learning groups, practice, and non-guided visits (European Union, 2016: 29). Still others merely classify it as

being either self-directed learning, incidental or socialization/tacit learning (Cristol & Muller, 2013: 21; Schugurensky, 2000: 3-4). Generally, it is associated with learning at the workplace, where, through every day problem-solving, it supports an organisation's effectiveness and development (Pöyry-Lassila, 2015: 5; Kaija, 2005: 18). Within an organisation, this presupposes that there are conditions to fulfil, namely with regard to filtering information to make it pertinent and beneficial to the user's needs, work and interests, to providing a measuring mechanism relating to costs or benefits analysis, to ensuring effective time or resource use, and to creating personal motivation to learn on the staff behalf (Degreed, 2015: 7).

Truly speaking, there is no clear-cut between formal and non-formal education/learning (Rose, 2009: 221; Kamil, 2007: 3), and the three types form a continuum all together (Cuinen et al., 2015: 3; Eraut, 2004: 250). In fact, it is proven that when people learn something formally, consequently non-formally, there is also something learned informally, depending on factors such as intention, consciousness or expectations (Krieter et al. 2020: 191; Cuinen et al. 2015: 3). However, it is difficult to quantify every type of learning or education, but some researchers assume that about 80 % of what a person knows is learned informally (Degreed, 2015: 3; Cristol & Muller, 2013: 15). This point of view is shared by the European Commission (2015), which puts it simply, stating that "much learning takes place outside school" (p. 35). As church's leaders partake in global encounters, they acquire a lot of knowledge in an informal way, which mingles with what they already know. All together the knowledge at their disposal as they lead and manage the institutions for which they work. Informal global learning is further explained in the next section, mainly with respect to adult people (chap. 2.2).

2.1.3 Global education

Due to recent tremendous progress in technology, today's world population is mobile (Global Learning Programme, 2017: 6); thus, not only people are more interconnected than before, but also places, economies and

environments interrelate greatly (Sevice Ontario, 2016: 6; Ministry of Education, 2007: 9). People are facing almost similar challenges (NYSAN 2012: 1) and are influencing one another in a range of aspects, including thoughts, actions and feelings, as the human race makes a vast network of individuals all connected (Ball, 2014: 14). They belong to a “broader community and common humanity” (UNESCO, 2015a: 11). In this regard, the actions and/or decisions taken in one corner of the globe are likely to impact positively or negatively on the quality of life of the people living in the other, or even humanity in its whole (Global Learning Programme, 2017: 8). Ball (2014) refers to this reciprocal influence as “the butterfly effect” (p. 14).

As for its role, global education intends to prepare learners so as to be successful and complete individuals, who not only participate fully in their society, but also act as active contributors to the economy development and behave as responsible guardians of the environment in order to be beneficial to both the present and future generations (Global Learning Programme, 2017: 10; NYSAN, 2012: 1). In this perspective, learners are seen as change agents, so they should be encouraged not only to “investigate the world, weigh perspectives, communicate ideas and take action”, but also to “prepare for a far different future than the world we know now” (NYSAN, 2012: 1, 2). Global education – and therefore global learning for the development of global competencies in order to enjoy life in a globalized world – has, thus, been coined. As to what it really implies, Cabezudo et al. (2008) put it:

“Global education is an education perspective which arises from the fact that contemporary people live and interact in an increasingly globalized world. This makes it crucial for education to give learners the opportunity and competences to reflect and share their own point of view and role within a global, interconnected society, as well as to understand and discuss complex relationships of common social, ecological, political and economic issues, so as to derive new ways of thinking and acting” (p. 10).

Global education intends to educate for global citizenship, trying to help reflect global issues and attempting to provide sustainable solutions (Siege & Schreiber, 2016: 10; Hayden & Matthews, 2010: v). These issues include (a) human rights, (b) gender equality, (c) peace and nonviolence,

(d) appreciation of cultural diversity, (e) poverty, (f) protection of and eco-systems, (g) solidarity, (h) respect of nature and shared responsibility (UNESCO, 2016:15; Trilling & Fadel, 2009: 155-157; Ministry of Education, 2007: 10). With global education, people's eyes and minds are open to the realities of what is known now as globalized world, so as to work for a more just, equitable world and respectful for human rights for all (Cabezudo et al., 2008: 10 & 21). To achieve its goals, a range of approaches are referred to, namely collaboration/cooperation and dialogue, investigation, and problem-solving (NYSAN, 2012:1; Cabezudo et al., 2008: 30).

Global education implies transformative learning process; thus, it requires (a) a culture of partnership – based on dialogue and cooperation among people, as opposed to individualism, and (b) a radical change of thoughts, feelings and minds (Global Learning Programme, 2017: 6; Cabezudo et al., 2008: 13-4). For this reason, Cabezudo et al. opine that it is an “education for the mind as well as for the heart” (p.14). Globalisation, and consequently global education, poses real challenges and offers a lot of opportunities to mankind; yet, researchers have not come to a consensus with regard to what it is and what it is intending to promote (Keevy & Chakroun, 2015: 30). In fact, according to Cabezudo and collaborators (2008: 10), global education is not an approach that nations have to implement uncritically for, not only dilemmas, tensions and doubts of many have always surfaced when global issues are dealt with, but also perceptions of global education have proven differing until now. As for the impact of global education on humanity, it has kept unsearched; and its implementation in schools remains far insufficient (Scheunpflug & Asbrand, 2006: 39). For church's leaders, partaking in global encounters accounts for their acquisition of global learning, which is likely to impact their churches and societies in different ways. As they navigate the universe for learning acquisition, they need capabilities to cope with uncertainty, diversity and other challenges that globalisation brings about.

2.1.4 Adults' education

By the end of the Millennium, UNESCO has been emphasizing education for all. In fact, so far, about 771 million adults, two thirds of whom are women, are illiterate (UNESCO, 2006: iii; UNESCO, 2005b: 19). Thus, education concerns children, young people and adult ones, though the latter have overpassed school age. Researchers' opinions are diverging, however, as to what adult education and learning is. For example, Bin Abdullah et al. (2008) think that adults' education is nothing but the "practice of learning, teaching and educating adults, which often occurs through extension and continuing education" (p. 106). For the Department of Education and Science (2000) of Ireland, adult education is rather a "systematic learning undertaken by adults who return to learning having concluded initial education or training" (p. 27). The idea behind these two definitions is that people ended up or stopped learning or being educated, but they come anew in school settings to learn, sooner or longer afterwards. This is the case for adults who re-enter an educational system for university/tertiary education, or run for continuing education and/or vocational training on the one hand; but also the concept comprises the idea of community education for marginalized groups of the human society, and any other "systematic and deliberate learning undertaken by adults in a wide variety of settings and contexts both formal and informal" (Department of Education and Science, 2000: 28), on the other hand.

According to Fry et al. (2009: 14), research is controversial about the existence of adults' education – since they are far beyond school age, and if any, the next question seeks to determine to which extent it differs from that of children. Without being unanimous about all the facets of adults' education and learning, researchers affirm not only the existence of a type of education that caters for adult people; but also, they maintain that adults learn in different ways than children do (Denys, 2013: 3; Bryson, 2013: 6; Bin Abdullah, 2008:106; Department of Education and Science, 2000: 26). As for how adults learn or are guided in their learning by the teacher, Knowles et al. (2005: 215) refers to the concept "andragogy", which is the "art and science of helping adults learn" (p.14). Adult learners are known as being self-directed and autonomous, experienced, problem-

centred, goal-oriented, internally self-motivated and practical (Denys, 2013: 3; Fry et al., 2009: 14; Bin Abdullah, 2008: 106; Knowles et al., 2005: 199). So, their participation in learning activities is voluntary. Besides, together with having specific expectations of the education type they are willing to enter, and based on the experience accumulated in life, adults are able to decide on what, when, and where they learn. So, according to Denys (2013), to succeed in his/her adult teaching action, the teacher should "take the expectations, interests and previous experiences of the learner into account when developing a curriculum, training plan and selecting learning methods" (p. 3). Therefore, to fully engage them in learning, it is worth reflecting continuously with trainees, on behalf of the teacher, what they learn, how they learn it, why they learn it, where they learn it, and when they learn it (Rasmussen, 2015: 2; Bin Abdullah, 2008: 106). In other words, adult learners want to know how the instruction is going to help them practically; so, for any sequence of material presented, they ask themselves, among other questions, (a) what it is in that for them, (b) why they need this piece of information, (c) how they will benefit from it, (d) how they can make use of it in their life or job, and so on. Besides, for having quitted school and re-entering it sooner or longer afterwards, adults need guidance and counselling from the school personnel, so as to reach their goals. Among other activities relating to progressively assisting and guiding adult learners in their choices are providing students with information, assessing their progress, giving advice, counselling, helping with teaching and career education, reflecting placement to help achieve their entry to a particular job or course for example, engaging in advocacy and negotiation with agencies, companies and institutions on behalf of learners, giving feedback to providers and stakeholders about needs that are to be met, doing follow-up to alumni so as to know what has happened to them and identify the needs they may still have, and networking to help build connections with employers (Department of Education and Science, 2000: 156-157).

With respect to what precedes, teaching adults seems difficult. In addition to the idea that the teacher has full knowledge of one's audience, and complete awareness of how adult people learn, the Northwest Centre

for Public Health Practice (2014) suggests five key factors to focus on when developing adult training, namely “(a) The material presented should have immediate usefulness to the learners; (b) the material presented should be relevant to adult learners’ lives; (c) the training environment should be welcoming so that all learners feel safe to participate; (d) the training presentation should be engaging, and (e) the training should be presented in a respectful manner where learners have an opportunity to share their experiences” (p. 4). Bryson (2013) sums such philosophy of teaching adults using simple terms, namely “teaching is dialogue; learning is engagement, growth is discovery, and knowledge is application” (p. 4).

In sum, considerations on adults’ education are differing, but complementary. Some people opine that, as it is limited to learning in adult age and it occurs most of the time in non-formal learning settings, it makes part of lifelong learning (Denys, 2013: 5; Aitchison & Alidou, 2009:7). The emphasis is therefore put on the learner’s needs, who is taken as resource not only in sharing his/her experiences but also in taking an active part with regard to curriculum design, the instructor’s attention being set on relevant activities and practical outcomes for his/her recipients (Peace Corps, 2004: 5). In this respect, it aims at transforming the adult’s life for the better, being mostly connected to the world of work, the learning to earn a living by creating wealth, life and living, productivity and competitiveness in the global economy (Avramovska et al., 2017: 9; Onderi et al., 2014: 40; Herod, 2012: 9; English & Mayo, 2012: 77; Ekundayo, 2001a: xiii). Others think that it is mere continuing education, workplace education, or community education (Lucio-Villegas, 2015: 1; Kamil, 2007: 10). In fact, the former place adult education in the educational continuum – learning is “from cradle to grave” (Denys, 2013:5), whereas the latter assume that adult education is connected to people’s daily life. Adults learn in order to communicate and to interact with peers, to share experiences, and/or to prepare for employment, thus focusing on literacy as means of communicating among people, and people’s adaptability to a changing world. So, basic education and literacy, income generating activities in

several domains –mostly the agricultural sector, vocational training to prepare for immediate entry into the labour market, and many more, find room on the education curriculum (Avramovska et al., 2017:9). In this respect, for example, the German government has established community learning centres (CLCs) everywhere for its population's continuous empowerment, social transformation and life quality improvement (idem). A centre of that type functions simultaneously as a “place of learning, and a place to organise and a social and cultural place meeting for all” (Avramovska et al., 2017:11). Adult's education is very important, in that it contributes to building citizenship, people consciousness raising, their cohesion by enhancing social capital, fostering competitiveness by providing society with skilled workforce, and cultural development, and community building by empowering even the marginalized to become active participants in social life (Barros, 2012: 120; Department of Education and Science, 2000: 28-29). On the one hand, this is only the instrumental facet of it, and consequently just a part of lifelong and life-wide learning where the education overall objective is interpreted in terms of adaptability, productivity or production, competitiveness, and/or employability, so as to better serve the labour market (Barros, 2012: 125). Adult's education, on the other hand, implies a continuous and pleasant acquisition of knowledge for personal development and improvement, where learning and knowledge are appreciated for their own sake (Costa, 2015: 37; Delourmel, 2013: 6; Bin Abdullah, 2008: 106). This is the case for travels, leisure activities, and many informal learning activities to which man (human being) is devoted, in order to satisfy the desires of his/her enquiring mind. A strong change has happened in the way people learn with regard to informal learning for all, mainly for adults in contrast with lifelong education (Degreed, 2015: 2). A change of paradigm is being noticed in that education bears the idea of collective entity and of an obligation from the providing State, contrary to learning which implies the individual as unit and his/her personal responsibility, to the extent that adults' education is not merely related to social issue alone (Barros, 2012: 119). Their learning occurs for the most part out of the school settings, thus being more informal than formal and/or non-formal (Leone, 2013: 9). Getting involved in

encounters within the churches' international network is one of the many opportunities that account for adult learning and education. Discovery of new places, of new experiences and of new perspectives are comprised in the many returns church's leaders get from getting involved in them, for the transformation of society. In the next section, I reflect on a particular aspect of adult education – informal learning for adults.

2.2 Informal learning for adults

In this section, I am going to consider what motivates adults to join informal settings of learning, or keep learning throughout their lives, together with the benefits they get from such decisions, before considering the learning experiences associated with one aspect of informal learning – travels and exchange visits.

2.2.1 Adults' motivation for informal learning

To engage in any type of education, like any other student, adults should find motivation to participate in knowledge acquisition (Patterson & Song, 2018: 10; Bin Abdullah, 2008: 106). Sustained attention, readiness and motivation affect greatly and direct a person's participation in activities – three internal factors of which motivation is nothing but that internal or external force which impels to start, to direct and continue an action for an individual (Kaya & Akdemir, 2016: 13-4; Merrian & Bierema, 2014: 147; Esichaikul, 2012: 49). Thanks to it, one finds learning meaningful, worthwhile and beneficial, so he/she learns easily, is engaged, or/and sustained until he/she achieves their goals (Findsen & Formosa, 2012: 118). According to Delourmel (2013), "Man is programmed to learn, (...) and the word school derives from the Latin concept "schola" which means leisure associated with studies. Learning should be a pleasure. One should always find a personal motivation to learn" (p. 22). As for Livingstone (2001), he opines that "the continuing acquisition of knowledge and skills is probably the most distinctive feature of the human species" (p. 2). This highlights the importance of motivation in shaping learning at any period of man's existence. For adult learners, motivation is said to be internal, and

therefore their learning is voluntary for, after weighing certain parameters, they are able to make a choice on what, when and where to learn (Fry et al, 2009: 14; Denys, 2013: 3).

According to Bin Abdullah (2008: 106), motivation is one of the key aspects of adults' education; their learning foundation lays on six factors worth considering, namely (a) social relationships, (b) external expectations, (c) social welfare, (d) personal advancement, (e) escape or stimulation, and (f) cognitive interest. In fact, most of the adults join education institutions for a variety of purposes. These motivational factors include finding new friends, complying with instructions from employers, improving ability to better serve mankind or prepare for service in their community, achieving higher status in their jobs or secure professional advancement, relieving from boredom, escaping from the routine caused by work or home, or just enjoying learning for its own sake, because they find it pleasurable (Bellamy & Oppenheim, 2009: 127; Bin Abdullah 2008: 6). In other words, adults do not only engage in learning because of the expected outcomes with regard to the many visible returns of instruction – whether for themselves as individuals or the community to which they belong, but also, they learn for the sake of learning, appreciating knowledge for its own worth. In fact, as mentioned earlier, informal learning is termed as incidental, self-motivated, lifelong and life-wide and the like, but very important though invisible and unrecognized, when compared to non-formal or formal types of learning (Degreed, 2015: 4; Cristol & Muller, 2013: 15). In order, for grown-up people, to keep willing to learn in all life-cycle and in all life situations, there is great need of acquiring earlier both the disposition and capacity for lifelong/informal learning during their formal and non-formal school experiences (Department of Education and Science, 2000: 32). Barros (2012) puts it simply when he says that people should “learn to learn throughout their life” (p. 126); so, they can maximize learning informally – namely in the home, the community and the workplace, through information technology use, leisure time, and the like. Effective informal learning implies self-improvement – a prerequisite of which is strong motivation, which attains its paroxysm

when it “involves both love of learning and the desire for personal growth” (Delourmel, 2013: 6; Robinson, 1999:108).

In a nutshell, being motivated for adults to learn informally would mean overcoming the dispositional barriers with regard to learning, by not recalling to memory their negative past school experiences or negative community perceptions for example, but getting self-encouraged, finding enough time for themselves, and dealing positively with emotions such as fear, anxiety or worry (Patterson & Song, 2018: 1; Flynn et al., 2011: 45). Learning by encounters implies that one goes beyond these deterrents, uses their former capacities of acquiring knowledge by developing personal strategies so as to grasp what is necessary. Always having transfer in mind and reflecting on how beneficial the new knowledge is likely to be account much for learning, as well.

2.2.2 Benefits of informal learning for adults and organisations

Continuous learning and/or personal development learning opportunities – or better, informal learning, have proven very important for both organisations and individuals. Nowadays, not only organisations are struggling to attract and retain the best and brightest employees, but also the workforce is cherishing employers who offer informal learning opportunities, alongside their employment. The solution resides in informal learning, in that it allows for flexibility, relevance and efficiency within the organisation (Degreed, 2015: 3). In fact, with it, adult people learn when they feel the need to, and choose the domain which best fits them; thus, the enterprise increases productivity in spending less money and time on ineffective employee training. Traditionally, adult’s education/learning has served as a tool for human resources management, a way of preventing social conflicts, and a tool of adaptability to the market ever-changing standards (Barros, 2012: 125). When employees are highly skilled and well educated, the organisation maintains its competitiveness, and is equipped for adaptability and change (Department of Education and Science, 2000: 127). As mentioned earlier, nowadays initial education cannot serve throughout life, nor can school alone get tremendous results for learners

(Jacobson & Blank, 2015: 1). So, for any organisation, by allowing and motivating its staff for continuous learning, it becomes itself a learning organisation, and takes advantage of a range of material not taught in school for its effectiveness and full development (Lytras et al., 2009: 281). So, in a changing world with a knowledge-based economy, people should not only learn continuously; but also, they should be open to new ideas (The World Bank, 2007: 117). In fact, reflecting the changes ever experienced in organisations and the importance of learning today, Pöyry-Lassila (2015) opines that

“Changes in organisations and their unstable and unpredictable business environments challenge also the employees to change, i.e. to learn both formally and informally. Informal ways of learning have to a great extent replaced formal training and education as means to support the effectiveness and development of organisations” (p. 5).

With regard to learning within a global world, people get equipped with a variety of knowledge, values and skills. These include getting acquainted with global issues and universal values such as justice, equality, dignity and respect for diversity, developing cognitive skills such as thinking critically, systematically and creatively, and non-cognitive skills such as empathy, conflict resolution, and communication skills, aptitude for networking and interacting with people from different backgrounds, building behavioural capacities in order to be able to act collaboratively and thus find solutions to different challenges (UNESCO, 2016: 19; Keevy & Chakroun, 2015: 27, Livingstone, 2001: 13; DeNobile et al., 2014: 32). The returns for such a professional learning are beneficial both to individuals and their organisations, especially with regard to experiencing change/transformation and noticeable improvements therein (Wei et al., 2009: ii). In connection with this, Eraston (2008, cited in OECD, 2016) advises that “people must know enough in order to change; and they must change in order to get different results” (p. 3). Learning from global encounters is a way of preparing for most of these benefits, not only for the individual church's leader, but also for the church organisations they lead and manage. As they change what they do and how they do it, they are likely to experience improved results for themselves and their churches.

In the next section, I give an overview about learning from encounters in general, about undertaking exchange visits and travels, in particular.

2.2.3 Learning associated with exchange visits and travels

Today's world is a global, interconnected world, globalisation being the "movement of goods, services, people, and ideas across national borders" (Merriam & Bierema, 2014: 2). The speed and intensity of human beings' movements across national boundaries are tremendous nowadays. Learning is part of an adult's everyday life, as it is for any other individual; so, a connection has been established between learning and experience in general, and with travel in particular, although this type of learning remains invisible/ignored and difficult to quantify for organisations (Cristol & Muller, 2013: 15). Learning takes place in formal, non-formal and informal settings; consequently, there is way of distinguishing between three types of learning associated with travels and visits – formal learning, non-formal learning and informal learning (Pitman et al., 2010: 230). Informal learning through visits and travels is rather a pleasurable and personal pursuit of knowledge, rather than a real study activity as such. Finding a personal motivation to learn is thus of great importance.

For a school, organising repeated visits or study tours outside the classroom setting impacts greatly the learning activity (World Bank Group, 2017: 1). According to DeWitt and Storksdieck (2008: 184), in order to make a school trip a real learning experience for students, certain factors are worth considering, namely the novelty of the trip setting, the knowledge that students already have about the central topic of the trip, the students' individual interests in the topic, their personal motivations and agendas with which they are going to approach the experience. The idea behind such encounters is the learning acquisition, namely with regard to understanding the world, reduction of prejudices and improvement of use of foreign languages on the behalf of the students involved (Scheunpflug, 2017: 12). As for what is expected from them, this centres around people's inner transformation, which results in much preparation in order to contribute to building international understanding between nations, mutual solidarity, more tolerance for foreigners, inclination to

solve global problems basing on mutual understanding and respect (Scheunpflug, 2017: 13-14; Scheunpflug, 1997: 109). When considering adults' learning and the multiple ideological positions relating to it, Findsen and Formosa (2012) deal with four main orientations, of which one is the recreational-leisure model. According to him,

"In the recreational-leisure model, the constructive use of leisure for social well-being is emphasized as a way of off-setting boredom and loneliness and as a means of promoting social interaction. Knowledge and curriculum are usually provided through various kinds of voluntary organisations such as sporting or cultural groups. Teaching and learning are often formal and didactic and valued in their own right (as opposed to value judged from the viewpoint of useful application)" (p. 26).

Adults engage in visits and travels for different purposes. Generally, most adults undertake journeys for recreational sake, rest and relaxation, personal values, social experiences on the one hand, for learning and/or personal development experiences, on the other hand. In other words, the initial motivation of such informal visits and travels is not often for learning, but most of them bear informal learning connotation (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2005: 168). In connection with this, people have been moving around the globe for a variety of personal explicit reasons. These include the desire of breaking away from the routine of everyday life, surroundings and pressure in order to find a time for relaxation and rest, to break away from the influence of family, of children and friends, to spend more time with friends/relatives and thus satisfy social interactions needs, to meet people of the same interests as theirs, to see and discover new places and cultural attractive sites, for security sake, and learn other cultures (Van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011: 298-300). According to Bruns (n.d.: 2), apart from acquiring information, exchange visits are beneficial to those who participate in them, as well as for the organisations involved, in that they allow for common understanding, relationships, commitment to new approaches and sustainable friendships, and future network. They constitute thus a tool for both learning and networking. For this reason, encounters are often funded for persons or organisations who cannot afford it, for social justice sake. As for their real contribution, Bruns (*ibid*) states that

“Exchanges visits and other travels strengthen relationships and teamwork, play an important role in career development, broadening perspectives of those likely to take on greater responsibilities in the future. Attending real events can have much more impact than staged presentations. Getting people involved in talking and doing, not just listening, is one key to success (...). Travel offers the opportunity to escape from the assumptions and preconceptions used to cope with everyday life and to gain different perspectives (...) visits allow time for exploration and for ideas to condense into new patterns” (pp. 4-14).

In a global world, information and knowledge is easily accessed, through the Internet, workshops or conferences for example; and so, the idea of travelling on long distance would be considered of no value and judged meaningless by many. But as shown above, between visitors and their hosts, information becomes alive in dialogues and/or conversations, as well as from the responses to a number of questions. People get acquainted with one another, and mutual understanding of each other's problems and achievements is likely to create inspiration and encouragement so as to keep working and start new initiatives for better organisational and individual life. In addition to getting to know each other, most of the time, by travelling people come to a clear understanding of the world society, and figure out what development – and consequently its related concepts '*overdevelopment*' and '*underdevelopment*' – looks like (Scheunflug, 2017: 12). In fact, according to Matras et al. (2013), exchange visits are organised to “improve the knowledge and practices of the visitors and their organisations, and to integrate the experience gained from the visit into their daily lives” (p. 2). As for Grundtvig Learning Partnership (2012), referring to new ways of engaging adults in learning activities, the concept 'mobility' is used to mean

“Any activity where students engage in a coordinated structured learning activity outside the classroom environment and away from their area of residence study. It usually refers to transnational activity but in certain cases may take place within the student home country. However, learning mobility is normally transnational, physical, and for a broad range of learning purposes, be it in organised programmes, or on the learner's own initiative” (p. 26).

Any adult person may choose to go on journeys on their own initiatives, instead of being contended with virtual mobility through the internet or any other tool brought by new technology. And if granted, a time slot for

sharing ideas with those who did not take part in the learning tour helps everybody benefit from the experience for best practices and implementation of improvement ideas, to the extent that the visitor acts as multiplier when back from the visit. The other persons in the organisation are, by that occasion, granted time to learn through what Matras et al. (2013) call the 'adoption ladder' whose steps are "awareness, interest, knowledge or comprehension, attitude, legitimisation and practice" (p. 2), before they own the new approaches for improvement at different levels. Church's leaders do not learn from global encounters only for themselves as individuals, but also for their communities. As education providers, what they learn needs to bear fruit for the benefits of all, to whom they are responsible in different ways, including building capacities. Only then is their learning of good quality, as it is further discussed in the next section.

2.3 Quality of education in a global world: an overview

To be useful to people and help to reach the goals for which it is designed, education needs to be of good quality. This section provides an overview about quality with regard to learning within a global world. I will reflect therein what is quality in general (Chap. 2.3.1), before emphasizing on quality in informal global learning (chap. 2.3.2) and on two ways of improving quality – networking and partnerships, *inter alia* (chap. 2.3.3).

2.3.1 The notion of quality in education

Education is at the basis of any society's development and prosperity (UNESCO, 2015a; Trilling & Fadel, 2009: 40), so not only should every person have access to it, but it should also be of good quality (UNESCO, 2005a: 126; UNESCO, 2000: 8). Globally, the number of out-of-school children or youth is falling dramatically with the introduction of Education for All concept, and most adult people are now learning, but this is just a part of the process. The important question is to know the quality of what is being learned at school and how it is learned in there (UNESCO, 2013: 2). In fact, in most educational systems, students complete primary school education without mastering the basics, and diplomas without the required competences, skills, values and attitudes are numerous. Quality is

a broad concept, mostly used with varying meanings in reference to students' performance, the outputs of an educational activity, or the learning/teaching process (Fry et al, 2009: 187). In this understanding, nations have found in education a weapon for today's competition and democratic stability, to the extent that many countries are restructuring their education systems so as to be recognized globally as top (Schleicher, 2016, 12; Blossing et al., 2013: vii). They continuously wonder how well the learning opportunities available to learners of all kinds help them to achieve their personal goals, the goals of their nation as a country and, of the whole community. In an attempt of helping what quality is, Fry et al. (2009: 187-195) expand further by showing that quality should be understood as excellence, 'zero error', enhancement, fitness for purpose, transformation, and as a threshold made of the desired knowledge, skills, and values of a graduate. This ongoing need of excellence is at the basis of continuous reform within educational systems all over the world. Nowadays quality is at the heart of educational debates. Educationists are becoming more and more aware of the importance of quality and are consequently dealing with questions relating to how well a system should be – on the one hand, the overall system, and the concrete teaching and learning processes taking place at different educational institutions, on the other – in order to make students learn effectively (UNESCO, 2005a: 28).

As mentioned earlier, the notion of education quality is a complex one as it refers to the interaction between material and non-material dimensions or ingredients. In fact, according to UNESCO (2005a: 36:), the education quality framework is made of the context, the learner characteristics, the enabling inputs – namely teaching and learning – and the learning outputs/outcomes. The context comprises a certain number of elements that education practitioners cannot control, such as socio-cultural factors, religious factors, labour market demands, globalisation, the knowledge age, technology, demographic changes, factors relating to war crisis, or epidemic breakdown, for example. According to this framework, in order to be effective, any education should consider the individual learner with his/her background and prior knowledge, in addition to considering the current context, before getting involved in the teaching and

learning process. This would lead to quality outcomes, such as the development of competences, skills, values and attitudes on the side of the learner. In other words, for effective learning, quality is required of all the education system components – quality learners, quality learning climate/environment, quality content, quality process, for quality outcomes/outputs. UNICEF (2000) develops this idea by opining that quality education includes,

- “Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;
- Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;
- Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace;
- Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities;
- Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society” (p. 4).

For example, in connection with the present thesis, this idea meets the one relating to knowing who the adult learner is, what he/she likes to learn, and why he/she is learning it (Rasmussen, 2015: 2; Bin Abdullah, 2008: 106). Quality is demanded of all education practitioners and policy-makers for excellent school results and competences in life; and so, the International Community is committed to ensuring quality education to

all nowadays, contrary to just accessing people of all ages to education – a fact relating to mere quantity (UNESCO, 2015a; Killen, 2009; UNESCO, 2005a; UNESCO, 2000). As target and immediate beneficiary of education action, the learner is placed at the centre of the education quality framework, since every education activity should aim at reaching him/her and supporting his/her competence development (Siege & Schreiber, 2016: 101). However, in order to attain success for the educational activity, the teacher gets in as vital factor, provided his/her roles of organiser, planner, information provider, facilitator and advisor (Le Donné, Fraser & Bousquet, 2016: 8; Hattie, 2012; UNESCO, 2005a: 36; Harden & Crosby, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 1998: 8). Therefore, current top school systems pay a lot of attention to how they select their teaching staff (Schleicher, 2016: 12). In fact, according to Hughes (2013), “the powerful relationship between teacher and learner is central to the task of improving the quality and effectiveness of education. Research confirms that in any education system, it is, in the end, teachers that make the difference” (p. 51); and farther it affirms that “teacher attitude is everything” (p. 73). The teacher quality and capability function as a foundation to an effective learner’s learning. So, for quality sake, teachers should be recruited with care, trained on how to qualitatively teach before being allocated wisely, and retained longer in schools (UNESCO, 2014: 187).

Within an ever-changing, complex and globalised world, the role of the teacher is becoming more and more demanding. A shift should be made from having students to just acquire knowledge to preparing for its use for the common good, from absorbing uncritically what is presented to using their critical thinking and problem-solving skills, therefore orienting students towards being more and more creative, cooperative and interconnected in learning. Rapid changes are being perceived everywhere; therefore, it is up to teachers to prepare the students to seize the opportunities that are available to them, namely the use of new technologies, by offering quality education. Dealing with that shift in educational quality, Schleicher (2016) says,

“Put simply, the world no longer rewards people just for what they know – Google knows more every day – but for what they can do with what they know. Because

that is the main differentiator today, education has to do more than transmit educational content. It also has to cultivate students' ability to be creative, think critically, solve problems and make decisions. It has to help students work better together by developing their ability to communicate and collaborate. It has to build students' capacity to recognise and exploit the potential of new technologies. And, last but not least, it has to nurture the character qualities that help people to live and work together" (p. 13).

Quality in education needs to be central even in learning from encounters, ability to learn from encounters proves quality, although not all people have the same opportunities for global learning. It requires from all to using skills and competences namely with regard to coping with the challenges of the current era, on their own.

2.3.2 Quality in informal learning

Quality education is one that produces the effects for which it was designed (Creemers, 2005: 6). In other words, reflecting on quality of a school implies inter alia seeking to which extent goals are met, how the outputs and outcomes are, how graduates are living, how healthy students are, how much they learn, even how the conditions in which learning is occurring look like. All this accounts for the formal and non-formal types of education provision, where it is well recognized that its quality of is tributary to the quality of teaching and teachers (Schleicher, 2016: 12). As for the informal type of learning, which is sometimes confused with adult learning and/or lifelong learning, it is life-long and life-wide (Department of Education and Science, 2000: 32). Based on real life experience, and happening in every life situation without relying directly on a teacher, mentor or trainer – of course, no form of human learning is conceivable without the influence of other people (Claxton, 2002: 21) – it is rather ubiquitous, incidental, spontaneous, self-directed, voluntary – to cite few characteristics (Livingstone, 2001: 2). Successful informal learning is based on the teacher's action during formal or non-formal learning experiences. According to Hung et al. (2014),

"The demands of learning have now shifted in favour of the ability to manipulate information, meaning-making and towards the development of lifelong and life-wide learners. A key consideration in understanding what is needed in schools

today stems from the differences between creating adaptable and adaptive learners" (p. 158).

In other words, these researchers assume that, in addition to giving inputs to students, teachers should be helping them to experience learning in unexpected situations, to be able to use their knowledge in unique ways and be ready to learn from new situations, on their own. This supposes a real shift in the way teachers think of their learners today.

According to Hung et al. (2014), the main characteristics of such a learner would include the following:

"a) *The learner as an active and creative explorer of the world*: The learner does not simply respond mechanically to environmental stimuli/events. He/she is an active explorer and creator.

b) *The learner as a reflexive agent*: Learning facilitates a process which enables the learner to reflect on his/her life and environment. The aim is to organise learning opportunities, learning materials and events so as to help the learner learn. It is also important to promote learner reflexivity and encourage him/her to actively engage in problem-solving. The learner needs to self-question and critically analyse learning processes and results.

c) *The learner as a self-actualizing agent*: The important aim is to promote intrinsic motivation and self-actualization or fulfilling one's potential as an individual who is curious and explorative.

d) *The learner as an integrator of learning*: The challenge for the lifelong learner is to collectively integrate thinking, feeling and action, and take advantage of all the different learning settings – whether in-school or out-of-school, formal or informal – as well as across a wide range of learning content" (p. 181, italics added).

Measuring the learning quality in this type seems not as obvious as in other types of human educational action, where academic achievement, for example, is used as indicator of school quality. It sounds more complex, and less perceptible. As mentioned earlier, the learner is responsible of his/her own learning, independent, self-regulated, and somewhat creative on the one hand, meanwhile collaborating with other learners, on the other hand. However, as informal global learning is transformative and citizenship-oriented, actions like participating in and contributing to the community, self-esteem and confidence proof in the adult learner actions, attested knowledge with regard to respect for human rights, ability to analyse social situation critically, ability of working cooperatively and collaboratively, demonstration of curiosity and autonomy, demonstration of responsibility to one another and to the community are some of its quality outcomes, although measuring them remains difficult (UNICEF, 2000: 20). With regard to adult learners, UNESCO (2009) opines that quality education and learning programmes are simply those that provide them with “meaningful opportunities for positive personal and social change” (p. 79).

In a nutshell, during formal/non-formal learning time, the classroom should be considered as global by the learning facilitator, offering cross-cultural learning opportunities to all, so as when in the world-classroom the learner is able to effectively learn on his/her own, by recognizing, distilling, adapting the new knowledge and transferring it to their local context. Informal learning is life experiences-related, its content is all life domains, and therefore it is difficult to capture. Nevertheless, this can be explored better by sharing experiences, as it is the case for this study. Learning from encounters within a global world implies that people – here church's leaders – use their self-learning capacities and keep reflecting on ways of applying the learned to their churches and societies. This requires adaptability, flexibility, creativity and understanding of their proper environment.

2.3.3 Networking and partnerships as ways to improve quality

Today, networking and partnering are important for quality in leadership. In this section, I will first reflect on networking, and its relation to partnership.

Networking

One aspect of implementing quality in education is through networking. In fact, according to Hughes (2013), “the success of a school depends on its capacity to join networks to share knowledge, address problems and pool resources” (p. 213). No school can achieve tremendous educational outcomes by acting alone; so, to handle all the issues relating to its mission and thus fulfil its vision, it is very important to work hand in hand with other local, national and international institutions, both from the public and private sectors, their domain be it educational or non-educational. This means that an education institution should establish mutual beneficial relationships with other institutions, and keep the formed ties active through regular communication and meetings (Ball, 2014: 8). People within a network support one another, share relevant information, and cooperate in order to accomplish individual and common goals (Rohan, 2016: 15; Bienzle et al., 2007: 14). In an educational network, for example, teachers work with other teachers and professionals, which creates synergy in applying evidence-based approaches; they find a venue to share best practices, to get informed about new research on both teaching and learning, to create awareness about educational policy implementation issues, to produce teaching and learning material, to assess students learning outcomes, to work in learning communities, and the like, to the extent that a high-quality professional culture is established among teachers (Brassey & Nick, 2017: 24; Hung, et al., 2014: 194). Nowadays, networking is enhanced through the internet; so, people and organisations are brought together though geographically separated or institutionally distinct (Ramalingam et al., 2008:1). In the same way, (adult) church leaders and other church members should work in synergy with other churches and institutions, both locally and globally, to enhance mutual learning.

Their relations should be based on mutual respect and understanding, cooperation, mainly in the pursuit of the assigned common goals.

As for physical contacts and everyday human interactions, all people share the earth with one another, and ipso facto they “are all in the web”, (...) because “the human race is a vast network of beings all connected” (Ball, 2014: 14). Ball (ibidem, p. 4-17) expands further on natural laws of networking worthy considering, which are – italics added (a) ‘*no man is an island*’ – all people are interconnected, thus, nobody should act as if they were alone in the world, (b) ‘*degrees of separations*’ – no separation at all between people, whoever they want to reach is closer than they think he/she is, (c) ‘*the matrix of purpose*’ – everybody has a goal, so by exposing it to others, a clear path is likely to be found so as to get there, (d) ‘*the law of give and take*’ – giving and taking always shape any network for balance sake, (e) ‘*the law of reciprocity*’ – giving should precede receiving, for people are inclined to give to someone who has given first, and (f) ‘*the law of atmosphere*’ – there exists an instinct tendency to cluster for people of common interests. In other words, networking emerges naturally (Ramalingam et al, 2008: 2), by building reciprocal and lasting connections basing on mutual trust among the people involved (Bienzle, 2007: 17). Clearly, for one to be accepted by those around him/her, together with his/her projects, is essential for one’s success; so, creating a good atmosphere for network by asking oneself the starting good question of what they bring to the network as contribution – before the one of what they get in return can arise – is foundational. That is why Anderson (2014) puts it simply that “networking is about giving, then taking” (p. 18).

On everyday basis, people meet a lot of fellows socially and/or professionally, yet few real close relationships may be observed for they lack knowledge on how to develop network contacts. According to Anderson (2014), networking should follow a simple guiding principle comprising – italics added:

“ a) *Visibility* - You need to be visible. People need to know who you are.

- b) *Credibility* - Next step is assure credibility. Who are you, what are you good at?
- c) *Profitability* - Then a mutual connection is established. You help each other and make a close/strong network relation” (p. 17).

Most of the time people lose opportunities for building connections with others, yet by just smiling, being interested or listening actively to somebody in small talks, for example, strong ties may start developing. In such a way, one gets visible; and if they are found trustworthy, connectedness emerges in order to start profiting. Of course, all ties/connections within a network may not be strong – there are both strong and weak links, nevertheless, six functions are fulfilled by any network, namely building the community in promoting its values and standards, filtering to allow for organised and useful piece of information, amplifying a message to make it reach a broader public and more understandable, learning and facilitating effectively and efficiently, investing and providing members with the needed resource to carry out their activities, and convening or bringing together different individuals or groups of individuals globally (Ramalingam, 2008: 2-3; Mendizabal, 2006: 5-11). With regard to education, networks prove very important in that they are not there just for the sake of networking, but also for learning for all, and shaping the practices and educational policies (Bienzle et al., 2007: 33-34). The churches, as venues for learning acquisition for their members and the whole society, are global movements and part of an interwoven network at different levels. As learning organisations, strengthening the different ties and keeping learning from one another are comprised in the duty of the church’s leaders, especially at this era of knowledge economy.

Partnership

Another concept similar to network, and which contributes to quality education outcomes today, is partnership. In most countries globally, education is the role of the state, unfortunately without any capacity to provide for everything with respect to educating its citizens, thus the necessity for

partnerships at all levels. So, according to Hughes (2013), things should not go that way: students' parents, universities and the whole community should support the educational process for quality results. In fact, he says,

"It is a mistake to leave everything to the state – to do so, is to compromise the rights and responsibilities of parents and the community. In an effective education system, there is an appropriate balance between meeting the needs of the society (and not just the state) and those of the individual. To develop, every society needs a skilled workforce and for its citizens to be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to participate effectively in their society. Effective education systems and good schools make maximum use of the resources available to them in the community, both human and financial, and forge strong partnerships with parents, community groups, other schools and universities" (p. 66).

According to Bray (2000), partnership is "the state of being a partner", and a partner is "a person who shares in the same activity" (p. 4). He notices, however, that the concept of sharing applies both to individuals and organisations, depending on a particular context, and it primarily implies equal sharing though it is not always the case, which makes distinguish between two kind of partners, the "dominant partners" and the "subordinate partners" (idem). People engage in collaboration through partnerships for various reasons, including sharing experience, getting mutual support, labour division, increasing resources, increasing the sense of ownership, extending reach of their initiatives, increasing action effectiveness, and programmes impact through monitoring and evaluation (Bray, 2000: 6). The culture of partnership based on cooperation and dialogue between people, cultures and religions at all levels is fundamental for transformative learning, as intended by global education (Cabezudo et al., 2008: 13). An example of organisational partnership is the twinning, that is, the "pairing of one institution with a similar but usually more mature institution for a mutually beneficial partnership" (World Bank Group, 2017: 43). Church organisations are collaborating so as to carry together actions of common interest as they cater to humanity. This increases their effectiveness on the ground, allowing to reach the goals and mission assigned within an interconnected world.

2.4 Partial summary

Meanwhile stressing the role of the teacher to prepare formal and non-formal students to be self-directed learners, autonomous and self-organised so as to cater for themselves once the cycle is completed, the chapter sought to provide an overview on concepts, namely adult education, global learning, networking and partnership.

Adults' education has been given a particular attention as it is sometimes confused with lifelong learning and/or informal education. Informal learning takes place in all life situations, so it connects to experiences, one of which being travels and exchange visits. Because of globalisation, such human movements are not only speedy and frequent today, but also, they constitute a learning opportunity for all, mainly for adult people.

3 Research methodology and methods

In this chapter, the methods that I used in the study are described. As stated in the introduction and state of research parts, the study attempts to understand the learning of the Protestant churches' leaders from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo with regard to being involved in global encounters. I thus intend to describe and explain herewith the methodology processes I used, and the decisions that led to such choices with respect to the empirical study at hand (chap. 3.1). An explanation concerning the sample and sample process (chap. 3.2) will be presented first. Then, I will provide a thorough description of the data collection method and process (chap. 3.3), of the methods, procedures of data analysis and interpretation (chap. 3.4) before coming to the ethical considerations (chap. 3.5). Last but not least, the mechanisms of quality control throughout the whole study (chap. 3.6) will put an end to this section. A partial summary (chap. 3.7) will recapitulate the whole process in a summative way.

3.1 Qualitative approach in understanding Protestant churches leaders' informal learning

There are two commonly known approaches referred to in regard to research in education, that is, qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Creswell, 2012). The study at hand is concerned with the understanding of the informal learning of Protestant churches' leaders in the Democratic Republic of Congo, within a world characterized by globalisation. Among other features of the current century is the speedy movement of people, goods, services and ideas around the globe (Merriam & Bierema, 2014: 22), which results in global experiences and exchanges. People are thus dependent on one another, to the extent that their horizons are getting broadened on everyday basis, mainly through access to knowledge and technology use (Cabezudo et al., 2008: 16). It is noted that to accomplish their daily lives, people require constant learning, not within the classroom setting, but as they go about everyday activities (Merriam & Bierema, 2014: 1). Research concerning informal learning in Sub-

Saharan Africa in general, the Democratic Republic of Congo in particular, has remained silent until now (Edwards et al., 2006: 1). So, the content, context and the people I am intending to research make the topic original and thoroughly new. Because the purpose of this study is mainly to get an idea of what churches' leaders have been learning from getting in touch with leaders or members from other churches globally, either when journeying abroad for international meetings, sessions of experience exchanges, or personal reasons, or when being visited by people from outside their country, qualitative approach fits the purpose of the study. Informal learning experiences, which are the case of this study, can be effectively explored through open expression of participants.

Qualitative approach is preferred when the researcher seeks to explore "how individuals understand and experience their world at a particular point in time and in a particular context" (Merriam & Grenier, 2019: 4). In qualitative research, people are understood from their own perspective, or better, from their point of view (Gorman & Clayton, 2005: 3). As for the study at hand, its purpose being to understand how the Protestant churches' leaders from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo perceive their experiences with regard to partaking in global encounters, qualitative approach is fitting. As mentioned earlier, travelling abroad on account of the church or for any other reason, getting involved in experience exchange sessions, or receiving a partner at home are full global learning occasions that the relating experience can be explored through open expression of participants. That is why participants have been given the floor so as to share their experiences with regard to the knowledge, attitudes, skills or patterns of behaviour they believe is accountable to their getting in touch with other people and places globally. The reason for the choice of qualitative approach in the present research is two-fold. First, the study at hand aims at exploring the learning acquired from informal settings by churches' leaders, together with the changes experienced thus far within their churches, or at the individual level, without bypassing the challenges inherent to bringing about change. Second, the study is new in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo. To serve such purposes, I have found qualitative approach as fitting.

3.2 Explanation of the sample and the sampling process

This section attempts to provide an explanation of the sample and the sampling process. It is worthwhile to briefly present some considerations about leadership within the context the Democratic Republic of Congo (chap. 3.2.1) before coming to the characteristics of the sample (chap. 3.2.2) and the sampling procedures (chap. 3.2.3).

3.2.1 Church's leadership in the Democratic Republic of Congo

As mentioned in the title, this study targets the Protestant churches' leaders from the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Leadership is found at different levels of any organisation's structure. An organisation is made of groups of people, some playing among other roles the one of coordinating the activities of other groups, and directing the efforts of the organisation members towards reaching its goals and objectives (Joshi, 2016: 40). In an organisation, leaders influence others by showing direction of action, communicate efficiently, motivate and inspire their fellows so as to have activities done and be successful (Laegaard & Bindselev, 2014: 93). They are thus equipped with leadership skills; these are tools, behaviours and capabilities useful to motivate and direct others (MTD Training, 2010: 9). According to Schust (2011), leadership differs somewhat from management in that to lead means "to anticipate, to lead the way in an exemplary fashion" whereas management comes from the Latin 'manus agere' and means "to take by the hand, to help solve problems, to build up and cultivate relations" (p. 16). He expands further by simply presenting leadership as "a service helping to make others successful", whose iterative process comprises among other steps "(1) to plan and agree on goals/results, (2) to control and decide, (3) to put into practice and find alternatives, (4) to control and evaluate, and (5) to provide feedback and motivation regarding improvements" (Schust, 2011: 12). Leadership abides in the various functions of a leader and not a particular person (Joshi, 2013: 30), so such functions may be shared among certain members of a group. As for people considered as 'church's leaders' here-with, they are people who hold any leadership position in their church denomination, at any level of its structure. In connexion with this, pastors,

deacons, elders of churches, choir presidents, and other people in leadership position within the church have been considered church's leaders.

3.2.2 Characteristics of the sample

So far, there is no study done on informal learning in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo, as I mentioned in the state of research. This exploration is thus new; so, considering the fact that there is not any relating prior research and the newness of the study at hand, the theoretical sampling, which draws from the grounded theory method, is thought to be fitting this study purpose.

Grounded theory, or better the 'grounded theory method', which was initially designed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in the mid-1960s, intended to generate theories from empirical data (Bryant & Charmaz, 2012: 39). The study emphasises on data rather than on the research questions or the studied literature relating to the phenomenon, in that the researcher delays revealing what he/she learned from the literature review until after data are collected (Tracy, 2013: 184). The sample size is not known in advance, but it will only be determined when the saturation point is reached, that is when no new information or insight is being generated (Merkens, 2004: 169) – such a decision is somewhat subjective (Creswell, 2012: 433). The researcher stops sampling as he/she notices that including new cases does not contribute any new piece of information about the developed concepts and their dimensions (Schreier, 2018: 90; Taylor et al., 2016: 108). Since the study at hand aims at developing "a theory that is grounded in the data" (ibid, p.91), the theoretical sampling is fitting. With it the researcher picks an initial sample for data collection, codes, and analyses his/her data, and meanwhile he/she decides what to collect next and where to find it, so as to develop and refine one's emerging categories and theories (Bryant, 2014: 131; Bazeley, 2013: 15). Put otherwise, the choice of participants, the processes of both data collection and data analysis are concomitant (Tracy, 2013: 184). The process is not only emergent and flexible, but also iterative, as the data collected from a participant are analysed before coming to the following one for data collection, and so on (Rapley, 2014; Ritchie et al., 2003). Thus, next selection of

participants is done progressively, bearing in mind how the issue at hand, I mean here 'learning beyond the classroom setting', is varying with regard to the characteristics of the sample. Along the process, the researcher constantly compares the data gathered from participants to grasp the similarities and differences in the information provided (Creswell, 2009: 13).

With regard to the undertaken study, the sampling table (see appendix 6) is presenting the characteristics of the selected participants. In fact, in order to answer the research questions, it is not possible for a researcher to collect data from all cases, hence the need of selecting a sample from a population (Taherdoost, 2016; Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009; Ritchie et al., 2003). For any research, a sampling table functions as guiding tool for the sampling process; so, through the whole process of data collection, the researcher ensures that the characteristics of participants are considered in order to meet the exploration goal. For this study, they are determined by the extent to which they are likely to make a difference with regard to the learning of churches' leaders in a global world, so far as travelling abroad is concerned.

So far as this study is concerned, four clusters of characteristics are worth considering. They are personal (gender and age), professional (level of education, role played in the church, and type of service therein), institutional (church and location of church), and experiential characteristics (status of the visited country, and number of travels abroad). In fact, research shows that there is a relationship between learning and gender. For example, Kulturel-Konak et al. (2011) and Philbin et al. (1995) opine that there are differences in learning styles between males and females. The same accounts in approaches to learning new material, or to male and female learners' results in assessments and tests (Woolfolk, 2016: 156). Thus, the gender feature is taken into consideration with regard to selecting participants to this study. Concerning age, psychologists opine that learning is tributary to age (Woolfolk, 2016: 71-82). For instance, it is recognized that as people mature, they become more and more self-directed human beings, gain experience, learn for immediate application of knowledge, and are led by their intrinsic motivation to learn (Merriam & Bierema, 2014: 47; Foley, 2004: 86). So, in selecting the participants to this

study, age characteristic is taken into consideration; and the scale of 10 years intervals is referred to as people therein are supposed to share some common psychological features. These intervals are 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60 and above. People's educational background influences greatly how they engage in learning out of the school settings (Hung et al., 2014: 158). Also, experience and learning go hand in hand (Merriam & Bierema, 2014: 104; Laubscher, 1994: 65). So, getting involved in a profession, rendering services and moving from a place to another whether during one's free time or for specific reasons, are altogether occasions of acquiring knowledge and experiences (Roberson, 2018: 14). The learning such occasions bring about leads to new life experiences, which themselves are sources of learning. Therefore, participants are selected based on their qualification or level of education, the role played in the church and the type of service therein, as well as the church location and the number of travels made. For reasons of anonymity, each interview of the sampling was given a name of a territorial entity (zone or urban municipality) from the ancient Kivu region, having nothing to do with the places where the interview took place.

3.2.3 Sampling procedures

As mentioned above, in reference to the sampling table, the researcher continuously makes decisions about the selection of participants in the study. For the study at hand, I use individual semi-structured interviews to collect data, and purposeful sampling strategies to select Protestant churches' leaders to partake in it (Creswell, 2012: 206; Mack & al., 2005: 5). Participants are intentionally chosen from a population, bearing in mind the characteristics described in the sampling table, and in connexion with the extent to which they are likely to contribute to the current study (Gentles et al., 2015; Rapley, 2014; Creswell, 2012). These people are "key informants" as they are supposed to have some specific knowledge about the topic under study (Lodico et al., 2006: 140). Because there are a lot of people who may fulfil the requirements of being selected within the sampling frame, convenience sampling is referred to as well. In fact, ac-

cording to Creswell (2012), convenience sampling is “a sampling procedure in which the researcher selects participants because they are willing and available to be studied” (p. 619). This happens, for example, when the researcher has limited time or resources, so he/she conducts the study on just a certain number of people included in the said study (Lodico et al., 2006: 145).

For this study, the sample is made of 28 church leaders, of whom eleven are women, all sharing common characteristics, namely gender, age, educational level, church belongingness, church location, status of visited country, exerted ministry in the local church, time of service, and number of travels abroad. They are selected from 3 major church denominations from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. The participants all together shared their experiences on global encounters for 15 hours, 39 minutes and 5 seconds, which gives a mean time of 33 minutes and 32 seconds per interview. For anonymity sake, each interviewed person was given a name of a territory or urban municipality of the ancient Kivu region, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (chap. 3.5).

3.3 Description of the method and the process of data collection

In this section, I am providing a short description of the method of the data collection (chap. 3.3.1), of the development of the data collection tool (chap. 3.3.2), and of the process of the data collection (chap. 3.3.3).

3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

The study at hand explores the learning of the Protestant churches' leaders from the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo outside academy, mainly with regard to travelling to their international partner churches, and exchange visits. In other words, how they represent and interpret the travelling reality makes up the central phenomenon for this study. As mentioned in the state of research, informal learning includes learning that people acquire outside the curricula as they are provided by formal and non-formal educational institutions and programmes (Schugurensky, 2000: 1-2).

Research also shows that people gain a lot of learning from travelling and paying visits, though at first sight the purpose may not be learning as such (Pitman et al., 2010; DeWitt & Storksdieck, 2008; House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2005). They therefore get personal experiences and knowledge of different kinds. So, to explore such a phenomenon, interviewing travelling or visiting people is likely to be the most suitable method to collect data. Indeed, there is no way of observing their behaviour, feelings or meaning-making out of their travelling or visiting experience, apart from having them talk about it (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:108). With interviews, the researcher gets in dialogue or interacts with the interviewee about a topic of mutual interest.

Literature contrasts *structured interview* with *semi-structured interview* (Brinkmann, 2018; Creswell, 2012; Easwaramoorthy & Zarinpoush, 2006). The first is a type of interview where the interviewer asks a set of standard or pre-determined questions concerning a certain topic of mutual interest in a specific order, so, the respondent chooses one's answers from a list of options; whereas in the second the interviewee answers in his/her own words. According to Gorman & Clayton (2005: 125-6), interviews have some advantages. These include (a) allowing not only for immediate response to a question asked, (b) helping the interviewer and the interviewee to explore the meaning of the questions posed and the answers given, (c) enquiring on *why* people or organisations behave in this or that way – that is causation, (d) providing a friendlier and more personal emphasis to the data collection process, and (e) facilitating the collection of a large amount of data within a short space of time. In exploring the informal learning of Protestant churches' leaders, semi-structured interviews are used. In fact, a set of pre-determined questions as stated in the interview guide, together with the possibility and flexibility of asking more others for information enrichment's sake, are used (Brinkmann, 2014). So, sometimes it is no wonder that the interview questions differ from the research question, especially when they serve some purpose toward the research objective (Saldana, 2011: 35).

3.3.2 Development of the interview guide

At this point, I describe how the interview guide is developed. Beforehand, I explain the development of the questions for the interview. Then, I provide some clarification with regard to the background information that the study needs from interviewees, before dealing with the language in which the interview guide is developed and translated for adaptability to the context.

Interviewing primarily implies an interviewer who asks questions to an interviewee, that is, a participant in the study. Working on effective questions before research starts is a determining component to designing interviews (Turner, 2010: 757). They are to be designed in such a way that each of them helps to dig deep into the experiences of the participants to allow for the maximum of data collection from the interviews. Different types of questions are thus asked in the process of the interview. In fact, an interview guide intends to translate the research questions into questions that can be asked to the interviewees in a language that makes sense to them (Brinkmann, 2013: 59). For this purpose, I designed an interview guide, which states the key research issues to cover (see appendices 1. 2 & 3). This includes the perceptions of the Protestant church leaders' on travelling beyond national boundaries, the learning acquired from visiting a partner church abroad, the benefits brought about by partnering with others, the changes experienced ever since travels have been undertaken – both at individual and institutional levels, and the difficulties encountered in attempt of implementing locally the learned materiel from global experiences. In addition, interviewees suggest something to the church leadership with regard to the organisation further travels, for better profitability. Basing on the designed interview guide, I was able to collect field data by asking questions to the persons who fulfil the sampling criteria, namely age, gender, level of education, church, church location, status of visited country, ministry in the church, time of service and numbers of travels abroad (see appendix 7).

3.3.3 Data collection process

As I mentioned it above, I use the theoretical sampling approach to select the participants in this study. This is done according to the criteria and characteristics as mentioned in the sampling table (see appendix 7). As I cannot systematically work on all interviews at the same time, participants are progressively identified; and before working with any of them, getting their telephone number in advance so as to schedule an appointment with them sounds better – only after we have convened on time and place can the interview take place (Boyce & Neale, 2006: 6). Prior to effective data collection, the interview guide is tested on some respondents, which allows to establish if it is clear, understandable and fitting for answering the research questions, and/or to foresee some changes if need be (Gill, Stewart & Chadwick, 2008: 292). To cover the research field, an exchange for training purpose about the research protocol and its administration is implemented with co-researchers. This helps to understand the target, purposes and the research questions, together with how the research is to be conducted. A list of potential respondents within the area is given them, too. On the appointment day and time, before conducting the interview, the nature and/or purpose of the research and the general conduct of the interview – how responses may be recorded, that there is neither right nor wrong answers, and so on – are explained thoroughly to the participant (Doody, 2013: 31; Cohen et al., 2007: 361), together with seeking for his/her oral or written consent (see appendices 4, 5 & 6). Then only is the interview conducted in a secure, conducive environment, where the respondent is at ease and far from disturbances.

In a practical way, to start with, I introduce myself to the respondent; then, I explain the purpose of the research and what I expect from the respondent in a few words. If needed, I state briefly the reason for his/her choice as potential respondent. Ethical considerations, namely freedom of participation, anonymity, confidentiality in handling data during all the stages of my research (collection, analysis, interpretation, presentation of results and storage), and the right to withdraw are touched here, including to ask for permission of use of a recording instrument, since I cannot memorise all the experience exchange (Taylor et al., 2016: 111;

Alshenqeeti, 2014: 44; Creswell, 2012: 148; Cohen et al., 2007: 382; Seidman, 2006: 60-69). All this helps to make rapport with the interviewee, and to gain trust. Listening attentively to what the participant is saying helps to judge how to phrase the next question (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012: 76). In need of further clarification, explanation or additional information, I refer to probes (Doody, 2013: 30; Given, 2008: 681-3), whereas to encourage the respondent I refer both to verbal and non-verbal cues (for example mm, uh, nods, and so on).

The interview is semi-structured, so most of the time the dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee does not follow the questions order as stated in the interview guide. To the contrary, it is done in a kind of randomly order, as I progressively and attentively note some key ideas that allow for asking follow-up questions or probes for further clarification of what is said, thus giving a conversational and relaxed climate to the dialogue at hand (Taylor et al., 2016: 115-118; Seidman, 2006: 81-86).

3.4 Methods, procedures of data analysis and the interpretation of data

The preceding section has attempted to provide a thorough description of the method and process of data collection. In this section, I justify and reflect the choice of the method of data analysis – the qualitative content analysis – by providing a short description of the whole process of the analysis and the interpretation of the data. This is done through the preparation of material for analysis (chap. 3.4.1), the understanding of the data content analysis (chap. 3.4.2) and their coding process (chap. 3.4.3).

3.4.1 Preparation of material: transcription and translation

In order to get immersed in the data, audiotaping, transcription, translation and generating initial codes follow, as further described in the following part, in anticipation of the data analysis and interpretation process. In fact, as mentioned earlier concerning the theoretical sampling (chap. 3.2.3), an interview (or a set of interviews) is transcribed, translated if need be, and coded before coming to the following participant for data collection, whose interview goes through the same process before a third one is

selected, and so on until theoretical saturation – a point at which data become somehow repetitive as no major new insight flows from them (Taylor et al., 2016: 91). For this study, the primary data is made of twenty-eight audio files corresponding to the conducted interviews. In order to be accessible at any time, and for the sake of keeping track of participants, audiotapes and the related files developed in the course of working with the interview transcripts have been labelled accurately for efficient management – for possibility of tracing the interview data to the original source at all stages of the research (Seidman, 2006: 112). Before the analysis, all the interviews are transcribed and then translated, depending on the source-language, either from Kiswahili or French into English. In this part, I deal with how either activity is implemented.

Transcription

The audio files are the original verbal form of the recorded interviews, and consequently not easily analysed. Therefore, they are transposed in a written form through the transcription process. According to research, though demanding, the transcription process is a very important step in qualitative content data analysis, in that it allows for better understanding of the interviews, especially if done by the researcher him-/herself (Taylor et al., 2016: 170; Bazeley, 2013: 73; Cohen et al., 2007: 365-368; Seidman, 2006: 115). For profitability sake, while re-hearing the audio-tape during transcription, he/she should pause/stop and memo, so as to keep the ideas springing out from vanishing (Wengraf, 2001: 209-212). Though such an activity adds more time to the transcription, it provides however a good start on data coding and analysis. The researcher may choose to transcribe the interviews verbatim; still such transcripts do not represent fully their raw material (Mayring, 2014: 43); data seem lost from the original encounter as transcription represents “the translation from one set of rules systems (oral and interpersonal) to another very remote rule system (written language)” (Cohen et al., 2007: 367). Though transcribing would mean ‘putting down all the words’, when it comes to practice this becomes complicated, since “any translation is also a betrayal” (Wengraf, 2001: 219). Cohen et al. (2007: 367) opine that “the prefix ‘trans’ indicates a change of

state or form; transcription is selective transformation. Therefore, it is unrealistic to pretend that the data on transcripts are anything but already interpreted data". Most of the time the researcher or the transcribing person considers only what is said, that is words, leaving apart non-verbal communication and intonation, inflections of the voice, hesitations, non-verbal cues, extra-linguistic and paralinguistic factors, which are also important with regard to the content of the interview (Cohen et al., 2007: 239, 372). The researcher may go around these by taking shorthand notes in a diary, while conducting the interviews (Bazeley, 2013: 102). I should note also that I used pseudonyms for some words, especially for names of people and locations, for anonymity sake, seeing to it that the interviews content is not lost (Taylor et al., 2016: 85; Seidman, 2006: 67). For originality sake, interjections, such as hm, aha, okay or eh, and local words, as shown in this example from the interviewee Kabambare (MAXQDA:135-136): "Naa baada ya ibada kila jumapili, wanakuwa na kipindi moja kinaitwa, wanakiita *munada*" were transcribed, as well.

Translation

For the study at hand, as indicated earlier, none of the conducted interviews was done in the language of work, so they had to be translated from Kiswahili or French to English. How this was done is shortly explained in this section. As mentioned in the concluding keynotes on the preceding section, translating an interview from a language to another distorts its original content. Issues of many kinds are reported by researchers with regard to translation, to the extent that most arguments are against the existence of a single correct possible translation (Given, 2008: 890). Nevertheless, there has occurred translation for the conducted interviews. The reasons behind such a translation are three-fold. First, this is due to linguistic differences between the researcher and the participants on the one hand, the supervising professor on the other (Seidman, 2006: 104). Interviews have been conducted in Kiswahili or French, depending on the degree of mastery of either language by the participant. Though the researcher can speak both languages, he/she has to transpose the data in

the language of a third party – the supervising professor, who speaks English, the language of work for this study. Second, for communication purpose, readability and dissemination of the results, which targets a more international audience, writing in an international language sounds appropriate. Third and last but not least, since undertaking PhD research is not an individual matter, but it requires collaboration and teamwork, so as to interact with experts from outside the Democratic Republic of Congo context on this topic of global interest – global learning, intercultural learning, networking, partnership, churches' international network, to cite few keywords – including the interpretation group, presenting and reporting on data in English sounds compulsory. Translation poses a number of issues, namely of false cognates, collocations, grammatical interferences, or cultural interferences; therefore, transformation of the message is likely to happen (Parks, 2014: 1-4). Parks expands further that there are obviously profound differences between any two languages and cultures, so translating should consider the function of the text, or better the intention communicated in the original text (p. 9). The researcher should thus be aware of his/her cultural filters; so, he/she has to check interpretations and translations basing on the primary data (audios) as he/she reads through the texts (Cohen et al., 2007: 139). Otherwise, he/she should interpret what he/she has found in the original language, so to record conclusions in the required one – using occasional quotes or phrases within parentheses or brackets, for example, or explanation (Bazeley, 2013: 77). For example, in the interview with Kabambare (MAXQDA:135-136) there is mentioned '*munada*', which is translated by 'auction': "... an at the end of the service on every Sunday, they have one session called "Munada" [auction].

In the study at hand, preferences have been put on translating all the interviews, and the subsequent generated files have been saved accordingly for further references, if need be. Native translators² who master both the local language, French and English helped to translate the interviews, following guidance provided by the researcher. Cross-checking of

² I am indebted to Urbain Kavuke, Charly Mathekis, and Pascal Mbokani for their great support.

the translated materials, in relationship with the primary data (audios) and the relating original texts for comparison follows in order to make sure that the central message of the interviewee is conveyed therein. In fact, only after the transcripts are readily prepared and proofread does the researcher move on to real analysis of the interviews. The transcribed and translated interviews can be found on the electronic media coming with this study.

3.4.2 Qualitative content analysis in analysing informal learning

To start with, it is worth recalling that the present study aims at exploring the learning of the DR-Congo Protestant church's leaders within a global world, especially with regard to their undertaking trips beyond national boundaries, in the framework of partnerships and ipso facto the international churches' network. As mentioned above, data has/have been collected using semi-structured interviews, which allow participants to talk freely about their experiences. In this regard, the researcher can explore and figure out the Protestant churches leaders' learning by analysing closely what they say about the international trips and/or exchange visits in which they have been involved so far. Qualitative analysis does not fit only any research where nothing is known about the topic under study – the research question thus designed in a way to enable discovery of new information items; but also, it provides a rich understanding of the perspectives of the persons being researched, to meet the need for more in-depth information (Norton, 2009: 115-116). Thus, qualitative content analysis fits greatly as method for data analysis. Content analysis stands for a set of research methods that aim at providing inferences from any kind of data relating to words, pictures, symbols or communication (Mayring, 2014: 17; Elo et al., 2014: 1; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008: 109-12; Krippendorff, 2004: 17). According to Taylor et al. (2016), all researchers develop “their own ways of analysing qualitative data analysis” and the fundamental difficulty a lot of people face in such an endeavour is that it is “a process of inductive reasoning, thinking, and theorizing” (p. 168). So, in the context of the study at hand, the content of the interviews transcripts has been

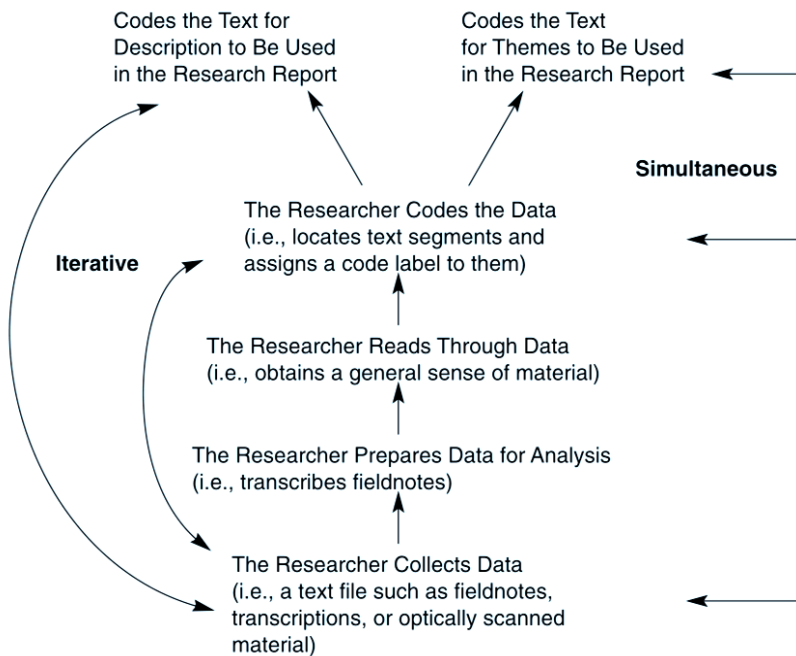
analysed so as to figure out the (informal/global) learning of Protestant church's leaders.

The process of analysing data is multidirectional and iterative (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012: 77; Cohen et al., 2007: 499). Though not occurring in a linear order, the data analysis and interpretation, for the researcher, passes by getting immersed in the data through close reading of the transcripts, transforming the initial notes into emerging themes or categories, looking for connections between the themes for their grouping according to similarities, to constructing a table for the whole study, or the abduction process (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012: 77-9; Seidman, 2006: 117; Krippendorff, 2004:85). According to Bazeley (2013), the qualitative data analysis is a three-stage process, whose steps can be “identified by some simple mnemonics [*italics and capitals in original text*]: Read and Reflect, Explore and Play, Code and Connect, Review and Refine to start the analytic process, Describe, Compare and Relate to deepen it, then Extract and Explain, so that you can Contend and, Defend and Extend to bring it to a conclusion. Throughout the process, you will benefit also from taking out time to Wander and Ponder, allowing your brain to make connections and ideas to gel” (p. xx). He thus gives a thorough description of what happens to a qualitative researcher with respect to his/her data.

Guided by the research questions, he/she collects his/her data – here, by conducting interviews; so, should he/she read it several times, while noting observations and taking memos, for exploration of potential themes/emerging ideas in the same spirit (Mayring, 2014: 82; Bazeley, 2013: 15, 101; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012: 77; Dey, 2005: 87-99). The same accounts for the development of both deductive and inductive codes which, together with close reflective reading, help the researcher to get familiarized with the data, and to capture a comprehensive though general picture of what the data is about. In an iterative reflective way, basing on certain criteria, the researcher comes to identifying a few emerging categories and/or key concepts, from which all the data can be described or abstracted (Bazeley, 2013: 120). This categorization results from the attempt of creating a conceptual tool aiming at classifying and/or comparing the important characteristics/features/properties of the phenomenon

under study, with respect to the purpose stated for it, and the relating context (Taylor et al., 2016: 170-188; Bazeley, 2013: 108; Elo & Kyngäs, 2007: 111-2; Krippendorff, 2004: 102; Dey, 2005: 100). The figure below illustrates the whole process in a certain way.

Figure 1: The qualitative process of data analysis



Source : Creswell (2012: 237)

3.4.3 Coding and codes

Before stating anything about how each interview is analysed, I present the coding system – the central tool for analysis – in the following section. Within the state of research (chap. 2), I mentioned that there is not yet any research relating to informal learning in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo. At the global level, of course, there is plenty of literature on this topic, which helped get insights about what I undertake to

cover in the study at hand. In connexion with the existing literature, I have thus been able to develop deductive codes, basing on the research questions, whereas the inductive codes are based on the data, while I read through them as long as they are collected (Bryant, 2017: 265; Bazeley, 2013: 336; Babbie, 2010: 21-23). It is well-known that interviewing brings about a tremendous mass of data, or better, a lot of textual materials, worth classifying and categorizing for analysis. For this purpose, it is worth starting with the theoretical discourse about the researched topic, before incorporating new insightful ideas from the empirical data. The key process to come up there remains the coding process as it allows for an easy retrieval of the important material needed for qualitative data analysis (Babbie, 2010: 400). There is way of distinguishing between deductive and inductive categories of codes, though sub-categories and descriptive concepts get in either set progressively, as new insights spring out from data while they are closely read by the researcher.

Deductive categories

Departing from literature, and in relationship with the research questions, five main deductive categories have been identified within the coding system. They are (a) the perceptions of Protestant churches' leaders on international journeys, (b) the learning gained from trips and/or exchange visits, (c) the benefits of travels and/or exchange visits, (d) the changes brought about by travels and/or exchange visits, and (e) the challenges faced in implementing improvement ideas resulting from travels and/or exchange visits.

Within the first category, that is "perceptions on international journeys" category, fall two deductive sub-categories, that is the meaning of travels and/or exchange visits (e.g. a school, a leisure occasion); and knowledge integration in daily life (e.g. adapted to context, adopted as such, and rejected).

In the "learning gained from trips and exchange visits" category (UNESCO, 2016:19; DeNobile et al., 2014: 32; Livingstone, 2001:13), three deductive sub-categories are identified, namely knowledge (religion or spirituality, sustainability literacy, critical thinking, understanding of

planetary boundaries, questioning of routine at workplace, questioning of hegemony in church's affairs), skills to bring about change (such as interpersonal/communication skill, organisational skills, managerial skills, technical skills, fundraising skills, leadership skill/servant leadership, and entrepreneurial skills/creativity), and values and attitudes (appreciation of diversity, respect of human rights, social justice, respect for rights of others, empathy, antipathy towards global issues, sense of community membership, cooperation, care for others, and tolerance/patience for difference).

The third category labelled 'benefits of travels and/or exchange visits' comprises three deductive sub-categories (Bruns, 2019: 2-14; Matras et al. 2013: 2), which are connection with people and places (with returns like information or new knowledge acquired, exploration time for places, social cohesion, bridges built among people, friendships/strong relationships developed, teamwork strengthened, and escape from preconceptions and assumptions), institutional benefits (mutual support/partnerships, collaborative coaching, empowerment and capability, discovery of viewpoints and approaches, commitment to new approaches, and time and attention focused on topic) and personal benefits (own network enlarged/having friends beyond national boundaries, mutual support, and collaborative coaching).

From the deductive point of view (fourth category), the changes resulting from travels and/or exchange visits (World Bank Group, 2017: vi; Matras et al. 2013:2) are envisioned at two levels (sub-categories), namely at the visitor'/traveller's level (knowledge and practices improvement; change in awareness, attitude and/or understanding; much more confidence in one's ability, conviction to take action, self-esteem, change in routine/working in new ways, and preparedness for taking action), and at the organisational/church's level (improved consensus/collaboration increased).

As for the challenges faced in the implementation of improvement ideas (fifth category), according to the World Bank Group (2017: 2), they go in the sense of weak environment for change (weak stakeholder/client ownership of new ideas, lack of consensus on approaches/not having the

same vision, weak coordination among stakeholders, weak communication among stakeholders, lack of mutual trust among stakeholders, failure to conceptualize or consider a better approach, and dictatorship in actions), inefficient policy instruments (weak administrative rules/administrative rigidity, weak laws and regulations, contradictions in churches, weak standard operating procedures, and weak adaptability potential for church), and ineffective organisational/institutional arrangements (inadequate systems, inadequate funding/lack of finances, and inappropriate staff/staff lacking in capacities).

Inductive categories

From the collected data, in addition to the deductive categories described above, arises a category dealing with suggestions with regard to travelling abroad, beside a range of sub-categories for the deductive ones stated above.

According to the empirical data, five sub-categories are recommendation/suggestion-related. They include self-preparedness – descriptions are rather made of phrases for better understanding of what they are about (learning more than one language, getting acquainted with foreign currencies, being informed about what goes on abroad, having travel documents, take some money with you, get encouragement from others, get support from the church, do the first step, and have a clear vision), (practical) tips on safe and sound travels (understand well timing/schedule, communicate efficiently, check documents, read labels carefully, ask questions, keep time/be in time, check gate, and make sure you prepared), general conduct of traveller (adapt to everything – especially diet, avoid to copy bad things/stick to good sides, seize the (good) opportunities, capitalize the strengths of others/minimize their weaknesses, avoid negative judgements on others, etc.), general recommendations to churches (preaching the gospel – not anything else, avoidance of dependence, sending others abroad to learn and change, implementing what was seen for improvement, and so on), and recommendations to donors and/or international partners (keep providing support for exchange visits and travels).

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, because the participants are sharing their experiences with regard to what they learn from travels and/or exchanges of experiences abroad, without being exhaustive, certain concepts join what stands at first view as sub-categories for the deductive categories, or for descriptive factors relating to them. So, from the interviews, the following concepts/phrases have been considered as fitting in the sub-category relating to the meaning of travels and/or exchange visits – some nuances of meaning may allow for individual stance: a space for exchange of experiences and knowledge, a space of new knowledge acquisition, a word exploration occasion, a time for rest, an occasion for maturity, an occasion for discovery, a privilege (honour), the greatest book of the world, and so on). The knowledge integration in daily life sub-category finds a new descriptive concept, I mean selectivity (that is, select what is good and reject what is bad). From the same data, five new sub-categories are found to fit in the perception-related category, namely (a) issues faced when visiting abroad (adaptability, communication/language, insufficient self-preparedness, confusion in things/items, manipulation of devices/handling things relating issue, and so on), (b) self-feelings associated with travels/visits (traumatised/stressed/upset/stressful, joy/happiness, solitude/loneliness/being left alone, uncertainty about how things will move on, travelling is good/interesting, and so on), (c) personal prior knowledge on international journeys (no knowledge, sufficient knowledge, theoretical explanation, awareness about checking and/or immigration procedures, no guidance at all, having some knowledge about international travels, interpersonal competencies, and some knowledge in international language), (d) purpose (opportunities) of trips/travels or visits (exchange visits/exchange of experiences, training/empowerment, evangelism/gospel crusade/spreading Good News, international/regional conference or meeting, studies/tertiary education, and so on), and (e) importance of travels and trips (open one's mind, open doors/provides opportunities, help make friends/connect to people, strengthen/improve one's ministry, help perform better, awaken desire of self-fulfilment, inspire a new vision/orientation, and so on).

Some other descriptive concepts have been welcomed in the gained-learning category, for the sub-categories knowledge (e.g. cultural riches/heritage/domain of other people, on other resources – time, information, earth/soil, impact/role of church on society, and so on), skills to bring about change (e.g. financial skills, time management skills, reflexive/thinking skills, collaborative skills, and so on), values and attitudes (humility/simplicity, rigor and/or temerity, self-discipline, love for well-done jobs, hard-working, respect for pastors/the Lord's servants, being independent, and so on), on the one hand; three sub-categories have arisen therein, namely self-description of learning (what helped, what I discovered, what interested, what makes happy/funny, what makes grow up, and so on), means of learning acquisition (by observing/seeing, by taking shorthand notes/note-taking, by asking questions/inquiring, by trial and error, by visiting websites, and so on), and subjective description of people (welcoming/hospitable people, kind/good/nice people, unwelcoming/bad people, hard-working/entrepreneurial, courageous/brave, self-reliant, devoted (engaged) to God/to church activities, and so on), on the other.

As for the third sub-category – benefits of travels and/or exchange visits, not only some descriptive concepts are added to the sub-categories institutional benefits (e.g. sharing ideas, networking perspective/enhanced connectivity, advocacy/lobbying rendered possible, joint project implemented, new and improved actions, increased financial capacity, getting famous locally, problem-solving strategies enhanced) and personal/individual benefits (discovery of (famous) places and people, experiencing life out of one's comfort zone, promotion/further responsibilities given locally, enhanced skills, boldness with regard to further travels abroad, and so on), but also a new sub-category has arisen from the data – self-feelings associated with experiences abroad (e.g. surprise/astonishment/ amazement, joy/gladness/happiness, wonder, being blessed, secure, things are good there, ease/finding oneself at ease, liking, self-pity/acting by compliances, stressful, inferiority, and so on). As for changes relating category, change of perspective and change in personality are additional at the visitor/traveller's level, many more concepts (such as more funds raised, better life

for pastors and/or other people working in the church, communion/partnership of churches reinforced, better organisation in church affairs, improved productivity, and so on) at the organisational/church level, and three more sub-categories are acknowledged. They are strategies for change in the community (e.g. by living/acting as role-model, by organising restitution and/or training sessions, by building other people capacities, etc.), key-knowledge/skill implemented when traveller is back home (such as fundraising relating strategies, evangelism approach, entrepreneurship relating knowledge, church services relating knowledge, organisation relating knowledge, and so on), and subjective knowledge on change (change is not easy, change is gradual/a process, change is possible, change is a must).

From the long list of categories, sub-categories and sub-sub-categories described above, it is clear that generating and developing them has been a process in which the researcher moves backwards and forwards between theory and the data (Dey, 2005: 105). The deductive categories issued from literature are open to new categories to come in, as a result of the interactive, iterative and non-linear linkages between theory and the data (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003: 49). Therefore, a lot of inductive categories have been progressively integrated therein as I read through data, reflexively. During this attempt of categories construction, data are organised and ordered in such a way that the most seemingly alike concepts are clustered in the most seemingly appropriate category, from which grasping both features and possible interrelationships for comparison and analysis is rendered easier (Saldana, 2011: 91-92). Labelling a data set as belonging to a certain category implies a comparison between that data and others which do not belong; for the above described, they fit in both the theory and the empirical material (Richards, 2015: 131-132; Dey, 2005: 102-103). The sub-section below sheds further light on the analytical process, by dealing with the data analysis itself and interpretation through the abduction. The coding system can be found in the appendix 8.

3.4.4 Data analysis and interpretation: abduction process

As mentioned in the introductory part (chap. 1), this work attempts to explore the learning of the Protestant churches' leaders from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo in connexion with their involvement in global encounters. As a qualitative inquiry, this exploration attempts to understand, describe, explain, illuminate, and document what the target Protestant churches' leaders have been learning in this domain for themselves and the whole community (Leavy, 2017: 9; Leavy, 2014: 1-2). The aspect relating to international travels and/or exchange visits is central to this study. Based on directly collected data rather than initial hypotheses, it is a theory-generating endeavour (Bryant, 2014: 119). Contrary to quantitative research, there are no standardized methods for qualitative data analysis, the primary ways for reasoning being deductive, inductive or abductive (Saldana, 2011: 93; Wertz et al., 2011: 92). Saldana expands further by saying that, whereas deduction concerns what is generally drawn and concluded from established facts and evidences, induction moves in the direction of what is explored and inferred "to be transferable from the particular to the general, based on an examination of the evidence and an accumulation of knowledge" (p. 93). As for abduction, it explores "the most plausible explanation from an array of possibilities" (p. 94). In other words, while deductive inferences are thought to be certain – as long as their premises are true – and inductive ones to be probable, abductive inferences are plausible, as they try to find the underlying reason for a phenomenon (Reichertz, 2014: 131; Saldana, 2011: 93; Fischer, 2001). Abduction moves beyond the data collected in the perspective of theory construction, by formulating explanation or prediction. It reveals the case and the rule simultaneously (Scheunpflug, Krogull and Franz, 2016: 17). Social researchers assume that abduction helps in making new discoveries in a logically and methodologically ordered way, therefore its success as noted today (Reichertz, 2014: 126; Reichertz, 2009).

For its background consideration, it is noted that this approach (abduction) was introduced in research in 1597 by Julius Pacius; but for about four centuries it remained unfortunately unnoticed until it got revived by Charles Pierce, who used it and proved that it is distinct from the until

then well-known types of logical conclusion, that is deduction and induction, so far as generating new knowledge is concerned (Koslowski, 2018: 366; Reichertz, 2009; Gabby & Woods, 2005: 39; Eriksson, 1997: 195). With regard to qualitative research, abduction is the inferential creative process the researcher puts in place for identification and theoretical explanation of the phenomenon as shown in the data – the surprising research evidence; that is to say, with abduction, the researcher is progressively led away from old to new theoretical insights (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012: 170). Koslowski puts it otherwise, when he says that abduction is

“a strategy for drawing inferences about an event according to which one explanation for an event is preferred to another because it provides the more plausible causal account of the data that is more causally coherent with what we take, at time, to be well-founded background information or beliefs” (p. 367).

Abduction's starting point is thus the empirical data, from which the researcher attempts to infer the most plausible explanation – it selects and constructs a hypothesis that explains a set of data better than can any other hypotheses (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014: 153; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012: 167). On the basis of empirical data, such an attempt provides better understanding of the phenomenon the researcher is working with, thus anticipating observations in other cases. In the context of the study at hand, it is a creative process that helps in typology formation and therefore in criteria identification, with regard to the learning for the Protestant churches' leading class of the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, in connexion with partaking in global encounters.

As mentioned earlier, abduction operates in different interconnected and iterative steps, the major ones being the phenomenon revisiting step to get familiar with the data, the de-familiarization and alternative casing steps (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012: 167). The fundamental activity of all this discursive and iterative process is not only reading again and again through the data, but also the resulting annotation and memo writing, which facilitate a lot theory construction as they guide the researcher towards a broad range of relevant themes in the data under analysis (Mayring, 2014: 82; Bazeley, 2013: 15, 101; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012: 169;

Smith & Shinebourne, 2012: 77; Dey, 2005: 87-99). Writing observations on a continuous basis, together with any ideas or relationships between codes and/or interviews, is also important during this process (Thornberg & Charmaz, 2014: 162). So, with regard to the study at hand, I used a research journal so as to capture any ideas that emerge during intensive and repeated reading of the material, and coding in view of data analysis (Cohen et al., 2007: 470; Schmidt, 2004: 254). In the following lines, I briefly describe each of the abduction phases.

Phenomenon revisiting phase

The revisiting phase of the phenomenon helps for familiarization with the data, as the researcher goes through field-notes again and again, for transcription, coding and memo writing sake (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012: 175-177). This increases the resistance of the phenomenon to the interpretation that may be done of them, that nothing is forgotten as the writing process moves on. The researcher, illuminated by the research questions, thus gets immersed in the data, or better, he/she gets to know better the material at disposal. Želinský (2019: 4) speaks of ‘mnemonics’ to name this familiarisation-immersion step in the data. I have dealt with transcription (chap. 3.4.2) and memo writing earlier, so in this section I am emphasizing simultaneously on participants’ portraits writing and coding transcripts.

In this section on the *participants’ portraits*, a short description of each participant is given (chap. 4.1). This description does not only consider the background information about the interviewee and the interview held with him/her, but also the core message from the interviewee with regard to the study being conducted. With regard to this work, I considered individual features of interviewees (age, gender), professional background (church and occupation in the church), academic qualification, the number of travels made, and the environment in which the interview took place (time, duration, and climate). The perception of the church leader on travelling abroad, the main ideas with regard to what he/she thinks he/she learned from there, the benefits and/or changes experienced, and the challenges with regard to implementing the new ideas gleaned from

travelling have been considered, as interviewees shared their experiences. As mentioned earlier, this section is further developed in point 4.1.

The next step was *coding the interview transcripts*. Qualitative database is most of the time made of field notes, which require getting organised; otherwise the researcher is overwhelmed by them, as there is no way of judging between what matters and what does not, for analysis. When a researcher codes items, he/she begins moving to a higher conceptual level, little by little. Thus, coding stands as the “first step in a qualitative analysis”, as it helps to identify, within transcripts, the fragments that carry important pieces of information with regard to the object of the study (Cropley, 2002: 116). Without being an end in itself, coding the data is thus a purposeful step, providing the researcher with a means of accessing evidence, of doing query and/or sorting data, by finding a label that allows for grouping several elements under one concept, and moving to conclusions (Flick, 2014: 11; Bazeley, 2013: 125). Coding functions as a data condensation task that allows the researcher to retrieve the most meaningful insights he/she needs to analyse, as he/she assembles data bits that go together (Miles et al., 2014). In order to do proper coding, the researcher reads carefully the interview transcripts, analyses them and notes, for every single interview transcript, the experts that align with the research questions (Saldana, 2013: 60; Schmidt, 2004: 254; Krippendorff, 2004: 126). Of course, for one text passage it is possible, to assign several codes. The text is segmented for analysis, so the categories are assigned to segments of the text (Mayring, 2014: 51). Similar items are assigned the same code (Yin, 2011: 187). According to Mayring (2014: 97-101), in case there are previous studies on the topic, code formation is rather deductive – the categories being deduced from theory or other researches; the missing categories (inductive) on the existing coding system are added afterwards from the empirical data, in connexion with the research questions (Bazeley, 2013: 170).

So far as the present thesis is concerned, the interview transcripts have been coded by the researcher himself, in collaboration with other PhD researchers in the domain of education. This means that the interviews are intra-coded by the researcher, and the same interviews are coded

by somebody else so there is possibility of comparing two categories of the same transcripts. Although the same categories for two different coders may not be reached – because each person coming to the data brings their own purposes, perspectives, experiences and knowledge therein (Bazeley, 2013: 150) – however inter-coding helps the researcher to find similarities and differences, which pushes his/her spirit to further reflexion (p. 151). To help inter-coders work on this efficiently, prior discussion is held with them, and after coding subsequent encounters are foreseen, where some modifications are agreed upon, if needed (Elo et al., 2014: 4). In the praxis, the analysis process is performed using MAXQDA, a software package for qualitative research. It is a computer-assisted analysis, which offers a series of advantages, namely of faster data coding, and a more detailed overview of internal relationships within the mass of data (Cropley, 2015: 111). The researcher processes the deductive codes in the software and, as long as the coding goes on, together with close reflexive reading of the transcripts, inductive codes are introduced therein for an update of the whole coding system. The coded and inter-coded transcripts are also imported to the software, to make a whole with the coding system. Then, comes the coding process itself, which is done by identification and mere drag of the segment to be coded into the corresponding code (Friesse, 2004: 200).

Defamiliarization phase

With regard to the abduction process, defamiliarization is a way of estranging what is familiar, that is the researcher acts as being distant from the data so as to gain more insights from them (Želinský, 2019: 4; Timmermans & Tavory, 2012: 178). In other words, defamiliarization increases the researcher's ability of revisiting the data, thence making the abductive reasoning more prolific/fruitful. Wearing theoretical – better, epistemological – lens, the researcher distances from his/her habitual patterns of thinking; therefore he/she creates a kind of semantic distance from what he/she would have taken for granted before, that is during the revisiting phase. Profound inscription – through note-taking, memo writing, and transcription – is suggested as a best path to come up there. In

fact, according to Timmermans & Tavory (2012: 178), people think differently in textual/written than in modes not derived in written works; so inscribed text is likely to show clearly a problem that would be veiled if reference was done to non-written accounts. So, from a creative exercise of one's intellect, the researcher identifies similarities, differences, logical fallacies, lists, and detailed comparisons between transcripts. So far as this thesis is concerned, basing on the research questions, the researcher revisits critically all the coded interview transcripts using the MaxQDA software to identify patterns in the data. This step covered fully, the researcher proceeds further to the formation of types, whose description occurs in the following section.

Alternative casing phase

As mentioned earlier, this study is a reconstructive one in that it explores the out-of-school learning of the DR-Congo Protestant churches' leaders in a global world. It mainly seeks to understand the different types of their learning as acquired from their trips and/or exchange visits with partner churches globally. Basing on the context of the study, a picture of the different types of informal learning, together with the main sustaining criteria, is thus expected of this research. How these types have been creatively generated is central to this third phase of the interview transcript abductive analysis. The alternative casing, also known as type formation step (Scheunpflug, Krogull & Franz, 2016: 17), is the final phase of the abduction process. Here, in light of the research questions, the researcher exhibits the structure of the case under study; he/she forms types and explanatory criteria as he/she revisits and reflects on the coded interview transcripts, having in mind the conceptual and theoretical framework, and the relating written memos (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012: 17; Wengraf, 2001: 312). All this entails looking at the empirical findings that are re-contextualized in order to capture the new ideas for theory reconstruction and new hypotheses (Bazeley, 2013: 336). For the study at hand, the findings are generated by working on the structure of the learning of the Protestant church' leaders, especially with regard to what they have been able to implement. The underlying criteria for such a structuring activity

have been creatively set in place by the researcher in connexion with the data at disposal and the patterns that emerged from them. All finds room within a table in a summative way (see chap. 4.4).

3.5 Ethical considerations

For this study, the ethical dimension is with regard to data collection and data analysis steps. In qualitative research, there should be not only respect for the rights and freedom of the participants, but also their privacy and confidentiality should be taken into consideration along the process of the study (Leavy, 2017: 200; Saldana, 2013: 37). I have dealt with some of these aspects earlier (chap. 3.3.3), but nonetheless I come on them in details. In this section, I show how I ensured either recommendation with regard to participants in the study.

With regard to freedom of participation in the study, as recommended in scientific research, before engaging in real data collection, I explain the purpose of my research and what I expect from the participant (Doody, 2013: 31; Cohen et al., 2007:361). In fact, participation is free and voluntary; so, the participant has the right to withdraw at any time. If the participant has some questions for clarification or clear understanding of what I intend to do, he/she is given time to ask them, and the answers are given on the spot. Then only can he/she give his/her contribution by responding to the research questions. An oral or written consent has been always of great importance from him/her. As the interview has to be recorded, the permission to do so is asked him/her before using the recording machine. Further ethical considerations recommend that participants be protected against any harm that might be due the data they have provided the researcher with (Khan, 2014: 231; Sieber, 2009: 109). So, for that purpose, the researcher has to keep secured the participant's voluntary consent, not to humiliate/degrade him/her, or release harmful piece of information about specific individuals. Also, their confidentiality and anonymity during the whole process – collection of data, analysis, interpretation and publication – have to be preserved (Bickman & Rog, 2009: 118; Mason, 2002: 201). For the data herewith, anonymization of both participants by the use of the territories and urban municipalities of the ancient

Kivu region, and of the religious institutions to which they belong, together with other sensitive names of places and/or people (e.g. <XYZ*>), has been referred to for confidentiality sake. In the whole process, the participant has been treated with full respect as a human being, and not like a “story-telling machine”; so, for example, as the interviewing ended the researcher took of his/her time to get back to normal conversation (Kazmierska, 2004: 157). A symbolic gift (money for transport) was then given to the respondents as an acknowledgement of their time. All of the persons with whom I took an appointment for interviewing responded positively, and consented freely to share their experiences with me.

3.6 Quality control throughout the study process

Qualitative research has undergone a lot of criticisms over time, especially with regard to its quality as a scientific research. Most of the time, it has been labelled as being arbitrary and subjective (Khan, 2014: 225; Tracy, 2013: 132; Wengraf, 2001: 28). So, is it recommended of any qualitative researcher to assure quality of research throughout the study process for the sake of its inter-subjectivity (Scheunpflug, Krogull & Franz, 2016: 19). In the following lines, I provide explanations with regard to the quality control strategies I referred to in the context of the study at hand, which is a qualitative one as mentioned earlier. I show how quality has been ensured at every phase within the study process, namely the development of the interview protocol, sampling, transcription and translation of interviews, analysis and interpretation of data phases.

Quality in the development of the interview guide

The research questions, together with the topic and the research purpose, form the basis for the subjects to cover, and the questions to ask during an interview (Saldana, 2013: 60; Saldana, 2011: 32). The result of research is tributary to the research questions, so designing them is a determining step for any scientific research success (Mayring, 2014: 10). As far as this study is concerned, they have guided the process with regard to the development of the interview guide. In order to ensure the quality of the latter,

I had to make sure it reflects the research questions initially designed for the study. So, the draft was discussed with a group of other experts in education, who provided sufficient comments and/or constructive feedback for its improvement. When finalized, it was translated from English to French and Kiswahili; but, there again, it had to be cross-checked by an expert who masters both languages to make sure translations convey the original message. During its administration, if need be, additional explanation of concepts could be provided for, so to help the respondent understand what the question is about.

Quality in the sampling process

For quality assurance within the sampling process, as mentioned in the point 3.2.3 above, I used the sampling table, which shows the features that are worth making differences concerning the informal learning of adult people, here the Protestant church' leaders (Khan, 2014: 229; Henry, 2009: 93). Basing on it, I could check if all the expected participants were interviewed for contribution.

Quality in the transcription and translation phases

The study at hand explores the informal/global learning of Protestant churches' leaders, no matter their academic level. Working with them would mean using the language they can understand better, which makes it compulsory for translation before analysis, as stated in chapter 3.4.1. Concerning the quality within the transcription and translation of data, audio files were listened to again and again so as to capture the participant's message. This was followed by transcription and translation in full by either the researcher or someone hired for that purpose. The hired transcribing persons/translators were trained with regard to how to transcribe/translate interviews, without losing sight of the context of the study. Besides, during coding and/inter-coding phase, regular comparisons were made with the respective audio, transcript and translation. High-quality people, who master both English, and the languages in

which the interviews were conducted cross-checked the translated transcripts so as the researcher make sure nothing of the participant's message is left in darkness. A second cross-check of the translation and transcripts quality happened as external people came in, when referred to for inter-coding, as stated earlier (chap. 3.3.4).

Quality of data analysis

As stated earlier (chap. 3.4.3), the first step in data analysis is with regard to coding data; and for the study at hand this has occurred at two different levels: intra-coding – where the researcher himself assigns codes to segments within all the transcripts, and inter-coding – having additional people code all or part of the transcripts for reliability check (Mayring, 2014: 83; Bazeley, 2013: 151). As for me, I have progressively coded all the interviews, and given sample transcripts to some experts for coding, as well, so to have two coded documents for the same transcripts³. They coded the sample in a separate way and, as mentioned earlier, after individual coding we met and discussed the respective codes assigned to transcripts segments. The resulting comparison and discussion with the researcher accounted a lot for the improvement of the codes assigned to segments, and ipso facto for reliability of data.

3.6.5 Quality assurance in the interpretation of data

So far as ensuring quality during the data interpretation phase, I referred to an interpretation group, as made of people who helped for coding, under the facilitation of the supervising professor. These are experts in educational quality, who have been providing support even from the beginning of this study. For the abduction process and the identification of types that emerged from data, or the relating criteria, reference was made

³ I thank very much the members of the learning community for their involvement in inter-coding interviews with me, especially Dr. Onja Tiana Raharijaona, (Madagascar), Charles Gahutu, M. A. (Rwanda) and Emmanuel Niyibizi, M.A. (Rwanda).

to the same team⁴. In addition, most inputs have always been discussed and cross-checked in (zoom) meetings, for quality and intersubjectivity of the data.

3.7 Partial summary

This chapter intended to present in a clear but summative way the research method and methodological approaches referred to by the researcher at each of the phases within this dissertation. Relying on qualitative approach to research, it begins by stating that exploring the learning of the Protestant church's leaders from global encounters implies meeting people in their natural environment and having them share their individual perspectives. To collect data, using an interview guide, a sampling table, or/and any other relevant tool (tape recorder for instance), the researcher worked with a primary sample taken from the population under study, by asking questions in a semi-structured way. He/she took time to reflect upon the content of each session, before picking another sample for further data collection, in the perspective of the research questions, until saturation point is reached. This purposeful theoretical sampling for data collection, along with content analysis was an iterative process – data collection and data analysis are simultaneously being reflected and carried out by the researcher. So as to grasp the meaning of the whole, getting familiar with the collected material through frequent reading, audiotaping, transcribing and translating, memoing, and coding are more than necessary. A coding system made of both deductive codes and inductive ones, together with MaxQDA software, helped to categorize the amount of data at disposal, thence allowing for the theory in view – through the

⁴ I am appreciative to the members of the international learning community for their active participation in the analysis and interpretation of my data: Dr. Semerita Kavira Kamundu, (DR-Congo), Dr. Abraham Tangwe Tamukun, (Cameroon), Dr. Onja Tiana Raharijaona, (Madagascar), Charles Gahutu, M.A. (Rwanda), Claude-Ernest Njoya, M. A. (Cameroon), Dr. Christine Nyiramana, (Rwanda), Emmanuel Niyibizi, M. A. (Rwanda), Canon Etienne Uwijiwabo, M. A. (Rwanda), Frederick Njobati Fondzenyuy, M. A. (Cameroon), Dr. Jean Kasereka Lutswamba, (DR-Congo), Josias Kakule Nyondo, M. A. (DR-Congo), Murhula Kaheto Pierre, M. A. (DR-Congo).

definition of criteria and the emergence of types for the phenomenon under study. The researcher complied with ethical regulations with regard to conducting qualitative research, and ensure the quality of the data therein at all levels, namely through anonymization, inter-coding and working with an interpretation group for data analysis. The process of abduction of generalizing the data into results helped for the emergence of types of learning, based on identified criteria.

4 Results: Portraits, criteria and typologies of the perceptions of church leaders' learning

As mentioned in the introduction (chap. 1), this qualitative study centres around the learning of Protestant church's leaders from global encounters. Using semi-structured interviews, the researcher engaged in field data collection among Protestant church leaders from three church denominations in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. For ethical reasons, interviewees have been anonymized, as I mentioned in the methodology chapter (chap. 3.5). The empirical data were transcribed as texts, translated from Kiswahili or French to English, and coded.

In the following chapter, the results of the analysis of data after the abduction process (chap. 4.2) are presented. First, the description of participants (chap. 4.1) provides a thorough description of every church leader who took part in the research design, by giving – in addition to presenting the overall characteristics of each – some inputs worth retaining from the interview in connection with the research questions. This allows an idea about the sample constituents and the understanding of the situation. From the comparison of the different interviews, the criteria describing the informal learning had been evolved (chap. 4.2). From the comparison along those criteria, five types of learning emerged, namely the personal well-being-oriented learning, the own ministry-oriented learning, the local society-oriented learning, the organisational change-oriented learning and the world society-oriented learning (chap. 4.3). In sub-chapter 4.3, the types are described in details. The whole chapter ends up with a summary of the results (chap. 4.4), where I present what the interviewed persons shared as experiences on their informal leaning globally in a summative manner. That section presents generic but descriptive ideas of the interviewees about the five types of informal learning in connection with the underlying criteria and sub-criteria for this study.

4.1 Interview portraits

The study at hand is a qualitative one, so abiding by the ethical considerations with regard to anonymity and confidentiality of participants is com-

pulsory (chap. 3.5). Twenty-eight people took part in the study by answering the interview semi-structured questions as mentioned in the above-referenced chapter (chap. 3), and herewith I am presenting their portraits, namely by providing not only the background information about every participant and the interview held with them, but also the core message from the interview in relation to this study. In this regard, interviewees' individual features (gender, age), professional background (church and occupation in the church), academic qualification, the number of travels abroad, and the environment in which the interview took place (time, duration, and climate) are considered for every interview. A note about the reason why I retained the interview for analysis in this study is also given.

Interview portrait of Be-u

Madam Be-u is responsible of <YoChi*> ministry in one Protestant church in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Her church is an active member of the <International Church Network 1*>, in which she also has been playing an important role, especially in the <RA*> Board for more than ten years. With an age that is between 40 and 49, she has a bachelor degree in theology. She has travelled often on account of her church, either inside or outside the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Madam Be-u consented to be interviewed in <DRC City 1*> by the researcher in a neutral area, in a climate of mutual confidence. The interview lasted for 39 minutes and 48 seconds. During the interview, she proves confident, relaxed, though this has been the very first time a floor is given her to tell of her numerous experiences. This explains partly her dubious attitude on certain points she had to mention.

As for the content of the interview, Madam Be-u has mentioned some worth noting aspects about journeys and travels abroad. She recognizes in them a mere school, an occasion of advocating for her church members, namely the women, youth and children. Her curiosity, observation skills and longing for change have made her learn about respect for human rights, gender equality, orderliness, entrepreneurship, overcoming cultural weight and traditions. For her, travels and journeys within the churches' international network close the gap among people, and are thus

a tremendous occasion of fellowship, experience share, friendship and service for the establishment of the Lord's Kingdom.

Interview portrait of Bukavu

Mister Bukavu is responsible of a development project of one Protestant church in DR-Congo, the <DRC Church project 2*>. His project operates in a rural area, in one of the districts of his church, where it targets peasants by helping with food security programmes, provision of various trainings and support for local social initiatives. The project intervenes in agricultural domain and therefore he works hand in hand with peasants, mostly the women. His church is an active member of the <International Church Network 1*>, from which it has been getting financial support for years. Being aged between 40 and 49, he has completed tertiary education. Though newly recruited by one of the departments of his church to run a project, in addition to exchange visits undertaken locally in order to learn from other projects managers of the same church, he has been travelling abroad – especially in <African country 4*> – on account of his church. His interest is to see what others have been doing so far, and thus to enhance his project's productivity and status. He seems determined to implement the improvement ideas that he got from exchange visits, as he hopes that they will benefit both the church and his own family.

Though far from his natural environment and workplace, he accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in <DRC city 1*>. This was done in a climate of mutual confidence. The interview lasted for 18 minutes and 12 seconds. Though he has only been on the <African country 4*> territory, besides his visits in local projects, during the interview he proves calm and relaxed. Nevertheless, he was hesitating on certain points that he had to mention.

Regarding the content of the interview, Mister Bukavu has mentioned some important aspects about exchange visits both locally and globally. He finds in them learning occasions, as people learn better when they "see" than when they just read about something or hear about it. The soil restoration techniques, conservation agriculture, crops rotation, zero grazing techniques, and project management techniques are among the

numerous things he has been exposed to. Besides, he recognizes in such visits a way of improving management, productivity and fund raising both for the church and the local population. In trying to implement change, he is compromised with the challenge of organic compost lack and the fund it requires to get them from other locations, and of permanent insecurity in this rural area.

Interview portrait of Bulengera

Mister Bulengera is responsible of a choir of one Protestant church in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the <DRC Protestant Church 1*>. His choir operates in an urban area, in one of the northern districts of his church. His choir members are mainly Christian couples. His church is an active member of the <International Church Network 1*>, from which it has been getting financial support for years. Being aged between 40 and 49, he has completed secondary school. Though he has been singing and/or leading the choir for a long time, he has only undertaken international travels very recently, especially in <African country 1*>, on account of the local church in cooperation with the partner church, for gospel crusade's sake. He seems determined to implement the improvement ideas he got from the two trips done so far, some positive changes having already been testified in the life of the choristers who went with him. This includes showing attention and carefulness to visitors within their church, time management, and being joyous while performing songs publicly.

Mister Bulengera accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in <DRC city 2*>. This was done in a climate of mutual confidence. The interview lasted for 35 minutes and 32 seconds. Though he has only been in <African city 1*> and <African city 2*>, he has learned a lot, and he was willing to share his experience, though with too much repetition. This rendered the message a bit difficult to capture.

Regarding the content of the interview, Mister Bulengera has mentioned some important aspects about travels beyond national boundaries. He finds in them occasions of gaining experience to share when back home; he is a curious observer who always compares the seen and lived

reality with what happens in his country on a daily basis. His attention is drawn firstly to people – whom he describes as hospitable, helpful/caring, kind and generous, and secondly to the church service practices such as free offerings, prayers, orderly entry or exit of church-goers, and so on. He mentions road infrastructure. He reports on the difference between the government from his country and the one of the countries in which he has been travelling, in dedicating to what they do. Together with his fellow choristers, they were refused the permission to cross <African county 4*>, what is reported as negative experience. His informal learning is mostly termed as ‘what helped me’ to mean that he was positively influenced, and thus he was implicitly willing to adopt some behaviours. The humility with which he and the choir were tended, the qualities he found in the country leading class, the guidance and tolerance from the police, contrary to what the situation is in his own country, are some of the main concepts that marked his travels.

Interview portrait of Fizi

Madam Fizi is responsible of one project, the <DRC church Project 4*> which belongs to <DRC Protestant Church 1*>. Her project operates in <DRC city 2*>, where it caters mostly to <LWD*> people. As for her church, she is an active member of the <International Church Network 1*>, from which the project/the church has been getting financial support for years. Being aged between 40 and 49, she has completed tertiary education. For long she worked in the <DRC Church Project 3*> as <STV*> teacher, where she gained a lot of experience, which made her be promoted as project director of the <DRC church Project 4*>. She has undertaken some travels abroad on account of both the local church and the projects in which she has been working, the very first of which led her to <European country 1*> with the funding of <International Church Network 1*> to learn about <XYZ*> topic. She has also been in <African City 2*> and <African City 6*>, with the funding of <International Donor 1*>, for project-relating matters. She has been implementing the improvement ideas she got from the four trips done so far, and some positive

changes have already been testified on the ground. These include adapting teaching materials and trades to <PLWD*>, individualized training and inclusive classrooms.

Madam Fizi accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in <DRC city 2*>. This was done far from her office in a climate of mutual confidence. The interview lasted for 37 minutes and 6 seconds. Like any traveller for farther countries, she experienced ambivalence, that is, a mixture of happiness and stress, joy and fear. The interview with her is full of relevant information; so, it was retained for analysis in the thesis at hand.

Regarding the content of the interview, Madam Fizi has mentioned some important aspects about global travels and journeys. She finds in them a way of acquiring experiences so as to behave and face the numerous challenges of the present times; she is a curious observer who always compares the seen and lived reality with what happens in her own workplace. As a <VcT*> first, and then a leader of <DRC church Project 4*>, her attention is drawn firstly to how vocational trainees are handled, mostly the strategies put in place to help them learn effectively. The collaboration between state leaders and churches, how training is adapted to the <D*trainees>, relocation of training with regard to training needs, inclusion in classroom and school settings, and consequently in the whole society, how elderly people are cared for abroad, and how people differ in mindset are some of the main concepts that marked her travels.

Interview portrait of Goma

Madam Goma is one of the <SyS*> teachers in her church, the <DRC Protestant church 2*>. Her church operates mainly in the north-eastern province of <African country 5*>; nevertheless, it has got some congregations in <DRC city 2*>. She accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in the same city where the interview took place in a climate of mutual confidence.

The interview lasted for 34 minutes and 35 seconds. Being aged between 20 and 29, she has a bachelor degree. She works for a university – the <DRC university 1*> located in <DRC city 2*>, and nowadays she is running for <PtG*> education in Europe. On account of her church, she

has been once in <African country 1*>, especially in <African country 1 village 1*>, to get her capacities reinforced with regard to catering to <SyS*> children. This was done with the financial support of <International Church Network 1*>, whereas for the trip to <European country 1*> she got support from <International Donor 1*>. From such places and many more, she learned a lot of things, namely coping fearlessly with strangers, communication skills and adapting lessons to children bearing in mind their peculiar problems. As a sophomore in education, she is not open enough in responding to interview questions; yet, some worth noting information concerning the subject at hand comes out the interview, hence its retention for analysis herewith.

In relationship with travelling abroad for the first time, Madam Goma reports on difficulties with regard to visas, crossing borders and getting various travel documents. This has however been so important to her, that she is no longer afraid to go by herself. Her experience with the first journey to <African country 1*> accounted a lot for her success when moving to <European country 1*>. She was positively marked by the courage and determination people from abroad exhibit in different domains. Being bold and cooperative, working on lobbying and problem-solving are among the many things she has learned through travels. She can now avoid attitudes that belittle children – the target for the <SyS*> ministry. To impact her church, she has been working on training, making restitution to her fellow <SyS*> teachers and children's parents the numerous materials she gets from her journeys. As a result, in her local church, the number of <SyS*> teachers has increased, and some parents have been acknowledging their guilt in belittling their children. Children are now being taught with respect to their age groups, and not as a whole and unique classroom. But the most important change she can testify until now is her own change of perspective concerning children in society.

Interview portrait of Idjwi

Madam Idjwi is a chorister and a female member of the leading class in her choir, which belongs to the <DRC Protestant Church 1*> in <DRC

city 2*>. Her choir is among the most famous ones in her area, with regard both to singing melodies and being known abroad through travels. Being aged between 40 and 49, she has completed only primary education. On account of her church, she has been once in <African country 1*> with the choir as first international travel. She thus acquired experience, that helped her move by herself to <African country 4*> for family visit. Madam Idjwi, though with so low level of studies, she accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in <DRC city 2*>.

The interview took place in a climate of mutual confidence, far from her children and husband, and it lasted for 40 minutes and 25 seconds. No doubt, this is the very first time a microphone is given her to talk about her experience, which she appreciated very much, to the extent that she expresses freely and at length, because her heart is overflowing with ideas. She assumes that travelling is very necessary for her, in that it exposes to 'good things' so as to emulate for betterment in every domain. She is a curious observer, who even retains tiny details.

Regarding the content of the interview, Madam Idjwi has mentioned some important aspects about global travels and journeys. So, it has been retained for the study at hand. In fact, her experience exhibits the feelings of one person leaving for abroad for the first time. Despite some difficulties relating to entry and visas, on the one hand she experiences joy, happiness, surprise, amazement, thankfulness to God for providing an opportunity to trip, and so on; she is critical towards people, on the other. Depending on circumstances, they are labelled as hospitable, good, not discriminating, or bad. A constant comparison between the exposure and what happens in her country is transparent. Her attention is mostly focused upon church-goers and choristers. So, she has been influenced by their time management, their way of giving offerings, their early and orderly entry to church for services, their order, the women's dressing style, besides the way in which the church is organised there. She came out with some decisions, including being no longer late for church services, getting more and more smarter in her dressing way, showing hospitality to strangers, being clean in all. With regard to what she saw and learned, she

feels satisfied with moving abroad, to the extent that she opines that travelling for other countries should be compulsory for any choir member, as it should be for any other person.

Interview portrait of Kabambare

Mister Kabambare is a famous song artist-composer in <DRC city 2*> where he works for a well-known choir. His fame has made him be recruited abroad for songs training within other choirs, besides moving with his own choir for exchange of experiences. Being aged between 50 and 59, he has completed secondary education. On account of his church, he has frequently visited two countries of the Global South, which has made him acquire a lot experience.

He accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in <DRC city 2*>, and the interview took place in a climate of mutual confidence, far from his children, wife and fellow choristers. It lasted for 36 minutes and 26 seconds. He has not only sung for long in the church; but also, he has lived close to pastors, so travels are made with an eye on the church as a whole.

Regarding the content of the interview, Mister Kabambare has mentioned a lot of aspects concerning global learning, which accounted for the retention of his interview for analysis in the present thesis. As a curious observer, he reports about respect of time for church services, how people give offerings (ordinary offerings and tithes), how pastors are engaged in visiting their church members both in their homes and workplaces, how they raise funds through auction strategies, etc. The internal organisation of the church – collaboration between church leadership and the choir, the provision of monthly consistent wages for pastors and key-choristers (trainers) by the church, a pastor for every group within the church, availability of loans in the church for people who are in need – most captured his attention. Besides, he has a close look on society as a whole, about which he reports among other aspects, how individual people are organised and self-reliant. He does not inhibit his feeling of satisfaction from his travelling experience. Therefore, he expresses learning in

terms of 'what helped him', 'made him happy and uplifted', and of 'getting one's mind open'. According to him, travelling helps to make friends and to get connected with others; it does not simply help to see how others do things, but also it strengthens one's ministry, so as to bear fruit and increase performance – whether at individual or collective level. In addition to implementing the fund-raising strategy relating to public launch of compact disks (CDs) for choirs in his city, he has also made them reflect and start projects for self-reliance. He advises that church leaders should be humble, close-looking so as to find solutions to their fellow church members' problems. They are to leave for abroad in order to learn and get knowledge from others. He longs for change, which he assumes is possible through the implementation of improvement ideas from abroad. He acknowledges, however, that not any idea got from others is good for raw implementation, what shows rather a theoretical than a practical learning.

Interview portrait of Kabare

Mister Kabare is a pastor responsible of one parish of the <DRC Protestant church 1*> in <DRC city 2*>. His age is between 40 and 49, and he has completed tertiary education. On account of his church, for the sake of experience exchange, he recently led the parish choir expedition to the capital city of one country in the Global South. Though he is still at the beginning of his travelling adventure – he has travelled only once – the interview done with him proves full of experience. So, I retained it for analysis in the study. The interview took place in a climate of mutual confidence, far from his dwelling place, and it lasted for 45 minutes and 15 seconds. No doubt, this was the first time a microphone was given him to speak of his captivating experience; thus, he could speak at length and in a detailed way.

Regarding the content of the interview with Mister Kabare, he has mentioned a lot of aspects concerning global learning. These include the difficult experience relating to crossing the borders of a neighbouring country, the difference witnessed in behaviours of people and country government organisation, the church regulations and practices, the language problem, and the issue relating to culture and tradition. Instead of

being critical with regard to what he found as differing, he complied with the tradition in order not to be a stumbling stone, for the sake of peace, flexibility and resilience. Contrary to what happens in his native country, Mister Kabare was amazed at seeing how country citizens from abroad tend and respect pastors, how a pastor like him is given prevalence in the church as well as in the community, how justice and security are in place, how policemen and soldiers are recruited on the one hand, the funeral organisation, the garments (robes) for church services, and the devotion of people to the church and to God, on the other. He describes the people that he met as being compassionate, respectful, generous and welcoming. They come to church in time, and never bare-handed. For him, travels make up a true school; they are a source of knowledge and a way of coming to maturity – people leave formal school without knowing everything. What he learned from this trip is described in terms of ‘what helped him’, or ‘what made him grow up’. In fact, he changed perspectives especially with regard to serving the Lord and making church-goers of his parish devote to church activities through offerings of many kinds, namely. When back, he implemented the idea of making people stand and move in front as they present/give their offerings, which has been now a habit and a great success for his local church. Other improvement ideas include the ones of never coming to church services with bare hands, and having the family members of the newly married couple come with thanksgiving offerings to God for the event, all together – contrary to having the couple alone do so, as in the past.

Interview portrait of Kailo

Mister Kailo is a vice-bishop of one district of the <DRC Protestant church 1*>. His age is more than 60, and he has completed some years of secondary school. With the financial support of friends and unnamed partners in the Gospel, he has visited four countries in the Global South, mainly for experience exchanges. Far from his office, he accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in <DRC city 3*>, in a climate of mutual confidence.

The interview lasted for 45 minutes and 8 seconds. It is full of experience, so I retained it for analysis in the work at hand. As a church responsible and leader at a higher administrative level, his speech goes beyond the operational, reaching to the strategic and visionary.

As for the content of the interview with Mister Kailo, several aspects concerning global learning are transparent therein. The interviewee, as an active observer, focuses his attention not only on how teaching and preaching within the church is constructed so as to strengthen the believers' faith, but also on fundraising strategies to meet the primary needs of pastors and other people who are serving in the church. In fact, according to him, international travels are not only a way of coming close to others for experience exchanges to learn how they operate, but also, they awaken a desire for success and develop high expectations. Besides, these experiences help improve one's ministry. Through the numerous trips that he did, he has rediscovered the pastor's role – to preach the Gospel while influencing others with regard to self-care so as to prepare for retirement time – on the one hand, the role of the church as a whole on the other – to pray for peace in the country, to impact the government with which it partners, and so on. He is longing for the church to impact the local government, in addition to contributing to peace in the country. He assumes that overseas countries develop because of among other factors the place awarded to church leaders, who partake even in decision-making. Moreover, he has got a clear understanding of what makes resources to manage. According to him, these include money, human resources, material things, time and information. As for his fellow pastors over there, he

found them as being concerned for others, self-reliant and hard-working, so they are blessed and lacking in anything. Because his district is lacking in active trained pastors – many are retiring because of age, Mister Kailo came out with an improvement idea, the one of <MiSta*>. This is a Bible centre where he has been preparing ‘first-level pastors’ to self-reliance for the Gospel sake. This new vision has brought great success to his ministry and the one of his trainees. He believes that the pastor was not called by God to keep living in poverty; so, a revolution should occur within the church and society, the start point being the church leadership itself.

Interview portrait of Kalehe

Mister Kalehe is one of the pastors of <DRC Protestant church 2*>. His age is between 30 and 39, and he has a higher education diploma in theology. Nowadays, he is also following some courses in the post-university cycle. So, most of his travels abroad have been undertaken in this study framework. With the financial support of his local church and its partners, he has travelled to one country in the Global South for more than five times. Far from his office, he accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in <DRC city 3*>, in a climate of mutual confidence and conducive to learning from one another.

The interview lasted for 31 minutes and 12 seconds. Though, at first, there seems to be not a clear-cut between ‘learning’ and ‘studying’, the talk held with Mister Kalehe contains some pertinent elements relating to informal learning; so, I retained it for analysis in the work at hand.

As for the content of the interview with Mister Kalehe, several aspects concerning global learning are transparent therein. As an active observer and a student in a transnational context, the interviewee focuses his attention not only on how time is kept both in the church and in academic affairs, but also on the importance of learning an international language, namely English. As a pastor, he describes his learning in terms of ‘blessing’, especially when considering how teachers and students over there make up a coherent community, free from gossiping, insults, prejudices and mobbing. He assumes that the courtesy of customers addressing a pastor like him is but a sign of acknowledging the call of God on him. He

has realised the universality of the Church – it is not limited to one nation – and, consequently, the oneness of the world. In fact, according to him, travelling accounts for the internationalization of citizens, and the church mission goes beyond the frontiers of nations. He was marked by both the simplicity and devotion of fellow church leaders, so he got a better understanding of a church leader, whose task encompasses encouraging the weak and serving others. Having noticed how his colleagues from abroad are hard-workers, in order to succeed he has adhered to hard-working philosophy and getting more and more organised, in addition to self-motivation and self-discipline. Despite financial limitation and the non-acceptance of novelty, he envisions having his fellow pastors transform the church into a Bible Centre for further learning – church as an educating church. In this regard, he has been devoting time to training <SyS*> teachers, and writing Christian literature. Concerning change, he opines that a tremendous change has happened within his mindset – he no longer judges others basing on prejudices. As for other pastors who will be travelling abroad in the future, he advises that they should be motivated to undertake trips for discovery sake, and internationalization.

Interview portrait of Karisimbi

Mister Karisimbi is one of the pastors of <DRC Protestant church 1*>. His age is between 30 and 39, and he has a bachelor degree in theology. Nowadays, he is responsible for one parish in <DRC city 3*>, where he accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in a friendly, conducive climate to learning through sharing experiences. He has visited two foreign countries in the Global South, the <African country 4*> and the <African country 8*>.

The interview with him, which lasted for 20 minutes and 43 seconds, is full of insights. So, I retained it for analysis in the study at hand. His travel opportunities include attending conferences and going on holidays on the one hand, leaving for training and travelling for leisure, on the other.

In his travels, Mister Karisimbi's attention is first drawn to the people he meets; he qualifies most of them as friendly, humble, simple, hospitable, generous, kind, and so on. He found such attitudes as being encouraging and thus worth imitating. He has also understood that true society is a mixture of good and bad citizens, so being careful and flexible in changing perspectives is advisable. According to him, God calls his servants to be humble, and this is what he has been trying to become since he came back from his first trip. He acknowledges that travelling is a way of improving one's ministry, as he/she learns from other people. While abroad, he observed people and took advantage in understanding how they live or think, how they worship and how they dedicate to developing their churches, especially with regard to technology – namely using overhead projectors and screens in churches. From there he got an inspiration of doing almost the same in his local church; and today his congregation is doing great progress in the area. Besides, he came out of travels with an assumption that people are not as other people think they are. This has made him both to adopt a certain position and adapt the knowledge he got to the context of his church in particular, his country in general.

Mister Karisimbi says that he has been transformed by travels. For example, he is now able to take the context into account when preaching or interpreting the Bible messages. As a pastor responsible for a city parish, to reach real change therein, he has been talking of what he saw through restitution sessions, starting with groups leaders, whom he empowers so they can empower others afterwards. As for other pastors, he would suggest that they leave 'the box' for abroad and live new experiences, to have a clear understanding of the world. He believes that doors are still open in order to get more friends and brethren in the Lord, and this is through travels and experience exchanges; but before undertaking such an adventure, he advises, solving the language and communication issue is more than necessary.

Interview portrait of Kasongo

Madam Kasongo is a pastor of <DRC Protestant church 1*>. Her age is between 50 and 59, and she has completed tertiary education. Nowadays, she has retired and she is living in <DRC city 3*>, where she accepted to be interviewed by the researcher far from her home and children, in a friendly climate. With the support of her own church and church partner, she has visited more than six foreign countries in the Global South.

The interview with her lasted for 28 minutes and 4 seconds, and it is full of insights; therefore, I retained it for analysis in this study. Many of her travel opportunities, which are very rich in experiences, pertain to accompanying her husband – who is also a pastor.

In her numerous travels abroad, Madam Kasongo's attention is first drawn to the people she meets in the church, especially those with an entrepreneurial mindset. She realised that, for a family, there is the possibility of living on breeding just a cow, poultry or growing some fruit trees, no matter how tough the environment is. According to her, this implies that one should have courage, discipline, respect for cultural season and determination. She keeps comparing the new setting she lived in with her home country, where there are plenty of resources but people keep suffering from hunger for lack of initiatives. As soon as she came back, she started practicing what she saw and learned about livestock and agriculture, to set a model for other pastors, most importantly their wives. She wishes pastors' wives went abroad, for such an opportunity is not simply a school, but also journeying opens barriers to a lot of benefits, especially if one masters an international language. Life abroad itself is an opportunity for learning.

Dealing with the benefits of travels, Madam Kasongo says that her great benefit is that trips have helped change her own life, and thanks to them she is equipped with material for empowerment of her church people in general, her own children in particular. Concerning the life of pastors abroad, she noticed that they do not live close to their parishes, which sets them a little bit free from any disturbance of people in need of appliances or whatever from pastors' homes. She wishes the same applied for

pastors in her local community, so they take advantage of their free time and privacy. She also found that children are self-disciplined and well-bred. To locally contribute to their education, she is now involved in providing witty counsels both to children and to parents publicly at end of church services. She is concerned a lot with their dropping out from school.

Interview portrait of Kibombo

Mister Kibombo is one of the elders of the church of <DRC Protestant church 1*> in the <DRC city 5*> parish. His age is between 30 and 39, and he has completed secondary education. After working as choir singer-composer and church elder for long, he has recently decided to join a pastor training institution in <DRC city 2*>, where he accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in a friendly and peaceful climate. With the support of his local church he has visited two foreign countries in the Global South, within a total of more than five trips.

The interview with him lasted for 52 minutes and 3 seconds. It is full of elements worth considering for analysis in the study at hand, so I retained it. Many of his travel opportunities occurred while he was still singing and/or leading the choir. He was hired to train a choir in the first visited country for a while, and he discovered the second one while selling song albums. As a curious observer, he has learned a lot from those travels. His learning is termed as ‘something good’ he saw people practice and which captured his attention.

Concerning the content of the interview with Mister Kibombo, his attention is drawn to how <African country 1*> government and its people are organised. Guaranteed safety and security for citizens all over the country, unity, order and respect for other people – even for strangers like he was, are obviously noticeable. Most people are not only hard-working, implement human rights; but also, they love God and serve Him wholeheartedly. As for the church, he reports a lot of facts, namely pastors do not stay close to the church – contrary to the situation in his local church, they enjoy coming close to their church members for support, and the latter have respect and consideration for them (pastors), are dedicated to

God's work and submissive to church discipline: respect for worship moment, coming early to church, etc. Unlike in his local church, he was amazed at noticing that any work for the church is paid for (salary) and nobody works there unless he/she is trained to. Besides, most pastors are said to be rich – they are wealthy people within the society before choosing the pastor's career; youth are trained to work, so development is evident both in the government and in the church.

Mister Kibombo came out of his trips with a lot of blessings and personal advantages, both spiritually and materially; so, he assumes that they were in God's plan for him. He can acknowledge that God pays back everyone who serves Him. He has developed self-esteem; he knows that he can. According to him, travelling is very important as it helped him to understand the reality, dispelled prejudices for change of perspectives, opened his mind. It has been a way of getting rich mentally and of acquiring new things for oneself and others. In a nutshell, his personal development and the one of his choir as they appear now, are tributary to travelling.

Interview portrait of Kindu

Madam Kindu is a woman-leader in the Women's Service of one parish in the <DRC Protestant church 1*>. Her age is between 40 and 49, and she has completed tertiary education. She is now working in <DRC city 1*>, where she accepted to be interviewed by the researcher. With the support of the <International Church Network 1> and <International donor 1*>, she recently travelled to the Global North where she visited certain cities, in addition to those she knew before in the Global South; so, she has got plenty of experiences.

The interview with her lasted for 37 minutes and 44 seconds. Being full of information worth considering for analysis, it was retained for the study at hand. Many of her travel opportunities are around exchanging experiences with fellow Protestant women, attending workshops and education in the post-university area.

Concerning the content of the interview with Madam Kindu, she reports that her first experience is international travelling itself; for her, it

was somewhat a complex task, as she had no relating knowledge before engaging in it. Despite the hassles of many kinds in her country, she has been enjoying it, however, especially when considering the many benefits that it generates, namely 'opening doors', helping connect (network) to other people globally and get new knowledge, learning about other cultures, and so on. Speaking of herself, she opines that people should travel for among other purposes, to have a clear understanding of the world, to discover new items and tools, to get educated in an informal way, to network with other people and to make friends, to have a clear perception of the reality, and to understand the greatness of God. According to her, trips help to know where one is coming from, where he/she is and where he/she is going. She has come out of her numerous exchange visits not only with skills – collaborative skills, connectivity and communication skills, project planning and management skills – but also with a new perspective in life – nobody is an island, people should live and work together. She therefore appeals church leaders at all levels to leave their comfort zone and try new things through travelling.

Madam Kindu hopes that the many trips she did are in God's plan for her life; so, she thinks that she is accountable to other people. In order to implement and to share the knowledge that she got from travels, she has been organising training sessions. She believes that this can promote change, as people get informed and practice what they are told. Besides, in running a project, she has been confronted to several challenges, the main ones being related to finances and the organisation of workshops themselves. Organising women in groups for mutual support, advocacy and lobbying are among the ways that, she thinks, may help to go around such issues.

Interview portrait of Lubero

Mister Lubero is a youth president in one parish of the <DRC Protestant church 1*>. His age is between 30 and 39. He has completed tertiary education. He was met in <DRC city 1*>, where he accepted to be interviewed by the researcher. With the support of the <International Church Network 1>, he has travelled to three countries in the Global South. The interview with him lasted for 23 minutes and 11 seconds. Though so short, some information worth considering for analysis in the present study is found therein; this has accounted for its retention here. He has been travelling to other countries mostly in the twinning programme of churches under the support provider mentioned above.

As for the content of the interview with Mister Lubero, he has been undertaking travels to see how other young live, and to learn about their cultures. At first, he did not have a clear understanding on how to behave while travelling – no knowledge about where to start for a journey by plane, nor on how to fulfil travel formalities at the airport, for example. So, he was fearful about all this; his mind seemed stuck and limited. He acknowledges however that travels make up a discovery of new worlds, too, and that the education he got at school does not suffice to provide him with all the information he needed to know for life. From there, he came with new knowledge; for example, he reports that he knows that people differ, and so do cultures; he can now find easily his way in an airport. In a nutshell, he is sure that he has learned through travels. He says that he is no longer limited. While abroad, his attention was most drawn to how women are considered in the different societies in which he was welcomed. Though somehow left behind, he found that women are useful people to foster the general interest and welfare of any nation. Elsewhere, they are much considered, contrary to what is the case in his culture. This made him acquire insights about what a woman is – leader, capable, brave and friendly people – to the extent that he came back with a change in perspective. From then on, he has been reflecting how to promote girls'/women's education and employment. As a result, at his workplace, the number of women employees is increasing. To come up there, women

need being educated, contrary to the popular belief that educating a woman is losing one's money. He faces however the issue of nepotism and insecurity in his daily struggle.

Mister Lubero depicts also the fact that climate differs from the one of his home, and living with unknown tribes who speak languages different from your own is very difficult. Nevertheless, he found that it is interesting to discover new places, new 'worlds' through travels. That is why he suggests that church leaders should keep travelling to get trained.

Interview portrait of Lubutu

Madam Lubutu is a woman leader in charge of the <Tec*> branch in one Protestant church in <African country 5*>. Her age is between 30 and 39. She has completed tertiary education where she obtained a bachelor degree. The researcher met her in <DRC city 1*>, where she consented to contribute to the present study by getting interviewed. With the support of her local church, she has travelled abroad more than ten times in countries both from the Global South and the Global North. The interview with her lasted for 30 minutes and 6 seconds. She has travelled a lot, mainly for service missions, international meetings and conferences, and sharing presentations; therefore, she has a lot of experience with regard to travelling abroad. This accounted for the retention of her interview for analysis in the study at hand.

As a woman, Madam Lubutu finds it a privilege to be chosen by her church to be part of such travel opportunities. Being selected by the church or getting a recommendation from it is a proof of great confidence placed in her. She finds in them (travels) occasions of upgrading her learning and training, together with building relationships with others. Like any other traveller, she experienced odd and stressful situations (for example missing one's flight), but she would learn through them, too. Understanding well the flight schedule/timing and communicating is among the tips that she proposes to solve such a problem. For her, travelling and church go hand in hand, because travels help the church to come to maturity. Though tiresome, she says, travelling is a school; it helped her to learn about a great deal of subjects. It blew off 'traditional ideas'

and biases about other people, providing time to know them better. So, she has developed social skills, namely to know how to behave with members from every society, to live with diverse people, to the extent that she understood that God loves all people equally, according to their cultures and differences. In praxis, she values and understands now every people, she balances everything people do, and she has built her personality otherwise. Her benefits gained from travels are numerous. They include an increased capacity of reality perception, new knowledge, tolerance, support capacity, improved communication skills, organisational and practical skills (e.g. proactivity), strong relationships and enlarged network.

In order to share her immense knowledge, Madam Lubutu has initiated a network of churches' radio stations. She is still struggling with implementing all she has acquired, as not everyone is ready to accept change. Nevertheless, she acknowledges that courage and determination are very important with regard to sharing a vision. According to her, people should travel to see what they have never seen before, and therefore thrive and gain potential.

Interview portrait of Maniema

Mister Maniema works in the administration of his church, where he is in charge of development and finances. His age is more than 60. He has completed tertiary education where he obtained a bachelor degree. He was met by the researcher in <DRC city 1*>, and there he consented to contribute to the present study by being interviewed. With the financial support of the <International donor 1*>, he has been travelling beyond the national boundaries and has visited certain countries both from the Global South and the Global North. The interview with him lasted for 36 minutes and 49 seconds. His travels were made possible because of partnerships between either Protestant schools or churches. In this framework, he attended international conferences or took part in experience exchange sessions with peers. The insights expressed in his interview accounted for its retention for analysis in the study at hand.

With regard to the content of the interview with Mister Maniema, the travels in which he took part allowed for a discovery of the outside world

and of other individuals involved in global encounters – hosts and visitors, as well as the way people work in overseas and neighbouring countries. He focuses on commonalities and differences. Travelling abroad also allowed for the discovery of the spiritual reality therein. There are big churches, but less church-goers; nevertheless, the few people who attend church services are characterized mainly by punctuality, contrary to what is witnessed in his local church. At a certain trip, together with the youth that accompanied him, he went having an illusion about the people he would meet on the other continent – thinking that they are unapproachable or unwelcoming towards strangers, but reality proved contrary. For him moving abroad is a sign of active partnership, a proof of equal rights and benefits for partners. The exchanges between churches account for living true love and faith in practice. As for the exchanges between schools, he took time to compare the education system of his country with the one of the host-country, and he noticed, for example, that teachers from elsewhere are engaged despite their low monthly pay.

Mister Maniema states that travelling abroad, which is ‘formative’ for its beneficiaries, is very important. It helped him to realize to which extent he is valued by others – his self-esteem has grown up, especially when he considers how he was welcomed there – on the one hand. On the other, the contacts he made with other people helped to realise his own limitations and weaknesses, namely with regard to communication and exerting his profession. Travelling has shaped him so he can live now in a multi-racial and multi-tribal society without any problem. It is a determining factor for change and improvement in one’s career, as well as in the church.

Interview portrait of Masisi

Mister Masisi, though he has completed tertiary education and holds a bachelor degree, is the vice-president of the <CiMin*> in his church. His age is between 30 and 39 years. He lives in <DRC city 1*>, where he was met by the researcher and he consented to be interviewed so to contribute to this study. With the financial support from both the <International do-

nor 1*> and the <International church network 1*>, he has been travelling to two countries from the Global South, with a total of five travels. The interview with him lasted for 26 minutes and 35 seconds. His travels were undertaken in the framework of experience exchanges, in the twinning programme of churches.

So far as the content of the interview with Mister Masisi is concerned, travelling abroad made him discover other people and their cultures. For the first time, he got an opportunity of singing praises with people from other languages; and, as part of the newly-formed choir, he could sometimes mix cultures – his own and the newly discovered culture. He discovered a lot of things; for example, contrary to reality in his homeland, singing is a profession, and people are devoted to the church and church authorities. Because of the benefits that he got, he assumes that travelling is the greatest book of the world. With it, he has experienced some changes in his own life: he has become a man of the people, and his heart is now free from hatred toward human kind, whom he says that he understands in a clear way. His mind is getting stronger and stronger because of resilience, he finds he has been empowered in a certain manner – training and leading a big choir especially. In a nutshell, travels have developed him socially, technically, emotionally and spiritually.

In addition to exchanging experiences abroad, Mister Masisi got trained there to train others. He is sure that he did not come back as he went on those trips; the new skills that he gained include playing music instruments, to train a big choir, leading a team, managing and communicating. As for the period before he went on travel, he recognizes that he was doing things as he wished to, having an illusion that he knew them well. From travels, he has come back with new and real knowledge. He can handle his fellow choristers in a different way than before, by having the group trained in sections at a moment, and as a whole at some other moment. To help his fellows to embrace change, he has been referring to restitution followed by discussion on what to take and what not. As a result, his choir has been increasing in number, he reports. However, as for any human business, he has been going through successes and difficul-

ties; but he thinks that he can overcome challenges by proving courageous. Although he acknowledges that most people do not accept new ideas quickly, he still believes in achieving success, anyhow.

Interview portrait of Mulekera

Mister Mulekera leads both the youth and intercession teams of one Protestant church in <DRC city 1>. His age is between 20 and 29 years. The researcher met him in his city, and he consented to be interviewed. With the financial support from his church denomination and his own family members, he has been travelling to three countries from the Global South, with a total number of five travels.

The interview with him, which was conducted in a climate of mutual respect, lasted for 20 minutes and 29 seconds. The interview contains insights worth considering for analysis in the work at hand, so I retained it. His travels were undertaken in the framework of experience exchanges, especially in the domain of evangelism and intercession. This action mainly targeted students from universities; so most of the time he has been travelling as part of a team.

Concerning the content of the interview with Mister Mulekera, he says that he got enough experience with regard to both the daily life of the people that he met and the profession of an evangelist. Because he addressed a lot of people, he got in touch with a variety of cultures and therefore of mindsets; he discovered different cities and places. His being welcomed here and there allowed him to build friendships with people with different tongues, and he got a clear idea about the oneness of the world and of God's people. He also saw how other believers organise their intercession/prayer moment in order not to get bothered: they may pray during a long period of time meanwhile walking, contrary to locking themselves in a room, for example. According to him, a great change was observed concerning how other people organise spiritual retreats. They make sure they do not forget anything – especially the names and contacts of the persons evangelised; so, they equip themselves with documents such as logbooks and notebooks. As soon as he was back, he initiated such documents for implementation. Mister Mulekera, who works among the

youth of his parish on one part, the students from universities on the other, is confronted to the fact that most people are not willing to accept and implement new ideas quickly. He appeals on adaptation to the context. The other challenges pertain to lack of sufficient resources on the one hand, to the political situation of his country on the other. In fact, there would be some restrictions as stated by the government – to the extent that a willing heart to implement change is likely to get discouraged. In connection with this, few churches' initiatives get support from the country's leading class; nevertheless, he keeps believing in change.

Interview portrait of Mwenga

Madam Mwenga is a pastor in one of the parishes of <DRC Protestant church 1*>. She is also a teacher in one of the same church's universities, the <DRC university 1*>. Her age is between 30 and 39 years. The researcher met her in <DRC city 1*>, where she consented to be interviewed. With the financial support from her church denomination and the <International Church network 1*>, she has been travelling to two countries from the Global North and one country from the Global South, with a total of four travels.

The interview with her, which was conducted in a climate of mutual respect, lasted for 49 minutes and 31 seconds. It contains a lot of significant insights with regard to the topic at hand, so I retained it for analysis herewith.

Concerning the content of the interview with Madam Mwenga, her learning is stated in terms of discovery of people through their behaviours and cultures, and places. She describes the people that she met as being welcoming, good and happy, so she liked them. For her, travelling abroad is something good in that it allows not only for getting informally 'educated', but also for building lasting relationships with others. Travelling reduces prejudices about other human beings, and it provides for interaction opportunities. Besides, it offers opportunities of experimenting and seeing what other people do, and so on. As a curious observer, she had a clear understanding of the importance of soil, of (natural) food for the

human body to the extent that now she has initiated a garden in her compound though rocky, and no longer stays for long without eating – unless she is in fasting period. As a reflective pastor and university teacher, she also understood how to spare a little money for church projects. Although she desired to pass on others what she learned, she has been facing a lot of difficulties. These include the lack of money, the prevalence of money to the experience itself for a potential audience – many would like to attend only if there is way of earning some money ('per diem'), the little time awarded her to share her experiences, and insufficient communication. For having travelled with other people from the same institution, in order to imprint sustainable effects of their common trips, and to address a large audience, she advises that a book be written by the whole team. This would depict among other issues the difficulties one encounters when travelling abroad, as well as the benefits it bears whether to the church or to the university that sent them. Nevertheless, she opines that some attitudes have already changed from her experience, especially with respect to the ministry of women in the church and the oneness of God's people on earth, despite the many differences there might be in tribes and cultures.

Interview portrait of Nyiragongo

Mister Nyiragongo is a pastor in one of the parishes of <DRC Protestant church 1*>. He teaches some lessons in a school, too. His age is between 50 and 59 years. The researcher met him in <DRC city 1*>, where he accepted to be interviewed. With the financial support from his church denomination and the <International Church network 1*>, he has been travelling to three countries from the Global South, with a total of four travels.

The interview with him lasted for 56 minutes and 38 seconds. It contains significant pieces of information with regard to the topic at hand; that is why I retained it for analysis herewith. The peculiarity of Mister Nyiragongo is that he has both travelled abroad for exchange of experiences and received guests from there mostly within a volunteering programme, which increases his experiences with regard to getting in touch with foreign people.

As for the content of the interview with Mister Nyiragongo, he opines that travelling and welcoming international guests in one's church plays an important role in a pastor's life as it helps to understand the oneness and universality of the church, its global communion, and the love of God. With it, one is likely to get in touch with other people – here pastors, to discover their zeal to serve the Lord and win sinners over to Christ, and therefore improve one's ministry. He has learned a lot from others, namely how to organise one's church, how to offer oneself to God's work, time management, and hospitality. On one trip, he got in touch with the competence-based approach – what it is and how it functions. How to raise funds for churches and how to evangelize and strengthen the faith of new believers, which is known as the <D-A*> to the Gospel, are also among the key insights from travels. According to him, the latter has currently impacted his church denomination. He said he was amazed not only at finding a parish organise several services at the same time – adults' service, youth service and kids' service – within the same church yard, but also at realising that women pastors served close to male ones, without being discriminated. He even wishes he would like to organise his home parish on that model though such an action requires permission from the higher church leadership. He nevertheless recognises that learning implementation requires time, and most of the time people do not apply all that they learn. He desires a lot to implement what he learned all the same. For example, a <C-C*> to financially support the church is now in place in his church, besides regular ordinary offerings. Travelling provided him a lot of learning, his only challenge being the language issue. He thus advises that having prior knowledge in an international language is compulsory for a pastor like him before undertaking to travel beyond national boundaries.

Interview portrait of Oicha

Madam Oicha is one of the women leaders of <DRC Protestant church 1*>. Her age is between 50 and 59 years. The researcher met her in <DRC city 1*>, where she accepted to be interviewed so as to contribute to the research project at hand. With the financial support from several international donors, namely the <International Church network 1*> and <International Church Network 2*>, she has been travelling to more than ten countries from the Global South, and one country in the Global North. The total number of the travels she has done so far is beyond twenty. Her travelling opportunities include attending general assemblies and meetings within several church associations, in addition to studying abroad. The interview with her, which lasted for 37 minutes and 10 seconds, contains significant inputs with regard to the topic at hand; that is why it was retained for analysis herewith. The peculiarity of Madam Oicha is that she was talking about learning incidentally through mistakes.

Concerning the content of the interview with Madam Oicha, she provides any further potential traveller with practical tips. These include checking the time as scheduled on one's flight ticket, reading closely labels, asking about what to do, keeping the time, following the (directing) arrows in order to find out one's way in airports, and so on. For her, travelling is a school; it opens one's mind to the outside world, provides some knowledge, and allows for discovery of a lot of horizons. So, one becomes limitless. From travelling, she acknowledges having understood the uniqueness of everybody in every aspect. Her mere counsel to potential travellers is thus adaptability to everything, every situation one encounters, especially in diet matters. With regard to returns of travelling, she has created a lot of connections abroad – she opines that they are the greatest benefit she has got from travelling. From the people that she got in touch with – whom she qualifies as humble, simple and patient – she has learned not only avoiding pretensions and leadership skills; but also, she has gained a new perspective with respect to seeing things and interpreting them.

To pass on others what she learned, Madam Oicha has been organising a lot of seminars with fellow women church leaders on a variety of captivating topics such as how to avoid violence and how to deal with emotions, although she has been facing a lot of challenges. Interfering in other people planning, refusal that an activity be carried out, awarding less priority to certain activities are among the challenges she cited. She would suggest, therefore, that both the sending church and the one inviting to a meeting abroad allocate some time slots for retransmission of knowledge. Besides, the sending church should plan and accept the proposals (plans) of the person sent, so far as implementing the knowledge acquired is concerned.

Interview portrait of Pangi

Mister Pangi is one of the overseers of <DRC Protestant church 1*>. His age is more than 60. The researcher met him in <DRC city 3*>, where he willingly agreed to be interviewed. Financially supported by his own church and one of its partner churches, he has been travelling to three countries from the Global South. His main travelling opportunity was exchanging experiences, mostly in the evangelism domain. The interview with him lasted for 29 minutes and 21 seconds; it is full of worthwhile information with regard to the topic at hand; that is why I retained it for analysis herewith.

So far as the content of the interview with Mister Pangi is concerned, he opines that travelling made up an intellectual luggage for him, in that it allowed to increase his knowledge, and to experience what both evangelism and the growth of the Lord's church are in a practical manner. From it, he was enabled to supervise other pastors and to mobilize people for the church's sake. He saw what others are doing, and learned from them, in addition to discovering their cultures – with which he constantly compares his own. As core values, he learned humility and integrity, so he did not get any problem with passing his incidental knowledge on others. Besides, he learned about group management, funds management and fund-raising strategies. By practicing the latter, he reports that a tremen-

dous change has been brought in his church, by improving the life of pastors in a certain manner. Elsewhere, he learned that church shouldn't focus on spiritual matters only; it has to get entrepreneurial and run self-financing projects – what he shared with fellow church leaders as soon as he was back. As a result, pastors are getting more and more self-reliant; so, he considers that travelling has brought revolution in his ministry.

Because of the humility and the integrity that Mister Pangi learned from others, together with his being blameless, pious and a role model, the new ideas he proposed were easily accepted. He is a real self-learner, who takes notes for himself in order to take advantage of the visits. In fact, for him, travelling is a school, so he has to keep record of the news ideas with which he came across. He reflects always his home church, to the extent that he adapts the teachings and preaching he attended and everything else he observed and saw to his own context. He was amazed at seeing how information and communication technology (ICT) is even used in the church. For him, this was a real discovery, and in opposition to using traditional means, he wished it were used by active pastors to do more. Mister Pangi observes, however, that though travelling abroad has transformed his own life and the one of his church, it is stressful.

Interview portrait of Punia

Mister Punia is one of the pastors of <DRC Protestant church 3*>. His age is more than 60. He has completed tertiary education, and has travelled to one country from the Global South more than five times. The researcher met him in <DRC city 3*>, where he consented to be interviewed in a climate of mutual understanding and confidence. To travel, he has been benefiting from some financial support as provided both by his own church and a member church of the local church network, the < DRC Protestant church 1*>. The interview with him lasted for 19 minutes and 51 seconds; it contains some important information worth considering for analysis in the work at hand; that is why it was retained herewith. His main travelling opportunities were to stand for his church in some international meetings, and to teach in a seminary.

With regard to the content of the interview with Mister Punia, he terms travelling experiences as 'good', or better 'a blessing', as he learned about other cultures, civilizations or customs. According to him, travels are very important in that they allowed him to spread the message of Christ, that is the knowledge and the Christian faith on the one hand; but also, he witnessed the behaviours that he thought were not for believers/Christians, on the other hand. This was shocking for him at first sight, though he finally understood, since Christ is the common point within all, he says. Besides, travels helped to extend his own ideas, and to discover himself. So, he got rid of prejudices, which have left room for love of all mankind. The relationship between his church and the partner church got strengthened – a sign of good understanding between them; and thanks to these travels he learned foreign languages, experienced life 'out of the box', having left his comfort zone.

Dealing with people there, Mister Punia experienced ambivalence, too. He depicts both hypocrisy for some, and sincerity for others. But his character came out of such a situation developed: he is now resilient and able to face challenges with serenity of mind, he has been trying to work hard as the people he saw over there, and he takes courage, too. Therefore, he would suggest that people should not demonize others, but understand that in every society there are both bad and good citizens. He appeals on global living, where there is mutual understanding and mutual acceptance of individuals. He opines that mixing cultures helps evolve so to move forward. As to potential travellers, he advises that they be tactful – especially so far as talking about certain issues is concerned, lest they hurt anew certain people – to counterpart the mistrust that political officers are likely to manifest towards foreigners. Pastors like him should preach about unity and love, he recommends.

Interview portrait of Rutshuru

Madam Rutshuru is one of the women pastors of <DRC Protestant church 3*>. Her age is between 30 and 39. She has completed tertiary education, and she has travelled to one country from the Global South more than five times, the <African country 2*>. She consented to be interviewed by the researcher in <DRC city 3*>, in a climate of mutual understanding and confidence. In her trips, she has been benefiting from some financial support provided by both the <DRC Protestant church 1*> and the <DRC Protestant university 4*>.

The interview with Madam Rutshuru lasted for 20 minutes and 11 seconds; it contains some information worth considering for analysis in the work at hand, which accounted for its retention herewith. She mainly left for upper studies, but she all the same took advantage to attend church services therein.

Concerning the content of the interview with Madam Rutshuru, she had good experience by attending a large church there. Her attention was drawn upon the increasing number of pastors within the same parish – a pastor for every ministry. The youth ministry leaders' way of getting dressed shocked her at first, for their appearance is the one of a 'rasta'⁵ or a prostitute. She got critical towards them, but for having lived with them for a while, and having understood the reason behind such behaviours, she changed her perception. She thus learned not to criticize anybody based on appearance. She can adapt to everyone, work with anybody no matter their background, and she can no longer judge before understanding the reason behind an action. So, she designs now her teaching, by avoiding any criticism and judgmental speech, in favour of encouragements to love the Lord and to be internally transformed.

⁵ **Rastafari**, sometimes called **Rastafarianism**, is a religion that developed in Jamaica during the 1930s. It is classified as both a new religion movement and a social movement by scholars or religion. There is no central authority in control of the movement and much diversity exists among practitioners, who are known as Rastafari, Rastafarians, or Rastas. Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rastafari>, 25 September 2022.

Madam Rutshuru opines that travelling has been like a school to her, creating in her the spirit of searching the scriptures, and not being happy with a mere reading of the Bible. She can therefore link the biblical messages with science, as she understands the human being and the context on which the biblical text applies. Through travels, her mind got opened to find out what science provides as answers to certain Bible-relating questions. She assumes that it is good to move around the world, to have an idea of what goes on elsewhere, being cautious not to imitate something for the sake of imitating, for both global and local things have good and bad sides. When back, her action mainly targeted couples and married women, on which some changes are being testified. As for implementing what she has been learning, she depicts the routine with which people do things, which hinders real progress toward change. She also suggests that nothing should be changed in a hurry, but that one has to be reflective, to build on local assets that are not to be left apart, too.

Interview portrait of Shabunda

Mister Shabunda is one of the pastors of <DRC Protestant church 2*>. His age is between 40 and 49, and he has completed tertiary education. Having been contacted to participate in the work at hand, he accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in <DRC city 3*>. With the financial support of his own church denomination and of one partner church, he has made more than five visits abroad. The two countries he travelled to are both from the Global South. The interview with him lasted for 20 minutes and 15 seconds. It contains some useful information worth analysing in the work at hand; that is why I retained it herewith.

Mister Shabunda reports that he has travelling in order to have a clear understanding on how other people work, how they do church administration, and how they have been making progress. Travelling helps to learn about what happens on 'the other side'; it is empowering, and it helps get rid of ignorance. It opened his horizons, increased his relationships, and made him get a new dimension of things. According to him, thanks to travelling abroad, one may even get solutions to some problems. So, for him, travelling is 'good'. That is why, whenever he is abroad, he

uses a variety of means – namely jotting down, tape-recording, and observing – so to glean most knowledge. In constantly comparing the work in his local church and what he saw abroad, he concludes that both sides have strong and weak spots. From his exchange of experiences, only what is new is brought home, and if it is judged useful it is applied to the church. So, in addition to being a moment of mere exchanges and of rest, travelling provides an added value to one's church. Nevertheless, he advises that not all new ideas one gets edify; so, there is need of being able to know what to take and what not.

Mister Shabunda is an active observer of other people. He realised that all people on earth do not do things the same way, every people having its own culture. So, he is no longer bored by any person's apparent misdeed. In his mind, he wonders how all people can live according to the Gospel. The crucial question within his church was about the women's ministry, but as he has kept speaking of what he saw, his church members have understood that the ministry is universal, but there exist special services. So, women can now preach on the church pulpit, and the church administration is being adapted to the current world standards. He is inclined to implementing change in the church; to come up there, he does not get directly into the matter, but he presents first the vision to all collaborators for collective ownership before taking a relevant decision. Thus, he does not experience many difficulties with regard to change implementation, apart from the slow process of having all understand, which results from slow decision-making.

Interview portrait of Uvira

Mister Uvira is one of the choir leaders of <DRC Protestant church 1*>. His age is between 30 and 39, and he has completed tertiary education. He has travelled to two countries from the Global South more than five times, all of which either with the financial support of his own choir members or a partner church in <American country 2*>. After being contacted so as to participate in the work at hand, he accepted to be interviewed by the researcher in <DRC city 3*>. The interview with him lasted for 38

minutes. It contains some information with regard to the present work; that is why I retained it for analysis herewith.

Concerning the content of the interview with Mister Uvira, he acknowledges that he undertook travelling in order to know how singing is considered elsewhere, and thus find ways of improving the singing career locally. So, as a curious observer, he is constantly comparing what he saw with his home church to find out differences and similarities, which fit in categories such as 'what to take home roughly', 'what to share', 'what would help perform better if given to his choir', 'what to do after having some people trained', and so on. According to him, the differences are so obvious at the organisational, educational and leadership levels, to the extent that he presumes that his local church has still too much to learn from others. Church leaders are also book readers, most of church-goers are active members, and nobody is accepted therein unless they have gone through a training on among other subjects the vision and values of the church. He was amazed at noticing that choristers get a monthly pay, so nobody is enrolled in a choir unless they are gifted for singing – one can be taken there if only they can do it well. He considers travelling as being very important, so he would like to see his church leadership send trainees abroad to learn about a lot of domains relating to church environment, namely lighting, sound engineering, adorning the temple, and manipulating giant screens. In fact, he assumes that in order to do things well, training should complement one's gift.

As soon as Mister Uvira was back, he started influencing gradually the liturgy of his local church, by helping avoid routine, having only one choir lead worship sessions for Sunday service, and playing the role model of change when it is his turn to lead the church service, for example. Travelling abroad has transformed his perception, he says; it has brought revolution to his thoughts, that he is now dreaming big. He takes advantage of his position to implement change, though it requires time, perseverance and determination. For his choir, challenges include the bad quality of music instruments and the lack of knowledge in terms of music for most of the choir members. He advises that pastors travel to have a clear

understanding of the world, and to be able to judge reality from the perspective of others.

Interview portrait of Vulamba

Madam Vulamba is in charge of finances in one rural institution from the <DRC Protestant church 1*>. Her age is between 20 and 29, and she has completed post-university education. She has travelled to two countries from the Global South more than five times, all of which either with the financial support of her own church or of a partner church. After being contacted for participation in the work at hand, she freely consented to be interviewed by the researcher. The interview with her took place in <DRC city 3*> in an environment of mutual confidence, and it lasted for 28 minutes and 45 seconds. It contains some important piece of information in connection with this study; that is why I retained it for analysis here-with.

Concerning the content of the interview with Madam Vulamba, she finds travelling abroad as good experience; it is very important in that it helps to go further in life, both professionally and intellectually. The people that she met are described as being organised, welcoming, open – not limited nor closed to themselves, focused on their work, hard-working, not distracted, attentive to foreigners' concerns; and her learning is stated in terms of imitation. She learned about how other people live, their rigor, objectivity, and respect for time. As she also went there for academic affairs, she came back with a lot of competences in finances management to help her organisation thrive. She learned also about being self-confident at the workplace. In fact, she reports that a piece of advice was given her abroad that when somebody is given a job, there is need of trusting oneself and put in it every effort to perform better – what she has been applying even now. The great change she acknowledges has taken place in herself – from a less self-confident lady to a more self-confident worker, as she believed what she thought she was. She has got result-oriented since then. This has affected her way of deciding on things, as well as the one in which she collaborates with fellow workers. Thanks to travels, she has gained temerity, self-discipline and love for well-done jobs. So, she

can try hard, and make herself available for work at any time, though some of her co-workers may choose the 'path of least resistance' with regard to accomplishing their assignments.

So as to implement change, Madam Vulamba has been acting as role-model, and building other workers' capacities so they can do better what they have to. Besides, she has understood that there are a lot of visionary people in Africa, too; so, she suggests that the youth should study, try, aim far and think big, since opportunities to seize are still available. For her, the reasons people give for not achieving their vision are but mere excuses.

4.2 Description of the abduction

After this introduction of the participants (chap. 4.1), I describe the abduction process with regard to the emerging criteria and types from the empirical data. As I mentioned it in the methodology chapter (chap. 3.4.4), the abduction is a technique that helps for the grouping of primary data to generalize the data and come up with criteria and the types of learning referred to in the present study.

As for the criteria for this study, they are different aspects considered by informal learning as it happens, is perceived and applied by the learner, and the effects it produces in the short-term or long-term on individuals' life. These aspects are being relevant for most of the interviews, they are emerging from the data.

From the exploration of the data, the first criterion is the experiences during travel. It deals with what the travelling church leaders testified on behalf of their fellow church leaders abroad as well as on the way, that is what they saw being implemented, how people behave or do what they are supposed to. This functions as the foundation of most of their subsequent learning.

As the exploration of the primary data continued, in line with the coded material referred to in the methodology chapter (chap. 3.4.3), another criterion named self-reported learning emerged. This criterion comprises the main domains or sources from which the Protestant church leaders who connect with others globally learn. It gives an idea on what

they themselves testify that they have learned from the people and the many places they have come to.

Further criteria that emerged from the data in reference with the coded material are the ways of transfer, including individual purpose – which states the travelling church leader’s purpose behind engaging in informal learning, the learned material put into practice, and how the recipient coped with it at the local level; the transfer benefits criterion, which provides an idea on what the church leader or the people to whom the learned material was passed on got as immediate advantages or gains for having acted that way, and finally the challenges – especially those faced when applying the informally-learned material locally.

By the different qualities related to the emerged criteria above emerged five types, which comprise the different categories of learning from global encounters as perceived by the Protestant church’s leaders. Such perceptions, which are mere excerpts from the interview transcripts, are first presented in a form of citations, and then commented (chap. 4.3) in accordance with the selected paragraphs. As said earlier, five types of informal learning are worth mentioning for Protestant church leaders, when considering the analysis of the twenty-eight interviews that make up the focus for this study. These are the personal well-being-oriented learning (chap. 4.3.1), the own ministry-oriented learning (chap. 4.3.2), the local society-oriented learning (chap. 4.3.3), the organisational change-oriented learning (chap. 4.3.4) and the world society-oriented learning (chap. 4.3.5).

The types and criteria described above testify about the diversity of the informal and global learning of the Protestant church’s leaders in the international church network. They help figure out how vast the learning churches’ leaders have acquired is. To help get an overview, the types and criteria, which are going to be described in the following lines (chap. 4.3), are represented in a table (table 1) deprived from describers from the interviews, at first.

The abduction is summarized in the following table, which presents both the criteria and the types.

Table 1: Presentation of categories and types

Types Criteria	Personal well-being-oriented learning	Own ministry-oriented learning	Local society-oriented learning	Organisational change-oriented learning	World society-oriented learning
Experiences during travel					
Self-reported learning					
Ways of transfer, including individual purpose					
Transfer benefits (for society)					
Challenges					

Source: Own raw data

The table shown above presents the 5 criteria that account for the formation of the different types. In the lines that follow, the formed types are dealt with in detail; they depict a thorough description of the different types of the learning acquired from global encounters by the Protestant church's leaders who took part in this study.

All the types mentioned in the study at hand are merely ideal types. In fact, all their constituents are from the empirical data (interview transcripts); thus, they depict no real types (Royce, 2015: 109; Clarke, 1991: 251). In this regard, no portrait or people can be associated with a single type developed herewith, ideal types being constructed just to help to understand and to explain social realities, which are sometimes complex. According to the work developed by Max Weber at the beginning of the last century and that has been commented at length by Anter (2014: 13), types are just useful for the classification of phenomena and construction of concepts for theory generation purposes.

4.3 Description of types of informal learning by encounters

From the analysis of the empirical data as provided by the interviews with the Protestant church's leaders, five types of informal learning by encounters emerged in connection with travels and visits organised for experience exchanges' sake. In this section, I am focusing on the peculiarities of every type of learning by using the criteria/sub-criteria for each type. Therefore, I present the categories evoked by the Protestant church's leaders, in accordance with what they themselves uttered in the interviews concerned with this study. For any type of learning, as well as any criterion – and the relating sub-criterion if any – with regard to the utterances of interviewees, excerpts are presented as citations. The citations are numbered by the files of MAXQDA, the software used for the coding and analysis of the data.

4.3.1 Type One: Personal well-being-oriented learning

In this section, the various descriptors that link together the personal well-being-oriented learning type to each of the criteria are presented in reference to utterances of the interviewed persons. The personal well-being-oriented learning emerges as the first result from the abduction process applied upon the 28 interviews covered in this work. From the latter, it is clear that Protestant church's leaders engage in learning from global encounters, reflecting primarily their personal welfare. They thus grasp aspects relating to ways of improving their own life as human beings – who have inherent needs and families to cater to, as they see how people (namely fellow church leaders) live abroad, or what goes on therein. So, aspects like entrepreneurship, self-reliance, hard work, and how jobs are performed for better returns have a choice place in this type of learning. In the following lines, I am presenting this first type by the five criteria which have been explained above (chap. 4.2) in a detailed way.

Experiences during travel: The church leader self-reliance in life

In the interviews, what the Protestant church's leaders experienced is obvious. For the type personal well-being-oriented learning, these are primarily focused on ways of self-reliance for life worth living, namely hard work. This becomes visible in the following statements of Mister Kabambare:

"There is something I have forgotten to mention; eh it concerns self-reliance in life. I saw there are people who are self-reliant/sufficient, you will see for example a man, if he lives on breeding animals – they are real herdsman, in one compound they keep only one cow which is the cow they maintain and cater to, they bring grass there on everyday basis but it produces about forty to fifty litres of milk every day, every morning. And you will see a man living on his cow, he can just drink two litres with his family but all the rest he will take to the market and it helps him, so he will be able to help his children to go to school, will be able to help him to pay for his health, medicine, food and other things, from that same cow. That too is a good thing that is really worth to imitate. Similarly, with chickens, he will raise chickens; those chickens will be able to support his life, everything." (Kabambare MAXQDA: 200-211).

Mister Kabambare witnessed self-reliance of fellow church leaders resulting from breeding cows or chicks in their plots, in order to respond to their numerous needs, including food, medicine, tuition fees for their children who attend class, and the like. This is a way of self-help, or better of avoiding dependence. On his behalf, Mister Kailo (MAXQDA: 74-81) corroborates by adding that the church leadership insists on such an attitude for its church-members, by setting the "Bible and development" vision, where Christianity and self-reliance, or – if put better – preaching the gospel and implementing development go hand in hand. So, people serve in the church meanwhile undertaking self-reliance related activities for themselves (Kasongo MAXQDA: 7-10), being motivated to work to the extent that they have almost no time to sleep (Kibombo MAXQDA: 77-86). This results in abundant prosperity not only for church-goers, but also for pastors, who are seen as rich people within their societies prior to ministering to the church, simply because of hard and well-done work (Kibombo MAXQDA: 520-533; Uvira-CG MAXQDA: 141-143). In so doing, they (pastors) are likely to attain financial autonomy, and live the life of

their dream (Kailo MAXQDA: 207-213; Kibombo MAXQDA: 129-133). In connection with this description, it sounds clear that to attain personal well-being, church leaders' attitude towards work is crucial: they have to take initiatives and cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset. This helps to alleviate poverty, and thus experience real satisfaction in life and the ministry they are working for, as they get less and less complaining, critical and condemning towards the other members of the church for potential ill-treatment.

This exposure to varying experiences through travelling and/or exchange of experiences opens upon acquisition of knowledge for the church's leaders involved in them abroad. This leads me to dealing with what they report as their own learning from the encounters.

Self-reported learning: Combining entrepreneurship with serving in the church

This second criterion in relation with the personal well-being-oriented learning is about what the travelling church's leaders testify as learned material from encounters abroad. They are aware of their own nature, as they are challenged by their fellow church leaders' life, namely with regard to combining entrepreneurship with serving in the church. The interviewee Kailo testifies about this through the following passage:

"These are the strategies for a pastor, even if he/she has to serve the church on one side, but he/she has means to cater to his/her family on the other, so that his/her children can study in good conditions and he/she continues that way in his/her ministry and he/she serves happily without grief. I remember... (1) This often reminds me of Hebrews 13 verse 7, which says "Learn from those who preceded you and your teachers; see their lives and their end. Then let something get into your life". Verse 17 says, "Because these people are on alert for you day and night; therefore, you too believers must do your duty to those servants (pastors)..." I find this being very important to me so that at the end of my life I should not be a burden to the church; through this experience I have learned the wisdom Gamaliel told Paul, saying "You want to do Theology [that is, to become a pastor], but priestly work has no salary! In addition to that, do something else: Do a profession (craft) as well, that is, build tents so that they will support your ministry; you will not lose teaching, you will not be a burden to the congregation either. That is what Paul the apostle did; and that is what I am doing nowadays" (Kailo MAXQDA: 213-228).

From the utterance of the interviewee Kailo, departing from how fellow pastors live abroad, it is compulsory for them to do something else in addition to preaching the gospel. The metaphor of building tents as by the apostle Paul in former times sums up everything a church's leader can undertake besides serving in the church. They should not count much on wages, which may sometimes be missing or very little. To the contrary, they have to do a profession or to undertake any other lucrative activity alongside their role at the church leadership level. This not only frees them from dependency or being a burden to the church; but also, it enables them to cater to their own family first, and consequently to be helpful to their own ministry, their congregation members, and so on, as they fulfil their role joyfully and happily. Entrepreneurship and serving in the church are thus not incompatible (Kasongo MAXQDA: 7-10). Looking in the same direction, Madam Vulamba (MAXQDA: 70-74) finds in their being focused to work something worthy imitating, whereas Madam Be-u (MAXQDA: 139-141) adds the idea of excellence, that is doing one's job well. She now commits not only to working on her assignments, but also to making sure that they are accomplished in the right way. From these interviewees, it is clear that hard work or having an entrepreneurial mindset helps to alleviate poverty, and therefore to reach self-fulfilment in life. This is a focus for personal well-being; but to come up there, putting into practice what is learned is very important, since attaining happiness in life does not come overnight.

Ways of transfer including individual purpose: Undertaking income-generating activities

With regard to the personal well-being-oriented learning type, and in line with the purpose behind engaging in learning acquisition, this criterion considers closely what church's leaders do about the learned material through trips and/or exchange visits. This is nothing but undertaking some income-generating activities, in addition to one's role in the church's leading class. In the interviews, the motives for embarking on an encounter trip are named. As they are explored, it comes out that

church leaders engage in learning activities for their own welfare or progress first, as stated at the beginning of the interview with Mister Masisi, in these words:

"My trips abroad are considered like a nursery, where I went to be nourished and well fed so I can grow both spiritually, technically, socially and emotionally" (Masisi MAXQDA: 120-122).

From the interviewee Masisi, it is clear that the purpose for participating in (informal/experiential/global) learning is his individual welfare, which comprises spiritual, technical, social and emotional growth. He sees the trips and/or exchange visits like a nursery, where plenty of important things, including physical progress, are gleaned. As for the interviewees Kibombo (MAXQDA: 450-454) and Kabambare (MAXQDA: 196-199), without contradicting him, they talk about being in search for something helpful with regard to personal progress. This description corresponds with the insight of adults' education that they (adults) learn with their own goal or perspective, and not solely through a forced participation in education, as school represents. In the case of this type, this orientation lies in an explicitly self-referential perspective. The perception related to this is expressed in the following excerpt:

"Yes! It's just that, when I came from <African Country 4*>, ah, I myself committed to creating a small garden, eh! a field of about one hectare, (uh) of banana trees where I installed the new species, especially the PHIA 17, the PHIA I do not know how much (uh) where I realised that, as they use a lot of organic fertilizer (1), they use a lot of compost, I too did the same thing, at least I'm doing well, like what <African Country 4*> people - are doing (uh), yes!" (Bukavu MAXQDA: 79-85).

Mister Bukavu exemplifies the transfer of knowledge from the learning place to the workplace. To replicate locally what he saw/observed at the exchange site, he has installed a certain number of banana trees in his field, so to practice the learned agricultural techniques. He worked exactly as he saw the others do, by using a lot of fertilizers and/or compost; and the result is that he is doing well. Other interviewees practised for themselves the learned material, too. That is the case of Mister Kabambare (MAXQDA: 211-214) who started a chicken breeding and production project and who, like Bukavu, is progressing very well. These interviewees

show clearly that people learn first for themselves, looking for what can benefit them in the short-term or long-term, especially with regard to creating wealth by undertaking some income generating activities.

One should note that, education being a social need, returns are expected at different levels, otherwise it is worthless. That is why it is important to consider also the benefits the Protestant church leaders' learning brings about.

Transfer benefits: Meeting basic needs for self and family

As mentioned above, people engage in learning for returns; and, in connection with the personal well-being-oriented type of learning, it is mostly about how the recipients meet their needs, both at the individual and the nuclear family levels. The utterance of Mister Pangi provides an idea.

"This experience has marked me a lot to the point that even I myself who am speaking to you now have my own projects. Though retired, I have my own car, I have my own house that I built myself with the resources I get from those little projects; I sum, I can say that these trips have revolutionised my ministry (uhl)" (Pangi MAXQDA: 164-169).

From what the interviewee Pangi says, it is clear that the material he learned from the international travels and/exchange visits he was involved in, once applied locally, is bearing fruit. He has initiated his own projects and a lot of personal material things are now at his disposal, including a car and a house. He, therefore, can affirm that trips have revolutionised his ministry, and ipso facto his life. Other interviewed people testify the same thing; for example, Madam Mwenga (MAXQDA: 252-260) finds her family helped a lot, as she provides it with vegetables and much more from a garden installed near her house. Departing from these testimonies, it is clear that trips and exchange visits abroad are beneficial a lot to the recipients and their dependents, when they apply the learned material locally. However, learning application does not always move on smoothly, obstacles and challenges of many kinds being inherent to any human business. So, for this type of learning which relates to personal well-being, it is important to look at the challenges faced, as well.

Challenges: Insecure work environment and low wages from the church

The fifth and last criterion for the type ‘personal well-being-oriented learning’ looks at the challenges faced by the learner-implementer of the learning gained, once at the application site. The insecurity in the area of work on the one side, and the low and insufficient wages for the Protestant church’s pastors and fellow workers on the other, stand out as major ones. That is the case with the interviewee Kasongo, who gives her perception as follows:

“To this hour, since it [cow] gave birth, it [cow] gives 7 litres of milk every day, from January to December (Ah!) That is an experience... Laughter) Oh, yes, it is insecurity in the area, which is disturbing us... (That’s right!)” (Kasongo MAXQDA: 203-205).

The interviewee Kasongo does not know what to do because of increasing insecurity in her work environment. From her utterances, her cow produces seven litres of milk a day, which would likely provide her with a lot of money if sold. She is now troubled, and she sees her project collapse desperately, as she cannot access straw for her livestock due to insecure conditions. Such a situation is coupled with bandits or robbers of livestock, together with a lot of rebellions, as Mister Bukavu (MAXQDA: 155-158) points out. In fact, the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo is currently under insecure conditions. This causes the people to be unsteady, to the point that fear causes inertia with regard to undertaking projects for oneself. The interviewee Kailo (MAXQDA 199-206) gives an additional fact that, even if one is willing to undertake projects, most pastors do not earn enough money. His church system lacks in strategies with respect to raising the church ministers’ wages to an acceptable standard. This hinders preparation to embark and venture entrepreneurship for self-reliance, besides working for the church. In connection with this, it appears that the interviewed Protestant church’s leaders are willing to apply the learned material for their own benefits, but they face a lot of challenges, namely unsecure environment and low financial means. So, alleviating poverty becomes somewhat difficult, despite the project ideas that they may have to go around it.

Summary

In sum, with regard to this first type of the Protestant church leaders' learning, and in connection with the abduction process done on the interview transcripts, it is clear that the focus is upon the welfare of the recipients. From their peers, they got some inspiration as to how combining serving in the church and initiating individual projects account for self-reliance, and therefore for poverty alleviation. Having an entrepreneurial mindset, working hard and doing one's job well are among the key features for such an attainment. When learning is practiced at their workplace, church's leaders are likely to get a lot of returns, especially with regard to responding to their own needs and the ones of their nuclear families on the one hand, eventually to the ones of their church on the other hand. The big challenges remain, however, the ones of the multi-form insecure environments in which most of them are living and/or working, and the low wages they get from the church.

4.3.2 Type Two: Own ministry-oriented learning

Another type that emerged from the abduction done on the interview transcripts is labelled 'own ministry-oriented learning'. It deals with the material that the travelling church leaders gleaned as fitting their ministry/work. From the interviews, it is clear that the persons involved in international travels and/or exchange visits acquire knowledge not only for themselves, but also for their ministry/workplace/job, mainly in the perspective of bringing some improvement therein. A lot of aspects from the interview transcripts shape this part, be they with respect to the church leader's key qualities and how they serve in the church, or what is self-reported as learning and its application locally, or the encountered issues in attempt to come up there. Like for the first type, it is going to be described by the five criteria detailed above (chap. 4.2).

Experiences during travel: Church leaders' qualities

From the exploration of the 28 interviews that constitute the corpus for the study at hand, and departing from the abduction process done on them, key leader's qualities are found on behalf of the many church leaders with whom the travelling pastors and fellows came across abroad. These include entertaining close relationship with church members and their commitment to the service, together with a constant inclination towards excellence. This is expressed in the following lines:

"Something I saw in the pastor's life is that they love to come close to the sheep (Christians) so much (Uh!) to initiate them with regard to making them grow spiritually (Uh!) because I can say that when we were there I saw so many things that I had never lived here (Uhu)" (Kibombo MAXQDA: 164-167).

Loving to come close to church members in order to make them attain spiritual growth characterises the church's leaders at the highest level, according to the interviewee Kibombo. It is thus one of the key differentiation elements with the local church's leaders he ever knows. According to Mister Kabambare (MAXQDA: 90-105), this is done through organising regular visits at their homes and – if need be – at their workplaces. The church's leader (here, pastor) has among other assignments to know not only where Christians live and where they work, but also the strategies and methods of work for Christians within his/her congregation. And if a working Christian encounters some difficulties at work, the pastor advises on how to raise/recondition that business again, for example by getting a loan. Besides, church's leaders from abroad are said to be engaged and committed to serving God (Masisi MAXQDA: 82-87 & Bulengera MAXQDA: 165-174). Their ministry is taken as their job, contrary to how it is considered locally. Ministering is taken seriously; so, pastors devote enough time to it, to the extent that even being advanced in age is not a pretext to stop serving. Christians do not come to church with empty hands (Idjwi MAXQDA: 211-217). As for Mister Uvira (MAXQDA: 42-62), an additional quality is that they can enrol somebody in any ministry (for example, a choir) only if they discover that the recruit can perform well.

In other words, they are excellence-oriented while exercising their ministry, which justifies why they even pay choir singers, for example. These interviewees show how they found the church-leading ministry abroad, especially how the believers are awarded a choice place within the church, and the required mindset – namely of commitment coupled with excellence – for accomplishing their mission. Such an experience is thus inspirational for the visiting pastors and other church's leaders, as they reflect their respective ministries.

Getting involved in experiences of any kind has been, most of the time, an opportunity of gaining new insights. That is why, in the following part it is worth examining what the travelling church leaders acquired from visiting abroad.

Self-reported learning: Leadership and management skills, practical skills and leader's qualities

For the own ministry-oriented learning type, this second criterion states what the Protestant church's leaders who got involved in exchange visits have acquired as learning. With respect to the differing ministries they exercise within the church leadership, this ranks from leadership and management skills to practical skills pertaining to how certain tasks get accomplished, in addition to key church leadership requirements and qualities. That is the case with Madam Oicha, who states it as follows:

“...attending workshops and trainings, which provided me with skills to do something. Most importantly, in the context of leadership, I have learned a lot of skills through those trainings and workshops (uh!), through attending assemblies, especially when I take part in exchanges in small groups (uh!)” (Oicha MAXQDA: 210-214).

From the many encounters abroad, the interviewee Oicha, who leads the Women's Department in her church, has learned a lot of skills, including leadership skills. These help her to perform certain leadership tasks properly. The interviewee Masisi (MAXQDA: 23-29) whose interest is the choir, specifies that he learned how to manage a large group of choristers,

whereas Madam Goma (MAXQDA: 17-20) knows now how to manage little children of Sunday school classes, together with mentoring them and communicating efficiently with strangers. Besides, a lot of practical skills or how-to tips with regard to accomplishing their ministries come in at different levels. For example, Madam Fizi (MAXQDA: 204-223) has learned how to individualise vocational training for children living with disabilities. As for Sunday school children, because of the different abilities at their disposal, Madam Goma (MAXQDA: 52-58) is now able to teach them various biblical subjects, in accordance with their age groups. She can also make grown-up children supervise the little kids during her teachings – a way of preparing implicitly the Sunday school teachers for future generations. Such skilful adaptability is also mentioned by Mister Bukavu (MAXQDA: 131-135) with regard to doing crop rotation and covering permanently the soil in his newly installed field, for better production. Furthermore, a lot of stuff was gleaned from church's members, which however finds room in the leading ministry. This includes humility as mentioned by Mister Karisimbi (MAXQDA: 66-71) – a quality that helps them to look more like their Lord Jesus-Christ, as they approach all people with simplicity – and hard work (Kailo MAXQDA: 195-199) in order to succeed in their ministries. The interviewee Nyiragongo (MAXQDA: 178-186) adds by stating that only through humility/simplicity, the church is rendered capable of getting closer to lowly people – namely the socially-excluded ones – to tell them about the Gospel and win them over to Christ, so they become servants of God as well. With regard to emerging in life, no doubt pastor Kailo witnessed the “ministry of success” from the encounters abroad, and the secret hidden therein – hard work – in order to get fully blessed and therefore be free from complaining against the church leadership, or their Lord, for lowly life. From these interviewees, it is clear that the travelling church's leaders learn a lot in connection with their individual ministries, as they get in touch with other people globally. That stuff constitutes such an upskilling that they are equipped anew for carrying out their mission.

However, in order for any learning to bear fruit (effects and outcomes), it is important that it be taken to the performance place for practice or implementation by the recipients, I mean real work environment. That is why looking at its ways of transfer in light of the intended aim proves more than necessary.

Ways of transfer including individual purpose: Living as role-model and empowering others in an adapted way

It is well recognized that learning transfer implies transfer situations for effective usage of the learned material. Concerning the type 'own ministry-oriented learning', this criterion targets the different ways foreseen or set in place by the travelling church's leaders in attempt of applying the learned. This is done through living as role-model and empowering others. From the exploration of the interview transcripts, getting the church's leaders involved in travels and/or exchange visits intends at improving their ministry or career as it is put by Mister Kabare:

"Uh! Aah, yes. On my side as a pastor, I went to that place so that I could benefit by seeing what others pastors do, and that when I am back home I try to improve my ministry as a pastor, in particular, the whole church leadership in general" (Kabare MAXQDA: 29-32).

Mister Kabare gets involved in encounters so as to improve his pastoral ministry in particular, the whole church's leadership in general. Mister Karisimbi (MAXQDA: 172-175) provides an additional insight by stating that getting involved with other pastors globally gives him much more understanding that he is likely to do things better than before. The same comes from the interviewees Kailo (MAXQDA: 164-172) and Bukavu (MAXQDA 168-169), whereas the interviewee Kabambare (MAXQDA: 357-363), who speaks on behalf of his choir leading staff, pushes the reasoning/reflexion further by acknowledging that his ministry cannot get stronger nor bear fruit if they keep locking themselves in one place. It is thus clear that the idea behind engaging in (informal/experiential/global) learning, at this level, remains the one of fostering and/or bringing some improvement in one's ministry when back home from the encounters. In

this regard, church leaders have been living as role-model of humility as shown by Mister Pangi in these terms:

“And the advantage I got in relation to this is that after experiencing this humility and this way of managing the group there in <African country 4 village 1>, on my return to my home city, as head of evangelism in the church Community, I also began to live that, in other words, I began to consider everyone at the same level in a group, not to seek to impose my point of view to others, but also to share experiences without taboos. So, it helped me to become – between inverted commas – like the people I had seen in <African country 4 village 1> (ah yes!)” (Pangi MAXQDA: 79-86).

Mister Pangi, though head of evangelism of his church denomination, lives humility as he manages the group of other ministers under him, by considering all at the same level, and not imposing them his point of view, as he shares his experiences frankly. This would make him to be like the church’s leaders he saw abroad. Moving in the same direction, the interviewee Karisimbi (MAXQDA: 68-79) explains further what this looks like in reference to what he lives. For him, he approaches all people with simplicity in the way Christ was approaching people, reaching all and adapting to all. They have also been committed to empowering their fellow church’s leaders or members, namely with regard to agropastoral techniques, for their self-sufficiency (Kasongo MAXQDA: 151-155 & 195-204; Lubutu MAXQDA: 197-201). The capacity building they embarked on would help prepare pastors for retirement time on the one hand, and enable the youth for well-done jobs on the other, as they are gifted but lacking in tips relating to how to do things properly (Uvira MAXQDA 64-80). Another way, as stated by the interviewee Fizi (MAXQDA: 114-128) is with regard to adapting teaching/training to targeted people; for the domain of vocational training, this meets specialising trainees for a trade that complies with their capacities, or adapting the biblical message to the context of the audience. From these interviewees, it is evident that the travelling church’s leaders brought some improvement in the exercise of their ministries/jobs, as they share experiences with their church’s members or reinforce their capacities in differing domains. The following part intends to look at what is brought forth by such a transfer.

Transfer benefits: Better workplace environment, reinforced capacities, money making for fellows, and leader's enlarged network

In connection with the own ministry-oriented learning type, this criterion looks at what results from the ways of transfer as stated above. Departing from the abduction process applied on the raw data, the many returns include better workplace environment, reinforced capacities for fellow workers, money making, and enlarged network for the leader, as shown in the interview with Maniema in the following citation:

"I have just told you something at the management level: the more I get in contact with others the more I am trained; so, the way I manage people (human resources) has also changed, even the way I live with my co-workers has changed in a certain manner. I am no longer authoritarian, as before – of course I am speaking of myself, unfortunately!" (Maniema MAXQDA: 202-207).

From the interviewee Maniema, it is apparent that the learning got abroad has resulted in a better workplace environment in his institution, as he is self-transformed and manages human resources otherwise. He is no longer living with his co-workers as in former times, where he used to be authoritarian in his leading/managing style. The physical environment of the church was also reinforced, as people offered money. That is the case with Mister Karisimbi (MAXQDA: 90-106), whose local church was able to set in place giant screens outside to help church late-goers to see and listen to the preaching though at a certain distance from the preacher or the choir, contrary to the past when they were just referring only to loud-speakers. To pass on the learned material on others, church's leaders have referred to organising restitution sessions from which participants come out with built capabilities. This is the case with Madam Goma (MAXQDA: 118-124), who finds Sunday school teachers' capacities reinforced with regard to managing otherwise the kids entrusted to them. As for Madam Kasongo (MAXQDA: 151-155), she passed her learning on fellow pastors and some vulnerable women concerning growing cabbage in order to alleviate poverty – which helped them make a lot of money as they sold it. Besides, as church's leaders practiced living as role-model, namely of humility, they have seen their network grow larger and larger. For Karisimbi (MAXQDA: 84-90), he has now a lot of friends, and many people approach

him easily in communication as he does for them, no matter their status or current situation. In short, these interviewees provide sufficient evidence for the returns of the church leaders' global and informal learning on their ministry. The working climate is transformed for the better, and the staff capacities are built as they partake in restitution/experience sharing sessions, on the one hand; the leader's network is enlarged, and the practising staff or/and leader harvest financial returns, depending on the case. With respect to adults' education, passing the material on others, or if put simply 'teaching' them, is also beneficial to the 'teacher' – here the church's leader.

All this goes, of course, in the direction of contributing to achieving the objectives and mission of the ministry. But, like for any human business, most of the time things do not work out as expected; church leaders are likely to face challenges in applying the learned, as seen in the following section.

Challenges: Weak human resources management, financial support and regulations

To some extent, church's leaders go through challenging situations as they apply the learning acquired from encounters abroad. With regard to the 'own ministry-oriented' one, such challenges pertain especially to human resources – problem of staff allocation and conflicts – finances and laws/regulations from the government. This is the case of Mister Lubero who, sooner after learning and suggesting about gender balance at the workplace, explains:

"For example, you may find that certain people are hired because of family ties, but those who are qualified for a certain job do not access it! Placing the right person in the right position still poses problem, and when I suggest that a woman is the right one, because I found her competent, not all my teammates accept it easily. They have unemployed family members, and they wish those people got the position, even if they are not qualified for it" (Lubero MAXQDA: 177-183).

Departing from this utterance of Mister Lubero, there are weak human resources allocation management in his institution, as nepotism finds

room therein. People are still hired not on the basis of skills and/or competences, but of family ties. So, hiring the right person in the right position poses problem. The issue is even greater with women candidates who, despite their competences, are not accepted easily by the stirring board (his teammates), thus demonstrating a lack of genuine cooperation and social justice within their team. Dealing with staff, the interviewee Kabambare (MAXQDA 346-351) expands further by adding that internal conflict for interest are still noted, resulting in misunderstanding within his team. Many are not happy with a new idea brought by a colleague. They throw it away, pretending that the innovator will think of himself/herself as being more important than they are, or is likely to substitute as team leader. When it comes to planning and achieving some concrete actions, for example training, church's leaders are also confronted to the issue of finances (Maniema MAXQDA: 229-231; Kindu MAXQDA: 237-241; Mulekera MAXQDA: 186-189). Most of the time they get stuck or postpone their activities to the Greek calendar, thus limiting the learning effects to a minimum. As for the church's leaders working in educational institutions, they do not know what is legal and what is not within the educational system. So, suggesting a new idea for implementation is like preaching in the desert, since nothing can be done about it until prior permission comes from the government – which may even not be given. The weak laws and regulations hinder the implementation of new insights at that level (Maniema MAXQDA: 239-243; Kabambare MAXQDA: 262-267).

From these interviewees, it sounds clear that the church's leaders who got involved in global encounters face a lot of difficulties when applying the learned material within their local ministry context. Not only are they confronted to human resources issues – namely nepotism and internal conflicts between staff – but also, because of weak financial support and unclear regulations from the government, they do not achieve their plan, which reduces the learning effects on the ground.

Summary

In short, for the Protestant church's leaders who get involved in encounters globally, the own ministry-oriented learning type is motivated by the idea of bringing some improvement within one's ministry (work/job), though little it may be. In this spirit, as they get in touch with other people and places, their attention is drawn to experiences that relate to pastor/church leader's qualities, and how they do what they are called to. They come out of such experiences fully empowered with management/leadership skills, and practical tips with regard to accomplishing their role within the church, together with church leadership requirements – namely in leadership and hard work. So as to produce effects at the local level, they influence their fellow church's leaders and collaborators by living as role-model, and by empowering the latter through trainings and restitution sessions. However, this tremendous task is confronted with a lot of challenges, namely with regard to human resources management, financial means, and laws or regulations from the government.

4.3.3 Type Three: Local society-oriented learning

The 'local society-oriented learning' is another type of learning that emerged from the 28 interviews as abduction was applied on them. From their close exploration, the researcher cannot do without the idea of learning in the perspective of one's local civil society, with which a constant comparison is made, especially by finding out some commonalities and differences. A close look into their reflections shows that all converges towards bringing some improvement within their society, through a lot of aspects that they witnessed in global encounters. These include people's living conditions and characteristics and behaviours, and the impact (effect) this produces on the church – a certain number of aspects, all of which they learn from. Like for the first two types, the third type description is going to be done in a detailed way by the five criteria described above (chap. 4.2), as well.

Experiences during travel: People's living conditions and qualities, and church's impact on society

Departing from the exploration of the 28 interviews and the abduction process done on them, key social aspects have been experienced by the travelling church leaders and fellows abroad. These relate mainly to the observation of the people as a whole from whom the points that interested the most include other people's living conditions, their qualities and the impact that the church has on the local government, all being coped with in constant comparison to what happens in their home country. That is the case with what the interviewee Kibombo reports, when he says:

"As for living conditions there, the first thing is that the people from there live making sure they are safe (uh!): security is in <African country 1*>, you walk not like here at ours (uh!). You can walk all night long; nothing will harm you (uh!). That is something I have witnessed there and found that is a good thing in that country (yes!)" (Kibombo MAXQDA: 16-21).

Dealing with the living conditions there, the interviewee Kibombo points out that there is security, to the extent that one can walk even the whole night long without suspecting any harm, contrary to what the situation is in his home country. The interviewees Kabare (MAXQDA: 229-234) and Bulengera (MAXQDA: 281-283) provide additional inputs by saying that people are free to walk at any time, but that they should make sure they have their ID cards. Because of such a secure environment, people are likely to work day and night (Kibombo MAXQDA: 89-94; Kabare MAXQDA: 116-121). At certain other places, the living conditions are said to be full of differing hardships (life in a kind of desert, difficulty of owning a plot in town, etc.), but people struggle to overcome them, for example by breeding cows for which they pay straw in supermarkets (Kasongo MAXQDA: 179-195). This denotes a certain level of creativity and development, as countries are organised in almost every sector (Kibombo MAXQDA: 30-32). People exhibit a host of qualities, including respect for others, hospitality, enthusiasm/activity and discipline (Karisimbi MAXQDA: 15-21; Kabare MAXQDA: 58-64 & 248-255; Kibombo MAXQDA: 44-49 & 67-72; Bulengera MAXQDA: 32-37 & 46-52). They are respectful to other people. The striking example is the one of the police

which considers even strangers with respect; they do not ask them for money, direct them with much comprehension, can even escort you until home in case you miss your way – contrary to the situation in their home country. Moreover, people are hospitable, what is seen as a sign of love for one another (Mwenga MAXQDA: 17-22). They are not only active and enthusiastic (Masisi MAXQDA: 77-79), but also kids are well-educated and disciplined (Kasongo MAXQDA: 211-219). This makes them respectful to other people's belongings, even tiny ones like a fruit tree in someone else's plot – which they cannot even touch and spoil the expected production. Another exposure is the way people dress, especially women. Contrary to what the case is in their society, women do not wear scarves; both young and old ones put on dresses – not loin clothes (Idjwi MAXQDA: 104-108). In all, the church's impact on society or government is visible, to the extent that if there is need of deciding about any important issue, the church leadership is associated to the vision for orientation and wise decision-making (Kailo MAXQDA: 115-132) – an additional aspect of praise for those societies. From these interviewees, it is clear that the travelling church's leaders were exposed to social facts within the many global encounters in which they took part. This goes as far as the impact the church imprints on the local society, the living conditions of people and the features they (adults and kids) exhibit at a daily basis, especially with regard to handling international visitors.

From these experiences and many more, adults (here, church's leaders) learn. That is why the following criterion considers what is said as having been taken from them.

Self-reported learning: Humility as quality, project writing and supervisory skills

Constantly bearing in mind their own society as they partake in encounters, the travelling Protestant church's leaders report having learned a lot from the experiences within other societies (people's life conditions and qualities, living environment, and so on), too. They not only emphasize on humility or simplicity as key quality; but also, they have got skills –

project writing and supervisory skills – for local people conditions betterment. The interview with Oicha provides a supporting idea as follows:

“Ah! Yes, (4) first what I learned from a lot of people from the other continent (uh!), many of them are humble and simple (aha), they do not get complicated like we do (you learned simplicity!), yes, I learned simplicity (uh!). You know, sometimes some people from my continent, when they have a certain position, they are set on high more than are the others, this creates in them some pride (uh). But those I saw there, can tolerate that you ask them a question several times, if you did not understand something, if you want to learn it or if you want to inquire about something, they are patient that you ask them the question (uh!)” (Oicha MAXQDA: 179-187).

From the utterance of the interviewee Oicha, it is clear that she was so impressed by the humility and simplicity of the people with whom she got in touch abroad that she learned it. According to her, people are not complicated nor proud, but tolerant and patient with one another. Mister Bulengera (MAXQDA: 446-449), who saw even government ministers sing in a choir for example, posits that they are not boastful, as does Mister Kalehe (MAXQDA: 112-128) tell about other leaders: they do not want to be noticed as leaders, but rather because of humility/simplicity they are encouraging even a wrongdoer. In addition, they learned about writing projects to submit to a donor for funding (Kindu MAXQDA: 71-73) – a way of alleviating poverty among the local population, and how to supervise traumatized children – a way of relieving them from trauma, so they resume their normal psychosocial life, and thus work in good climate at school, for example (Goma MAXQDA: 30-34). All this shows that the visiting church leaders were concerned with their local civil society as they partook in international travels and/or exchange visits, and they therefore gleaned a lot of stuff for it. This encompasses their desire to be humble/simple with their fellow citizens, the awareness about some realities, and how to relieve their society from a variety of issues, namely poverty and trauma.

However, in order for the learning to produce visible effects, applying it in real situation is of great importance. Such a consideration is dealt with in the point that follows below.

Ways of transfer including individual purpose: By writing project proposals and showing hospitality

Learning is profitable only if it is applied within the community for which it is intended. This criterion deals with the different ways in which the travelling church's leaders practised the learned material that pertains to the type 'local society-oriented learning'. These ways include writing project proposals and submitting them to donors for funding, and giving flavour to daily life by being more hospitable. The exploration of the interview transcripts shows clearly that bringing some improvement/change to their society rises out as main purpose, as Madam Idjwi puts it shortly:

"The meaning of the choir to move abroad is to show us some things that we did not know yet, because we live here in <DRC city 2*> or in our country, we will not be able to prosper (develop) if we do not learn from others, because we live in too much darkness" (Idjwi MAXQDA: 207-209).

Madam Idjwi thinks that the development or prosperity within her country can come with learning from others. This is further developed in an explicit way by Mister Mulekera (MAXQDA: 37-39) who thinks about improving something in his country as he learns from what others do because, according to Madam Oicha (MAXQDA: 111-113), a leader does not learn for him/herself, but for others, so that their lives and jobs get better. These interviewees, and many more, show that church's leaders engage in learning globally in order to bring about some improvement within their society. As for how this happens, Madam Kindu (MAXQDA: 221-224) is getting involved in writing projects for social welfare and having them submitted to donors for funding. Until then, for those written in the domain of adults' education, she has got a good feedback, and she assumes that when her dreams come true, things will go better. Besides, so as to make life worth of it, practising hospitality and being attentive to the needs of others are referred to (Idjwi MAXQDA: 366-376; Bulengera MAXQDA: 398-403). From these interviewees, it is clear that some improvement within the society is foreseen, as a result of the learning from which they benefited abroad. Submitting proposals that relate to education and living as role-model of hospitality and of getting concerned with

others have made up the start point. In the following part, a look is given to what such actions bring about in society.

Transfer benefits: Enhanced skills and capacities

Concrete social actions undertaken within societies target social benefits, for real social transformation. This criterion considers what results from the actions posed by the church's leaders as they implement what they learn globally. The unnamed benefits of individuals are herewith referred to as enhanced skills and capacities developed from the training or empowerment offered, as Mister Bukavu reveals it, saying:

“there, at the same time as I arrived at home I created a training Centre (uh), that I am managing in the same way as I saw in <DRC village 2*> and I have been training the believers of the <DRC Protestant Church 1*> and of the villages around our church, I train people, the men, the young people, the boys, the women, the girls; so, when they are going to apply what they would have learned from me, too, they find the benefits” (Bukavu MAXQDA: 103-108).

From the interviewee Bukavu, who initiated a training centre sooner after coming back from the encounter, it is clear that not only people from his church denomination, but also from the surrounding villages have got their skills enhanced, when they partake in the different trainings he organises. Then, as they apply the learned, they benefit a lot. The interviewee Fizi (MAXQDA: 168-176) adds that those training recipients get empowered, to the extent that they earn some money, and consequently they become then useful to their families first, then to the whole society. From these interviewees, it is obvious that social actions produce a lot of benefits – mainly as a result of well-built capacities, both for individuals and the whole society.

But meanwhile aiming at all this, most of the time the task is not as easy as one might think. There are always obstacles and difficulties to go around, as shown in the section that follows.

Challenges: Poverty and little comprehension for innovation

In an attempt to apply the learned material from global encounters to local contexts, the travelling church's leaders meet certain challenges. In connection with the local society-oriented learning type, challenges are apparent from the interviews and the abduction process done on them, too. These pertain mostly to the poverty of the population/institution, as a result of unemployment and weak financial resources, and their little comprehension for innovation. In this perspective, the interview with Madam Fizi provides a supporting idea, as follows:

"So, when they bring someone they've tied up, they say she/he's a mad maid/mad-man (hu) first she/he's left to himself/herself (uh), they can bring him/her in without even a nurse; it's like even the mental retarded we have, they take them to the boarding school, we ask [them] to pay school fees for their children, they face difficulties even to pay food for their own child not simply because he/she is disabled but also because of poverty – he/she is a person living with xxxx (uh), he/she is perhaps mentally retarded, he/she is... they call it by any name (uh). So that's a challenge, and they consider themselves as if they were cursed (uh), that they're really cursed, so that, the difficulties of restoration (feeding them up), someone tied up, without a nurse, you have to restore (feed) him/her (uh), [as] he/she can't take the drugs without eating (uh)" (Fizi MAXQDA: 322-333).

Madam Fizi is confronted to the problem of tuition fees for the children enrolled in her training centre. Because of poverty, parents are unable to pay them; so, the institution is not able to feed up those accepted and accommodated in the boarding house (dormitory). The interviewee Kindu (MAXQDA: 237-241) gives an additional aspect with regard to lack of financial means. This hinders her from organising adults' education (alphabetization), although her department is willing to. The issue of poverty coupled with unemployment even hinders a lot of willing people from going abroad and learn. In addition, most of the population do not understand improvement ideas, for they are new (Fizi MAXQDA: 320-322). From these utterances, it appears that challenges move alongside the social actions of church leaders undertaken for relative social betterment. Of these challenges, poverty and little comprehension for change stand out as the major ones.

Summary

To sum up, for the Protestant church's leaders who get involved in encounters globally, the idea behind the local society-oriented learning type is to participate in their society development by bringing some improvement therein. So, as they get in touch with other people and places, their attention is drawn to other people's living conditions and qualities, together with grasping the church's impact on society. As leaders within their own society, too, in addition to learning about humility/simplicity, they come out with skills to bring about change, namely writing projects for poverty alleviation, and relieving from trauma of many kinds. As they apply the learned, people's knowledge gets enhanced, despite the confrontation to poverty and little comprehension for innovation from the local population.

4.3.4 Organisational change-oriented learning

From the 28 interviews on which the abduction process was applied, the 'organisational change-oriented learning' emerged as another type of learning for the Protestant church's leaders. Church's leaders of this type learn in the perspective of their different organisations – here churches, with which they constantly compare the host churches, leaders and members. A close look into their reflections shows that all aims at bringing some improvement within their churches at different levels in reference to the many aspects they experienced in other churches globally. Their curiosity is drawn much more to how churches are organised, the church's leaders/members qualities, how money is collected within churches, evangelism, and many more. As for the three types already described, the description of this type is going to be done in a detailed way by the five criteria described above (chap. 4.2), as well.

Experiences during travel: Church organisational cultures, its leaders/members qualities, and money in the church

From the exploration of the interview transcripts and in connection with the abduction process applied to them, it is apparent that the travelling Protestant church's leaders experienced aspects within the many churches in which they were hosted globally. These relate mainly to their observation of the church as whole, as they look closely to how it is organised (membership, various offerings collection, phases within the church service, pastor's accommodation, and the like), how church service is performed, how leaders fulfil their assignments, how church members behave, and how fund is raised therein. Mister Uvira introduces this collection of insightful experiences, as he says:

"The first thing I learned from <African city 2*> is that one is considered a member only if he/she has gone through a training that helps understand among other key things the vision of the church (uh!); there, it is not the fact of coming to church today or tomorrow that makes you a member of this church, no! (Uh). You have to go through a 10-week training – ten Sundays of training to make you understand the vision, eh, the values of this church, and so on. Once you go through this training, you become a member (uh!) and that's the first of the things that are so very important" (Uvira MAXQDA: 160-167).

From the utterances of Mister Uvira, so far as the organisation of the church is concerned, in order to be considered a member of a congregation, one has to be trained for ten days (on Sundays), the time during which he/she learns and/or understands inter alia the church's vision and values. Contrary to the belief that just being regular to church services makes membership automatic, Madam Rutshuru (MAXQDA: 35-44) gives more precision saying that this training is done once a week, on Sunday after the church service, for every new-comer who intends to be part the congregation. As for the service itself, Mister Kabare (MAXQDA: 443-451) experienced that participants always arrive in time, to the extent that the church service leaders of the day come in and find all people ready seated. Then only comes the opening prayer. At the end, the pastors followed by the Sunday service leading team go out first; then follow all the other participants, in order to take part in the closing prayer which is said

outside the church. The members give ordinary offering wholeheartedly, standing and/coming forward “pew after pew” (that is, one after another) for it – anything is accepted as offering – or holding envelopes that contain their tithes (Kibombo MAXQDA: 235-251; Kailo MAXQDA: 56-59 & Bulengera MAXQDA: 195-203). So, nobody is allowed to come to the church service bare-handed; and if he/she dares to, he/she is likely to be asked why by the leading staff/deacon at the end (Kabare MAXQDA: 148-159). The offerings presented in nature (physical objects) are sold immediately after the church service within the church courtyard, so everything is converted into money. Mister Kabambare (MAXQDA: 82-89) adds by saying that when a person brings his/her tithe offering, he/she sets it before the church altars and a special prayer is said in his favour by the pastor, a way of sensitizing others to join and present their tithes, too. Concerning a new birth within a family, or newly-engaged couple in marriage, Mister Bulengera (MAXQDA: 211-216) and Mister Kabare (MAXQDA: 198-209) add that, not only the nuclear family proceeds forward to present a thanks offering, but choral thanksgiving offerings is organised by all the members forming the large family, from the groom and bride's sides altogether. The collected money finances all the church activities, including those of the choir. In addition to routine church activities – worship session, intercession, thanksgiving prayers, and so on. The church has at disposal a follow-up team for visitors who attend the service. It is thus not surprising that any visitor gets called so to share one's perception on how they found the attended service, on what can be improved, or else, all ending by a call to join the church for the coming time (Uvira MAXQDA: 180-203). The church has a pastor for every age-group – a pastor for adults, a pastor for the youth and a pastor for little kids, or for every department – a pastor in charge of the singers, a pastor of the women, of the widows; so, all the three church services occur at the same time in different venues within the church yard (Nyiragongo MAXQDA: 202-206; Kabambare MAXQDA: 167-188 & Uvira MAXQDA: 285-289). Congregations are involved in children's matters, to the extent that the latter are prayed for before leaving for their Sunday school class, and sooner after its end they are received back in the main church service to share what they learned

in their class (Kalehe MAXQDA: 67-75). Pastors are free to stay wherever they want, contrary to living close to the church as it is the case in her church (Kasongo MAXQDA: 224-232), and some of them are women (Nyiragongo MAXQDA: 206-210), who serve the Lord without being discriminated by their fellow men pastors.

In addition, church leaders (as well as the church members) are characterized by a set of outstanding attributes, as seen in this excerpt from Mister Kibombo:

“And another thing that I saw and imitated from my pastor there, he was earning \$ 600 a month. But, one day, he surprised me – I saw it twice in those two years I had been with him, instead of spending that 600 USD-salary, he called on widows and distributed the money to them! That impressed me so much, I was really surprised: six hundred dollars is his monthly salary, but (he gives to widows!) he gives it in whole (to the helpless!) to widows. He distributed it all! That is, he showed that he does not serve God for money, no! But he is doing God's work, ministering to God's people, just out of love (uhl)” (Kibombo MAXQDA: 506-514).

From the above-stated words uttered by Mister Kibombo, pastors are serving in the church out of love, not for money; this is shown through sharing their wages with the needy, namely widows. Mister Kibombo (MAXQDA: 226-233) adds that they care for the disabled and orphans. Besides, they prove humble (Karisimbi MAXQDA: 30-33); and for self-reliance sake they do something else in addition to serving in the church (Kailo MAXQDA: 207-217), looking closely to find out what everyone can do, whether in the church or for earning a living (Kibombo MAXQDA: 309-312; 223-226 & Uvira MAXQDA: 400-410). So, lawyers do what relates to law in the church; economists reflect income generating activities; farmers look after the church's fields [projects relating to agriculture], and so on – which makes up an investment for it, instead of just waiting for offerings as resources for church survival. The same accounts for medical doctors, jurists, and other independent church members, who undergo additional trainings, so to operate in their churches. So, in the church, every job (ministry) is performed by some persons trained for it (Kibombo MAXQDA: 149-158; 312-316; Masisi MAXQDA: 87-91 & Uvira MAXQDA: 50-51). According to Mister Kabambare (MAXQDA: 90-105) and Mister Kibombo (MAXQDA 164-167), church leaders are not only close to church

members (here the Christians) whom they visit regularly at home and/or at workplaces; but also, they are concerned with the working strategies used by the latter, the benefits they make and the difficulties they encounter therein, so to suggest solutions and ways-out (for instance, where to borrow some money so as to make the believer's work more productive again). Contrary to what most people think of the church's pastors – as the people who suffer or the lowest people in society, Mister Kabambare (MAXQDA: 374-384) experienced that they are rather the richest ones, the 'people who have money', to the extent that they are ready to provide loans to those who face financial challenges at work, or food to any needy church member. Mister Kailo (MAXQDA: 43-56) observed that they are good at managing five types of resources – financial, human, material resources, time and information – for prosperity. As for the church members themselves, they are found not only as being so welcoming to strangers in an exceptional way (Karisimbi MAXQDA: 35-50) that they can even sing for joy to visitors (Mwenga MAXQDA: 131-138); but also, they respect their pastors a lot as God's servants (Kibombo MAXQDA: 143-148), participate in the church service programs from start to finish (Kabambare MAXQDA: 42-47), are devoted to the church and all its activities (Kibombo MAXQDA: 196-206), prove disciplined (Bukavu MAXQDA: 183-187) and self-reliant (Kailo MAXQDA: 74-76), exhibit love for one another – especially the poor/needy amongst them (Kibombo MAXQDA: 206-215), and are respectful to time (Kalehe MAXQDA: 60-67 & Nyiragongo MAXQDA: 269-273).

Still other witnessed experiences from the host churches relate to strategies referred to by the church's leaders so that there is always money in the church to carry out its activities, as shown by the following citation from Nyiragongo:

"I noticed/realised an extraordinary gap (uh!) between the offerings given in this parish and those people give here at home (uh)! So, there, they actually have a fundraising system; there they use a <C-C*> – and double <C-C*> where everyone has to commit/engage in the same year. They must commit to support the budget of the parish (uh!) but they must fill a second commitment card to support the projects, namely the various constructions that the parish does (ah, good). And,

you actually understand, compared to our church here at home it was really something new because we pastors of the <DRC Protestant church 1*> have not yet even managed to get a single card accepted (laughter); but there, they have reached the point to get two <C-C*> cards accepted (uh!), and as if that was not enough, apart from the <C-C*> cards there are still special offerings that are made in the middle of the year and the parishioners are never bored (uh!), rather they are always willing to do the work of God" (Nyiragongo MAXQDA: 361-375).

Mister Nyiragongo experienced that, in order to raise funds in the church, people have to commit to support the church budget and its other projects, by filling in <C-C*> cards, in addition to giving offerings. In the same perspective, Mister Kabambare (MAXQDA: 70-80) adds by saying that they refer to thanksgiving offering for any life circumstance – including surviving loss [death] of a beloved one, having been blessed in a particular way, and so on. One has the obligation of coming in front to thank God; he/she is given the floor and utters some words, before being prayed for. She/he also invites other people willing to join in thanksgiving offerings – they massively come forward and give. At times, there is organised an auction where Christians bring everything in the church – food, money, clothing material, and so on, and have them sold to themselves immediately at the end of the church service, thus converting all into money to support the project for which church called upon funds (Kabambare MAXQDA: 133-148 & Bulengera MAXQDA: 195-200). Additionally, offering to God is an obligation; for, as they give alms, they stand up chair/pew by chair/pew (Kabare MAXQDA: 150-159). A deacon gives sign to all sitting on every pew that it is time for them to go for offering, so not standing up for offering is considered a scandal. Also, people are instructed not to give the least of their money – a one dollar note, for example (Kabare MAXQDA: 159-174), and for that church's leaders are creative to the extent that big baskets are made for offerings, contrary to small ones as it is the case in the travelling leaders' churches; and what surprises is that they are filled to the brim (Kabambare MAXQDA: 58-61). Mister Kailo (MAXQDA: 37-41) adds another strategy, the <M&RM*> which is, together with the preceding ones, a system that directs the church leadership in helping church members to devote, sacrifice and provide to God's service. From the interviewees cited above, it is clear that the Protestant

church's leaders took part and testified a great deal of experiences with the visited partner-churches globally. These experiences relate to how the church and its services are organised in general, the key leaders' attributes, how they found the church members therein, and the different strategies referred to in order to create the income of a church.

This range of experiences is likely to leave them with a lot of learned material. The section that follows extends over what this looks like in much more details.

Self-reported learning: New approaches to evangelism, fundraising strategies, and new skills.

For having partaken in global encounters and/visited churches abroad, the interviewed Protestant church's leaders reported having gleaned a lot of material from the experiences therein. They did not only learn about new approaches to carrying out evangelism, but also about fundraising strategies and new skills with regard to fulfilling their roles and mission, as stated by Mister Nyiragongo to start with:

"In a specific way, during this exchange with these churches in <African city 2*> (uh!), we discovered an approach of evangelism and strengthening of believers, that has even now impacted our entire Community, the <DRC Protestant Church 1*> (ah!); this approach is called the "<D-A*>" (ah!). Really this travel was rewarding for me and the entire church (uh!); the trip was indeed the continuation of other journeys that were previously made by other pastors (ah!), who had already begun to learn from these churches this approach through evangelism and strengthening within the church by discipleship (uh!); and during our trip, I was accompanied by eh other pastors/other servants of the Community, so we were able to put our Community in touch with that new approach of strengthening the believers in their faith, to the extent that the whole Community has adopted it now (ah!) ah, and consequently has reformed the way of strengthening the church members of the <DRC Protestant Church 1*> Community (uh!). As a result of the trip we did, this approach is a school that has already started even within the Community, in all its parishes" (Nyiragongo MAXQDA: 154-168).

From the utterances of Mister Nyiragongo, it is clear that new approaches to carry out evangelism, namely the <D-A*>, were learned. His church denomination has adopted it as a school within all its parishes, as it helps strengthen the church members' faith. Additionally, they have learned

how to build the church members' hope and how to work on teachings in order to strengthen their faith through fear and service to God. They can build doctrines and sensitize Christians so to rely on God and bring them to the level of having full knowledge that they are saved, and therefore turn to God by spreading the gospel everywhere (Kailo MAXQDA: 20-26). As for Mister Nyiragongo (MAXQDA: 327-350), he adds by saying that he learned how to connect, within the same church service, 'traditional habits' of worship (which fit the old people, for example adoration in a calm mood) to 'modern' ones (which are influenced by charismatic culture of praise, of dance and prayers, of intercession, and so on) in order to meet the interests of the youth, who were likely to flee from the church as they find it boring. Besides, they learned how to mobilize/raise funds for God's work by developing Christians' liberality in order to meet the needs of the parishes and the people working therein (MAXQDA: 347-361). On their behalf, Madam Oicha (MAXQDA: 96-98), Madam Be-u (MAXQDA: 144-145) and Mister Mulekera (MAXQDA: 140-156) expand the learning to a lot of practical skills, including time management and being orderly, leadership skills (the qualities of a leader, how a leader should interact with co-workers and other people) and how to get self-organised within one's ministry (handing a logbook to every evangelist so he/she can write down some information on the evangelized person, lest it gets forgotten, for example) – or to organise the church itself, especially so far as relationships with other churches is concerned (Nyiragongo MAXQDA: 28-30). As shown by these interviewees, the travelling church's leaders learned a lot in the perspective of their local organisations (churches). This ranges from how to handle evangelism therein in a new and fruitful way to organisational, time management and leadership skills, as they set adequate fundraising strategies.

In order to be productive and beneficial to self and the community to which one belongs, any learning needs being put into practice. Such a reflection is developed in the section that follows below.

Ways of transfer including individual purpose: By implementing new approaches to evangelism and fundraising, and organising church service otherwise

The recipients of learning need passing it from the learning/training site to the workplace so that it produces effects. With regard to the organisational change-oriented learning type, this criterion expands upon the different ways in which the travelling church's leaders put into practice the learned material from the encounters in which they were involved globally. These ways comprise implementing the new approaches in regard to carrying out evangelism and increasing funds within their churches, organising church services and living in a new way. From the exploration of the interview transcripts, the purpose of bringing some improvement within their churches and organisations rises out clearly, as Mister Mulekera puts it:

"Travel opportunities are very important in my organisation, because they contribute to the development of my organisation, because when I learn new experiences from others I see ways to come and implement them in my organisation. What I found as being something useful and good for others in their countries I come to implement this in my organisation at the local level, and it allows the organisation to flourish, to develop and above all to emerge in many things (uh!)" (Mulekera MAXQDA: 77-83).

Mister Mulekera states that travelling beyond national boundaries is very important in that he learns new experiences that – when implemented in his local organisation – help it to flourish, to develop and to emerge in different ways. Madam Lubutu (MAXQDA: 112-113) adds something similar by saying that journeying cannot be separated from the church, since they help it to be mature. As for Uvira (MAXQDA: 128-135), he moved abroad to learn the things that were missing in his local church for improvement, to the extent that reflecting on what can be increased therein was his permanent questioning. Seeking ways of improving his church was also the idea behind engaging in international travels for Mister Uvira (MAXQDA: 64-80), especially with regard to how songs are handled therein. In order for this change/improvement to happen, the learned

needs implementation; that is the case with Mister Nyiragongo about fundraising strategies, who says,

“It is something that I learned during this trip (uh!), and as soon as I came back, I initiated this in the parish that I was keeping [leading] (uh!); I can say that I managed to get one <C-C*> card accepted, first (laughter). While I was on the way of getting the second one accepted I didn't find the opportunity to do so, because I was transferred from that parish to another one (uh!)” (Nyiragongo MAXQDA: 375-380).

Dealing with fundraising strategies, as soon as he was back from the encounter abroad, Mister Nyiragongo set in place the ‘<C-C*> cards’ for support to the church’s budget and activities. He has succeeded to have one card accepted by the church members already. Mister Kailo (MAXQDA: 104-115), speaking about his church denomination, adds that they have been implementing <fundraising strategy 1*> and <fundraising strategy 2*> to better the live of pastors – pastor’s salary, good house, medical fees included. Instead of having the offering basket pass amid the crowd for offering collection, Mister Kabambare (MAXQDA: 61-68) reports that people are now moving to the front for it. He adds that choral thanksgiving offering has been introduced in his church, too, where somebody who has been blessed in any manner calls upon other people willing to thank God with him/her, as he/she presents his/her offering – this is working well (Kabambare MAXQDA: 70-82). Mister Kabare (MAXQDA: 310-355) gets in with the implementation of the idea of choral thanksgiving offering by the two families from which comes a newly-engaged couple, in addition to the slogan of never coming before God bare-handed and/or passing in front for offering. Although this was perceived by some church-members as a kind of colonization at first, the results prove tremendous. With regard to evangelism, Nyiragongo (MAXQDA: 214-233) utters that a new approach – the <D-A*> approach – has been integrated in his church denomination; the relating programme is now available for all its congregations, although it requires a lot of resources and training. They hope that all parishes and districts will benefit a lot from such an approach. In addition, according to Mister Uvira (MAXQDA: 208-231), in order to produce an edifying worship, some adaptation has taken place in his church service organisation, mostly at the liturgy level, as many people no longer

like routine. Entertaining visitors therein is getting more and more attention, as Mister Karisimbi (MAXQDA:46-56) mentions. Instead of welcoming strangers for the sake of welcoming them, they have now time to talk to them after the church service, and ask them on how they progress spiritually, their address in the city and, when possible, they go to pay them a visit. Church's leaders see a shift in the way people are living. So, Mister Pangi (MAXQDA: 79-86) began to live humility in leadership, trying to consider everyone's point of view in the group, and not seeking to impose his own. In the same way, Mister Bulengera (MAXQDA: 384-385) has made his colleagues [choristers] manage to respect the time, whereas Mister Kalehe (MAXQDA: 156-166) demonstrates the willingness to share knowledge with fellow church leaders – by offering training and/or mentoring – so they can perform well. From these interviewees, it is apparent that the learned was applied by the travelling church's leaders in their organisational work context, mostly so far as carrying the evangelism mission is concerned, together with increasing the congregation's financial capacities, and living by the newly discovered standards.

As for what comes out of such an attempt of learning implementation, the following part provides insightful details.

Transfer benefits: Church/people's increased capacities in finances and knowledge

The church, like any other organisation, organises activities meanwhile expecting some returns from the people involved; otherwise, the means used to carry them out are merely wasted. With regard to the type of learning labelled 'organisational change-oriented', this criterion expands on what the church gains as advantages, as its travelling leaders – or the people on which they passed the knowledge gained abroad – apply the learned material. As the researcher moves through the interviews and considers attentively the abduction process applied on them, he regularly comes across the idea of the church/people's increased capacities in financial matters and knowledge, as Mister Pangi reveals it when he says,

“So as soon as I came back, I tried to put that into practice; and just a while afterwards, in my district, the offerings amount increased, and the District's participation in the community budget was always between 90 and 100% (uh!), which made the district receive the ‘Certificate of Merit’ several times for completing what the church hierarchy was asking as participation in the operation of the budget. The parishes have emerged, too, which has made certain parishes and/or certain pastors to have means of transportation (motorcycle or/and car) of their own, because Christians have understood that it is necessary to offer themselves to the work of God. That's what I can tell about my stay in <African City 1*>” (Pangi MAXQDA: 134-144).

From the utterances above, it is clear that, as the church applied the fund-raising strategies learned abroad, its finances increased greatly. Parishes participated fully in their community's budget programme in an unexpected way, by achieving a score of 90 to 100 per cent of what the church headquarters asked to Mister Pangi's district. At the local level the same emergence was obviously seen, as pastors were able to get equipped with transportation facilities (cars or motorcycles) of their own, because the church members understood the necessity of offering to the work of God. Expanding on the results, Mister Pangi (MAXQDA: 160-169) says that they are tremendous, as pastors did not only have transportation means at their disposal, but they were enabled to start self-financing projects. Moving in the same direction, Kabambare (MAXQDA: 61-68) specifies that this increase is due in part to the fact that people (church-goers) have started giving offering abundantly, going for offering in front, contrary to the past where the offering basket used to pass in the middle of the participants. However, Mister Kabare (MAXQDA: 335-339; 355-360) opines that such an increase is achieved namely because, on the one hand, one gets obliged to stand up and give offering – as people stand up for it one after the other – and the newly-engaged couples are giving thanksgiving offering with the family members of the groom and of the bride all together, on the other hand.

The increase noticed within churches is not only financial, but also in terms of building capacities. Mister Shabunda (MAXQDA: 48-51) acknowledges the same with regard to the church's leaders themselves and their churches; therefore, he qualifies travelling for abroad as an “oc-

casion of resourcing” because, for having learned from the people he encountered and the places he went to, the seminars or conferences in which he participated, he came back with enough knowledge in various domains. Because of such financial and knowledge empowerment, the church engages in improved actions. These interviewees show clearly to which extent the churches have profited from the learned material from global encounters. Returns are obvious both at the individual level, as well as at the organisational one.

The above-mentioned benefits figure out a success for the organisations with regard to their application of the learned. However, like for any human business, inherent difficulties are never missing, as depicted in the section that follows.

Challenges: Weak financial capacities, business climate and insecure environment

Meanwhile applying the material learned from the encountered people and/or the places (churches) visited abroad, the travelling church's leaders face a number of challenges. With regard to the organisational change-oriented type of learning, this criterion examines what hinders them from adequate implementation. This encompasses the church's weak financial capacity, the country's weak business climate, and the increasing insecurity in the area of work for the reporting church's leaders. Concerning the first of these, Mister Kalehe utters the following:

“There are also some challenges that are related to the support, because it is a program that requires training tools – the church has not yet given anything, it has not yet initiated a program to strengthen (uh!) the financial support of the program, for example (uh!), eh! (Okay!) Uh!” (Kalehe MAXQDA: 180-184).

Mister Kalehe faces financial challenges for his training project, as the church is unable to provide support, although its implementation needs training material. Mulekera (MAXQDA: 186-189) adds by saying that, for his fellow church's leaders to live the same experiences and change, it is worth sending them abroad; unfortunately, financial means are limited. As for Kailo (MAXQDA: 86-91), he acknowledges that, in the places he

visited, the <fundraising strategy 1*> keeps bearing fruit because it is carried out in a business climate different from the one in which he is living locally. In fact, he says, contrary to his place where inhabitants earn a living at a daily basis – “they eat one day at a time...they eat their daily bread” – elsewhere many people are employed. Therefore, any willing person can engage/promise to give to the church by filling a <C-C*> card, but he/she will be unable to fulfil the promise made, simply because of evil business climate. In addition to this, Mister Kailo (MAXQDA: 352-358) and Mister Lubero (MAXQDA: 160-160) raise the issue of increasing insecurity in the area of work, a situation due to which horrible things have been perpetrated. These include a lot of houses burned down or abandoned by inhabitants in villages, many people killed or kidnapped, and pastors/fellow believers obliged to flee for their security and accumulate in towns, thus closing churches’ doors in despair. So, asking such people for money does not only sound like addressing weary/tired/traumatized people – which is unhuman, but also sharing one’s experiences is limited to those living in cities, as its surrounding villages are insecure because of militia, massacres, and the like. From these interviewees, it is apparent that the church leaders face a lot of challenges with regard to implementing the improvement ideas received from abroad in their local churches. They are internal – weak financial church capacities, but mostly external – business climate and insecurity. This slows a lot the progress foreseen to some extent.

Summary

In sum, in connection with the organisational change-oriented learning type, participating in global encounters for the Protestant church’s leaders implies participating in bringing some improvement in their local churches. That is why their attention/interest is mostly drawn to how the churches are organised globally, the qualities of other church’s leaders or members, and how to get resources within the church. To strengthen their churches, from the many global experiences, they grasp to new approaches relating to carrying their mission in a new way, with increased

funds, as they use new skills. As they set off to apply the learned, a noticeable achievement encompassing empowerment both in finances and skills/capacities is observed although they face certain challenges, namely weak finances, weak business climate and increasing insecurity.

4.3.5 World society-oriented learning

The *world society-oriented learning* is another type of learning that emerged from the abduction process applied on the 28 interview transcripts covered in the study at hand. The Protestant church's leaders got involved in global encounters; they therefore experienced life beyond national boundaries, from which they came up with a lot of knowledge in different domains. In the following lines, I am describing this fifth and last type by the five criteria as detailed above (chap. 4.2).

Experiences during travel: Diversity in cultures and priesthood, and international travel realities

Engaging in exchange visits and/or travels beyond national boundaries allows for coming across diverse people in diversified settings. With regard to the world society-oriented learning type, this criterion considers the many experiences in which the Protestant church's leaders got involved globally. As church workforce, their global experiences focus much on the diversity not only within the world people's cultures, but also in the priesthood within the church, beside discovering a lot of realities with regard to travelling around the globe, as shown in this citation from Mister Lubero.

"Uh, even at the church level, people pray in very different ways. I can say that even faith is apparently linked to culture. Well, even though I can't have enough information on that, I have found that there are different cultures, depending on how people live, sir. (Okay!)" (Lubero MAXQDA: 96-99).

Mister Lubero witnessed the diversity of cultures; he relates it to the diversity in how people live, and he assumes that even faith is linked to culture, as people pray in different ways, for example. Besides, he exemplifies his proposals by referring to how other people marry, in comparison with

how this works in his own culture, where the dowry is made of twelve goats, whereas elsewhere no dowry is asked for [marrying a girl is therefore conventional] or rather made of a certain number of cows (Lubero MAXQDA: 87-96). Moving in the same direction, Mister Kabare (MAXQDA: 180-186) says that such differences apply also in handling funerals and the relating ceremonies for a dead person, as he reporting about seeing a corpse extremely adorned, and people passing in front of it – a sign of honour to the dead person. According to him, people come with big objects in hands and drop them in a large container placed next to the coffin, as offerings to the dead, contrary to what is the case in his culture. As to Mister Kibombo (MAXQDA: 134-143), he experienced diversity not only within cultures, but also within the church – mostly at the priesthood level, as he reports that the ministry is not for a category of people. Contrary to what happens in his local church and/or society, where a woman seems to have no place – or better, she has some restrictions so far as ministering to the church is concerned, reverend women pastors [that is, ordained pastors with pastoral collar] work hand in hand with male ones where he travelled. He continues that there are no limitations in the ministry, what matters most being to identify the call according to the gift that someone gets from God. Mister Nyiragongo (MAXQDA: 206-210) sides with him, as he adds that women pastors serve the Lord without discrimination, without any complex, but with joy and acceptance in churches. Additionally, they report on international travel realities, namely the issues faced by people with regard to travelling beyond one's country borders. The first is communication issue as faced by Mister Kabare (MAXQDA: 410-422), who was given the floor to preach in a swahili-speaking church but, although assuming that he speaks the same language (Kiswahili), nobody from the audience could understand him – he was speaking a totally different dialect of the same language. Misters Lubero (MAXQDA: 43-4) and Karisimbi (MAXQDA: 23-25) and Madam Idjwi (157-161) add their voice to the preceding with regard to communicating with people abroad, by showing how important it really is. However, contrary to what they experienced locally, especially harassment from the police (Kindu MAXQDA: 57-63; Idjwi MAXQDA: 150-153;

Kabare MAXQDA: 56-61; 275-294 & Kalehe MAXQDA: 245-250), they experienced the difference with regard to how much the police agents were kind with them, by showing them the way to go (Kibombo MAXQDA: 67-72), by looking after their belongings or providing guidance (Fizi MAXQDA: 67-72 & Bulengera MAXQDA: 26-28), apart from being refused the entry to the host country for some (Kabare MAXQDA: 11-16) or missing one's flight for not understanding fully the time mentioned on one's flight ticket (Oicha MAXQDA: 26-33; Lubutu MAXQDA: 32-40 & Fizi MAXQDA: 64-67). From these interviewees, it is clear that the travelling church's leaders experienced a lot of aspects that account for their world society-oriented learning. This relates to how people behave at the socio-cultural and church levels, from which they keep drawing differences with what the case is at the local level.

Although all learning is not experiential, it is well-known that experience is the basis of learning. In the following section, an idea about what they took for themselves is presented with further details.

Self-reported learning: On cultures, travelling and interpersonal skills, and living with diversity

For church's leaders to get in touch with other people and/or places globally through exchange visits and/or travels, it is a learning opportunity for them, as it is for any attentive and reflexive traveller. In this regard, this criterion considers what they learned from the global encounters in which they were involved, so far as the world society-oriented learning type is concerned. Based on the interviews covered by the study at hand, their tremendous learning goes straight to other people's cultures on the one side, undertaking international travels, interpersonal skills and ways of living with diversity, on the other side, as Madam Kindu reveals it, saying:

"I learned a lot of things from the people I met there. I don't know if I'll be able to cover all the experiences I've learned from them within this time slot. (Yes) Otherwise, in that apprenticeship, in the evening, I remember it was a certain Tuesday, (Yes) we had what they call 'cultural evening'. (Wow!) This was learning from each other's culture. (Aha!) Each participant presented the culture of his/her country to the audience. I mean, she/he comes forward, then he/she presents; the

presentation was done in different forms. One could present orally, another could present through music, dance or whatever he/she liked. (Yes) When presenting, I could hear someone say, 'This is our culture; ... This is what we do...' So, I was very enriched by the different experiences of participants and comrades telling about their cultures" (Kindu MAXQDA: 93-103).

Even if she cannot be specific, Madam Kindu learned about the cultures of other people on a cultural evening in which she took part. She felt enriched as everybody was telling and/or presenting what they do in their culture, or what their culture looks like. Additionally, Mister Shabunda (MAXQDA: 105-117) understood that every people or tribe has their culture and that culture is not bad. According to him, some cultures have even aspects that do not contradict what the Bible says – for example those in which debauchery is forbidden. The gospel comes in then just to reinforce the culture, thus allowing its message to be easily understood. As for Madam Lubutu (MAXQDA: 150-159), for having learned about other cultures, she can now behave accordingly – since she already knows that such culture people do it in this way, such others do it in that way, and her own in that other way. Besides, the bad experiences they went through, they came out with skills relating to undertaking international journeys (here, travelling skills) and figured out the importance of interpersonal skills, such as learning an international language for communication, namely English (Lubutu MAXQDA: 32-40; Kindu MAXQDA: 137-142, Goma MAXQDA: 84-89; Kalehe MAXQDA: 77-83 & Nyiragongo MAXQDA: 404-405). They say they are now more collaborative, they can connect with other people, or share ideas as they work as a team. Dealing with teamwork, Madam Kindu (MAXQDA 73-78) asserts that she understood that the world is nothing but living together, as it is all about working together, about having comrades, because when you work with a group or with others, it is there that the world is bound together, and it is only through teamwork that the world will be elevated and promoted as a whole. Furthermore, for having got in touch with people from different contexts, cultures and beliefs, this taught Madam Lubutu to live in diversity, by being tolerant and supportive to other people, and by understanding them as they are (Lubutu MAXQDA: 162-167; 178-182). In connection with this, Madam Rutshuru adds that she learned to minimize criticism

and judgement on behalf of other people, that inquiring about the motive behind a certain behaviour accounts for taking position, instead of embarking for criticisms in a hurry. To complement this, Madam Oicha (MAXQDA: 188-196) adds that, from these experiences, she understood that people are different, and that therefore there is no need of pretending that what one knows the other already knows, or that what one does the other should do – everyone is unique, acting/reacting his/her own way. In addition to having a clear understanding about the diversity of cultures and mindsets, they testify having understood the universality (oneness) of the church – although with clear differences therein, but with one Master and Lord, who is Christ – the oneness of God's people, and of the world (Mulekera MAXQDA: 85-86; Mwenga MAXQDA: 307-310 & Nyiragongo MAXQDA: 36-37). In the same perspective, Mister Mulekera (MAXQDA: 88-90) adds that he understood that all people of the world were made by the same God, and that, for that reason, it is nonsense to fight against each other. From these interviewees, it is clear that the travelling church's leaders acquired a lot of knowledge from their experiences abroad, so far as the world society is concerned. They can now be cautious as they plan further travels, seek ways to communicate effectively and cope with diversity in certain forms.

As for any acquired learned material, this learning requires application within a practical context in order to be profitable to the community. In this regard, the following section expands further on some attempts of implementation, in alignment with the motives behind its acquisition.

Ways of transfer including individual purpose: By advocating for appreciation of diversity

Concerning the world society-oriented learning type, and in line with the purpose behind it, this criterion considers closely what the Protestant church's leaders have done so far about the learned material from the global encounters in which they were involved. This is termed *advocating for appreciation of diversity*, as they sensitize their fellows or tell of their own experiences and changed perspectives. From the exploration of the interview transcripts in connection with the abduction process, it comes

out that, besides their main objective to partake in such encounters, the Protestant church's leaders engaged in acquiring learning oriented towards the global society mainly in the perspective of building better connections with other people and places. Mister Mulekera puts it this way:

"So, I go there to preach the good news to people from differing countries. It gives me then an occasion of creating friendships with a lot of people, to partner with pastors and fellow believers from abroad, even to have a clear understanding of how other people live there: their cultures, their comprehension of faith, their fear, their beliefs, and so on" (Mulekera MAXQDA: 50-55).

Mister Mulekera, in addition to preaching the gospel, finds global encounters an occasion of building a cross-cultural network. This is done through creating friendships with people, partnering with other pastors and believers form global churches, meanwhile understanding how people live abroad. His interests encompass their cultures, comprehension of faith, their fear, and their beliefs. Madam Lubutu (MAXQDA: 27-29) adds by saying that such encounters allowed her to multiply relationships, or better to enlarge her network, too, as she met people that she had never met before. Additionally, this is subsequent to the discovery of the world, namely how other people live or work therein (Lubero (MAXQDA: 54-57; Maniema MAXQDA: 17-18; 54-55), thus broadening one's horizons beyond national boundaries (Lubero MAXQDA: 114-118). As for how they deal with the learned material when back home, they make awareness of change, by advocating for a more diverse and inclusive society, as shown through these utterances from the interviewee Punia:

"Yes, the great thing among so many others that I was able to bring is to show people that it is not good to have prejudices on others. Most of the time natives of a certain country have prejudices on people from this or that country; but when I tell of my experience, when I give the testimony of what I experienced here and there, eh, many people change their perception on others! I have been helping a lot of young people who had prejudices with regard to other tribes, or nations, I show them that, frankly, people must learn to understand one another, that they must not always demonize other tribes, maybe in part, but not in full" (Punia MAXQDA: 103-111).

From Mister Punia's utterances, it is clear that within society people have prejudices on other tribes or nations, but departing from his experiences

abroad he has been convincing his fellows on avoiding them, pleading for mutual understanding; and as a result, most young people have changed their perceptions on others. As for Mister Lubero (MAXQDA 100-111), after looking on how other people accomplish their duties abroad, he understood that something must change in his own society; from there on, he has been advocating for inclusion at the educational and/or professional levels, mainly with regard to educating and/or hiring women. Additionally, Madam Mwenga (MAXQDA: 226-240) says that she does all her best to talk to people from her church denomination and others that there is no difference in Christ, but that all are the same in him, thus refuting those who think that people from such or such tribe cannot be saved, simply because of prejudices. These interviewees long for an inclusive, intercultural and diverse society; so, do they make awareness about it, by advocating for diversity and inclusion within all their aspects, if possible.

Such awareness/advocacy stands out as the first step with regard to bringing about change. So, knowing about what this has brought forth for those who listened to them is worth discussing. The following section gives an idea on what learning returns look like.

Benefits: Enlarged network, and change of mindset and perspectives

Any learning, when put into practice, is like a planted tree that is likely to bear fruits at a certain period. For the world society-oriented learning type, departing from the exploration of the interview transcripts and the abduction process, the researcher gets informed about the development of a large network for the traveller on the one side, and a change in mindset and/or perspectives, on the other side, as more and more responsibilities are given to women namely, and positive relationships built with others. In fact, the interviewee Shabunda reports:

"In these exchanges where I am now, before it was difficult to see a woman preaching in my church Community. Yes, so currently with the teachings, people have understood that there is ministry for all but there are special services (uh!), so today, in the church, that a woman stands at the pulpit to preach, moderate or lead the hymns is not an evil whereas before we had difficulty getting a woman to

preach; it was really difficult but today it has changed. In the church where I am, it has really changed, even if in other churches in the community there are still some weaknesses but still there is a change" (Shabunda: 121-129).

From the utterances of Mister Shabunda, it is clear that a certain change in mindset is occurring within his church, where it was difficult for women to preach in former times, but now they can minister to the church by preaching, chairing (moderating) or leading songs/hymns therein, because people have already understood that the ministry is for all although there are special services. At a more professional/organisational level, Mister Lubero (MAXQDA: 128-133) gets in saying that women are no longer left behind as in the past; at his workplace, they have been given a lot of responsibilities – of the five ministries that his Ministry comprises, three are now being run by women. As for Mister Punia (MAXQDA: 116-119) and Madam Mwenga (MAXQDA: 299-307), people have become positive towards other people, nurturing successful relationships with people from other nations, with enough conviction about the existence of true believers among other tribes. Madam Oicha (MAXQDA: 160-171) considers relationships as being her most valuable benefits from getting involved in global encounters; therefore, she sides with Mister Lubero (MAXQDA: 114-118) who finds his horizons broadened beyond national boundaries, and Mister Masisi (MAXQDA: 109-114) who considers himself now as a man of the people, feeling free to live anywhere he wants, as a result of having travelled abroad. These interviewees show that there is a set of advantages, so far as living in a global society is concerned. A change of mindset and/or of perspectives results from the understanding of global realities, following the constant awareness from the experiences of those who got in touch with other cultures, churches, and nations.

However, embarking on such a task of making awareness does not move so smoothly as one might think; difficulties are most of the time found on the way, as shown in the following part.

Challenges: Routines, cultures' and traditions' weight, and prejudices

As they tell of their global experiences for local application in a way or another, the travelling church leaders encounter a number of difficulties inherent to their community. So far as the world society-oriented type of learning is concerned, this criterion examines what is likely to slow down the expected change/awareness. From the exploration of the interview transcripts, and basing on the abduction process, it appears that such hindrance pertains to routines, the weight of cultures and traditions or prejudices, as Madam Rutshuru shows it, saying:

"There are difficulties because people are used to the way they do things; people have their perspectives on things, they have their way of judging the realities around them, so when you want to bring something new, a new way of doing things, a new way of reacting to situations there are blockages that arise" (Rutshuru MAXQDA: 165-168).

According to Madam Rutshuru, sticking to routines is a challenge: people are used to doing things in their own way, have their perspectives on them, and have their way of judging about the realities around them. This makes them unwelcoming to anything new, any new way of doing things, any new way of reacting to situations. Because of this, as Mister Uvira (MAXQDA: 294-296; 331-333) ascertains, not all change is accepted by people, as many reactions go in the sense of seeing innovation as 'spoiling' the church service. Besides, the weight of customs, cultures and traditions blind people to the extent that they do not know what is best for them to choose; that is the case with young ladies who react saying that they only need husbands and marriages, when they are told to run for further studies, because a mentoring person found that they are capable of it, so to bring change within their families, and consequently to the whole country (Be-u MAXQDA: 319-333). In addition to routines and cultural challenges (Maniema MAXQDA: 221-223), there are also prejudices or biases some people have on other ethnicities, tribes, or people (Mwenga MAXQDA: 43-48 & Lubutu MAXQDA: 136-147). Their experience is that as one gets an opportunity to live with others, he/she is likely to find the opposite of the preconception they had at the beginning. From these interviewees, it is evidenced that because of routines, cultures or traditions,

and prejudices, the transformation of the local population mindset takes long to happen. They are real challenges, worth putting aside so as to thrive within a world society.

Summary

To sum up, concerning the world society-oriented learning type, the church's leaders foresee to enlarge their network, as they build up lasting relationships and discover the world. Within their many experiences, they were not only exposed to diversity within cultures and/or of priesthood within the churches; but also, they discovered a set of realities relating to travelling abroad. This left them with knowledge about other people's cultures, travel organisation, interpersonal skills and appreciating diversity, all resulting in having at disposal an enlarged network and change of mindset for self and the people they address. As they make awareness for the change they dream about, they fight against the established standards within society (routines), cultural/traditional weight and prejudices.

4.4 Summary of results

In this chapter, interview portraits corresponding to the 28 persons who took part in the study have been presented, by providing background information on the interviewees, as well as on the environment in which the study was undertaken. From the abduction process applied upon the 28 interviews with the Protestant church's leaders of the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, five criteria and five types of learning emerged as main results of the study at hand (chap. 4.2). The criteria that rose from the interview transcripts include experiences during travel, self-reported learning, ways of transfer including individual purpose, transfer benefits and challenges, whereas the five types that emerged from them are the personal well-being-oriented learning, own ministry-oriented learning, local society-oriented learning, organisational change-oriented learning, and the world society-oriented learning. The synthesis presented herewith is based on the description of the five types above in connection with the relating criteria (chap. 4.3).

Personal well-being-oriented learning

From the exploration of the interview transcripts, within the type of 'personal well-being-oriented learning' of the Protestant church's leaders from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, the focus is upon the welfare of the recipients themselves. While abroad, looking at other church leaders' life, they got inspired as to how to combine serving in the church and carrying out individual income-generating projects, so to live a little bit better. Having an entrepreneurial mindset, working hard and doing one's job well are thus given attention for such an attainment. As they practise the learned material at their workplace, they get a lot of returns, especially with regard to responding to their own needs and the ones of their nuclear families on the one hand, eventually to the ones of their church on the other hand. They face challenges, including the multiform insecure environments in which most of them are living and/or working, and the low wages they get from the church as servants therein.

Own ministry-oriented learning

As for the type of 'own ministry-oriented learning', for the Protestant church's leaders who got involved in encounters globally, the results of this study show that the idea for them to get involved in global encounters is to bring some improvement within their ministry (work/job), though little it may be. In this spirit, as they get in touch with other people and places, their attention is drawn to experiences that relate to pastor and church leader's qualities, and how they do what they are called to. They come out of such experiences fully empowered with management/leadership skills, and practical tips with regard to accomplishing their role within the church, together with church leadership requirements. In order to be effective at the local level, they influence their fellow church's leaders and collaborators by living as role-model, and by empowering the latter through trainings and restitution sessions. However, this tremendous task is confronted to a lot of challenges, namely with regard to human resources management, funding, and weak laws or regulations from the government so far as supporting improvement ideas is concerned.

Local society-oriented learning

Departing from the analysis of the interviews with the Protestant church's leaders who got involved in international encounters, so far as the local society-oriented learning type is concerned, the results show that the latter aim at participating in their society development by bringing some improvement therein, too. For that reason, as they get in touch with other people and places globally, their attention is drawn to other people's living conditions and qualities, together with grasping the church's impact on society. As leaders within their own society, in addition to learning about humility/simplicity, they come out with skills to bring about change, namely with regard to writing projects for poverty alleviation attempts, and relieving from trauma of many kinds. As they apply the learned, people's knowledge gets enhanced, despite numerous challenges including poverty and little comprehension for innovation from the society's citizens.

Organisational change-oriented learning

In connection with the organisational change-oriented learning type, the results of the study at hand indicate that the participation of the Protestant church's leaders in global encounters focuses on seeking ways of bringing some improvement in the organisation of their local churches. That is why their attention is mostly drawn to how the churches are organised globally, the qualities of other church's leaders or members, and how to get resources – mostly financial ones – within the church. To strengthen their churches, from the many global experiences, they grasp new approaches relating to carrying out their mission in a new way, with locally-generated funds, as they use new skills. As they set off to apply the learned, a noticeable achievement encompassing empowerment both in finances and skills/capacities is observed although they face certain challenges, namely weak finances, weak business/affair climate and increasing insecurity in their area of work.

World society-oriented learning

Concerning the world society-oriented learning type, the results presented herewith show that the participating church's leaders in global encounters foresee to enlarge their network, as they build up lasting relationships and discover the world (people and places). While abroad, they were not only exposed to cultural diversity and/or of priesthood within the global churches; but also, they discovered a set of realities relating to moving beyond the national boundaries. This left them with knowledge on other people's cultures, travel organisation, interpersonal skills and appreciation for diversity, all resulting in having at disposal an enlarged network and change of mindset for self and the people on whom they pass the knowledge. Meanwhile making awareness for the change of their dream, they keep fighting however against the long-ago-established standards within their local society (routines, cultures and traditions), and prejudices.

Summary

The following table, which results from the abduction process, presents in a clear but summative way these results, by associating key some descriptor(s) to criteria and types.

Table 2: Complete abduction table: description of types in connection with interviews

Types Criteria	Personal well-being-oriented learning	Own ministry-oriented learning	Local society-oriented learning	Organisational change-oriented learning	World society-oriented learning
Experiences during travel	The church leader self-reliance in life	Church leader's qualities	People's living conditions and qualities Church's impact on society	Church's organisational culture Leaders/ members' qualities Money in church	Diversity in cultures and priesthood International travel realities
Self-reported learning	Combining entrepreneurship with serving in the church	Leadership / management skills Practical skills & leader qualities	Humility as quality Project writing skills Supervisory skills	New approaches to evangelism Fundraising and new skills	On cultures, travelling Interpersonal skills Ways of living with diversity
Ways of transfer, including individual purpose	Purpose: Personal welfare By undertaking income-generating activities	Purpose: Improving one's work/job/ ministry By living as role-model and empowering others in an adapted way	Purpose: Improving one's society By writing project proposals and entertaining strangers	Purpose: Improving one's church/ organisation By implementing new approaches to evangelism and fundraising, organising church otherwise	Purpose: Better connection with people/ places By advocating for appreciation of diversity

Transfer benefits (for society)	Meeting basic needs for self and family	Better workplace environment, reinforced capacities, money making for fellows, leader's enlarged network	Enhanced skills and capacities	Church /people's increased capacities in finances and knowledge	More responsibilities to women, and more positive relationships with others
Challenges	Insecure work environment and low wages from the church	Weak human resources management, financial support and regulations	Poverty and little comprehension for innovation	Weak financial capacity, business climate and insecure environment	Routines, cultures /traditions, and prejudices

Source: Own raw data

5 Discussion of results: Leading a church by cooperation

The study at hand aims at understanding the learning of the Protestant church's leaders from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo as they take part in global encounters. An emphasis has been put on their perceptions of the international travels and/or exchange visits in which they take part abroad. The chapter at hand, which focuses on the main findings of my research, provides a clear yet detailed synthesis of those findings by confronting them with the theory dealt with in the state of literature (chap. 2), and therefore with the scientific discourse on informal learning. In other words, to start with, the results will be presented in attempt of answering the research questions (chap. 5.1), whereas the same results will be discussed and interpreted in line with the already existing discourse on leadership and informal learning, all culminating with stating the research contribution to the discourse (chap. 5.2).

5.1 Summary of findings

As mentioned earlier, this study is framed in the qualitative approach to research (chap. 3); it is therefore an exploratory study aiming at understanding the learning of Congolese Protestant church's leaders with regard to their partaking in global encounters. Rooted in the adult, lifelong, life-wide, informal and global learning, it is contextualized in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, with regard to the relationships in which the Protestant churches are involved globally (North-South or South-South networks), beside the governmental cooperation with numerous neighbouring countries, despite the almost permanent armed conflict crisis observed in the region (chap. 1.1.2). Lifelong learning sums up what all learning/education would be about, its main component being informal learning. Partaking in global encounters is an important opportunity for church's leaders to acquire new knowledge; and several ideas brought from abroad are shaping little by little their local churches, unfortunately without any documentation. Based on the interconnectedness of the world, and considering churches' leaders as education providers, the study proves significant; it aims at uncovering empirical data about the informal and global learning for the Protestant church' leaders of the

Democratic Republic of Congo (chap. 1.4). Therefore, after demonstrating the relevance of learning beyond the classroom setting, mainly from global encounters, I went through a great deal of literature to sharpen my knowledge about the key concepts that constitute the topic under study – namely education and learning, global education, informal learning, and adults' education (chap. 2.1), before focusing on informal/global learning for adult people (chap. 2.2), and providing an overview of education quality within a global world (chap. 2.3).

This research intended to provide an answer to the main question formulated as follows (see chap. 1.2): "How do the leaders of the Protestant churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo perceive international travels and/or exchange visits?" So as to have a more profound understanding, this question was operationalized into three sub-questions: (a) What do the Protestant church's leaders of the Democratic Republic of Congo learn from other members of the church international network during travels and stays abroad? (b) How beneficial is the learned material to the individual church's leader, the society and/or the church? (c) What are the challenges church's leaders report to face as they implement the acquired knowledge?

As stated above, basing on its explorative characteristic, this study was undertaken with reference to a qualitative approach to research (chap. 3.1), as nothing is known about the participating Protestant church leaders' learning within global venues, and therefore a need of exploring their perceptions and self-reported utterances. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were used for data collection (chap. 3.3.1). In this regard, the travelling Protestant people within the church's leadership at different levels were given room to share their experiences, and therefore their perceptions, so far as their learning from global encounters in out-of-school settings – here, travelling abroad and getting involved in exchange visits – is concerned. A variety of features – personal (age, gender), professional (church and occupation in the church), academic qualification, and the number of travels made – were considered for sample selection (chap. 3.2.2). The theoretical saturation point was reached after carrying out 28

interviews with Protestant church's leaders from three main church denominations, all characterised by a diversity of geographical, age, and educational backgrounds (chap. 3.3.3). For their analysis – qualitative content analysis – the collected data were handled using a rigorous but iterative process involving inductive, deductive and abductive reasoning (chap. 3.4), the main steps of which including data transcription, data translation from Kiswahili and/or French to English, intensive reading, data coding, data inter-coding for quality and intersubjectivity sake, and abduction using MAXQDA software.

As for the results of the study, they were presented at differing stages. First of all, the portraits of the 28 participants were dealt with by giving a thorough yet detailed description of every participant with regard to among other relevant pieces of information his/her characteristics, and key inputs worth retaining from each interview in connection with the research questions (chap. 4.1). Then, the five criteria that resulted from the iterative, deductive-inductive, and abductive analysis assisted by MAXQDA software were presented. These criteria comprise *experience during travel*, *self-reported learning*, *ways of transfer including individual purpose*, *transfer benefits for society*, and *challenges*, from the different qualities of which emerged five types of learning as follows: *Personal well-being-oriented learning*, *own ministry-oriented learning*, *local society-oriented learning*, *organisational change-oriented learning*, and *world society-oriented learning* (chap. 4.2 & 4.3).

The following section provides a summary of these results meanwhile attempting to answer the study guiding research questions. In fact, the analysis and close look upon the data as shown in the preceding section (chap. 4) display six main results, in a summative way for this study, as follows: (1) the travelling Protestant church leaders learned from getting involved in global encounters, (2) the benefits of the Protestant church leaders' learning go beyond the individual person, (3) the Protestant church leaders' understanding of the church's wealth is limited, (4) applying locally the globally-learned material is challenging, (5) all the types do not have the same effectiveness on society, and (6) all the types do not contribute equally to learning and society development. As I present these

results herewith, I will start with those that relate to the sub-questions, and end up with those that pertain to the main research question.

5.1.1 The travelling Protestant church's leaders learned from getting involved in global encounters

From the utterances of the participants in this study, it is interesting to discover that every church's leader learned, at least something, from having travelled beyond national boundaries, and/or exchanging experiences with another church's leader from a partner church within the church international network. This learning centres around a large range of domains, namely: (a) church growth strategies, (b) church leadership values and attitudes, (c) financial independence strategies, (d) church leader's career practical tips.

Church growth strategies

The study at hand shows that the travelling Protestant church's leaders learn about the strategies regarding how to make their churches grow stronger and stronger, whether qualitatively, quantitatively and financially. As they see their fellow church's leaders from abroad handle the church issues, and motivate church's members to attend church services assiduously, the visiting leaders are greatly challenged and therefore they pay attention reflecting how they can apply what they see at the local level. On the one hand, they learn approaches relating to evangelism approaches in order to fulfil their mission, as how to attract the youth by combining the traditional/conservative way of worshipping and charismatic behaviour, how to organise church services for adults, youth and kids in a simultaneous way, how to pray for the believers and get them energized for services, how to organise seminars – and not only sermons, how to supervise the Sunday school kids, etc., all of which aiming at strengthening their church members' faith, and equipping them for facing global challenges. On the other hand, they learn how to cope with money within the church to carry out its many activities. The numerous

ways referred to in order to raise funds within churches encompass having church attendees move in front for ordinary offering-giving, choral thanksgiving-offering, auctions, tithes, and fundraising strategies. These strategies include the one dealing with the mobilization of resources and their efficient management (same amount required of every believer as contribution to own church's yearly budget), and the fact of having church's members engaged financially by freely subscribing (by filling in a card) to support the church yearly budget and projects. Preaching the gospel and having the church members committed for the church finances help the church come to maturity.

Church leadership values and attitudes

This study shows that the travelling Protestant church's leaders learn different values and attitudes with regard to exercising leadership within the church. By observing how their fellow church's leaders do what they are called to, and how they behave within the church and society, the visiting pastors – together with the other church's leaders who get involved with them in travels and/or exchange visits – learn new qualities. These include being compassionate with the needy among the church's members, being concerned with widows and orphans, being close to church members whom they visit not only at home but also at workplace if need be, having an excellence-oriented mindset, and being committed to the church and its services. As leader-manager, they learn group dynamics, how to mentor their peers, how to get self-organised and to communicate effectively with strangers. Most importantly, they learn humility/simplicity which enables them to cater to all without discrimination or preference, and therefore fulfil their role as servants-leaders. As part of both the local and the global societies, they understand their involvement therein by promoting teamwork, intercultural life, inclusion and diversity. Being free from any abusive generalisation and (negative) criticism, they can now connect easily with other people.

Financial independence strategies

Another result from my research is that the Protestant church's leaders who get involved in global encounters learn strategies that account for financial independence, both for themselves and the churches they lead. For self, this self-reliance in life is tributary to hard work, and entrepreneurship, within an excellence-oriented spirit. In this regard, church leaders are encouraged to initiate self-financing projects in addition to serving in the churches from which they do not get sufficient wages to meet their numerous needs. By doing so, they are not likely to be a burden to the church. In the same way, church members are encouraged to work hard; whenever possible they get support from their church leaders, so that their activities can keep being productive. As for the church, referring to fundraising strategies is of great importance. Their implementation within churches has been boosting the economy of both the churches and their leaders – especially pastors, making them acquire a lot of valuable things for life and ministry.

Church leader's career practical tips

With regard to the first research question, the study at hand also shows that the travelling church's leaders learn a great deal of practical tips relating to better accomplishing their leader's roles within the church and society. Depending on the individual ministries in which they are enrolled for church services, they learn how to manage and supervise different groups of individuals (small and/or big choirs, Sunday school kids, etc.), to handle trainings (in vocational training centres, or for capacity building sake) or deal with their projects (crops rotation, breeding animals, evangelism and gospel crusades, etc.), and how to cater to society/church members by responding to their needs (by writing projects and having them submitted to a donor for funding, for instance). As global citizens, from their challenging experiences whether during travels or while staying abroad, they learn how to get organised for further international travels, how to find one's way within international airports, how to behave within the global society, and the like.

5.1.2 The benefits of the Protestant church leaders' learning go beyond the individual person

This research shows that the learned material from travelling and encounters abroad is very important not only for the travelling church leaders, but also, in the perception of the church' leaders, for their family members, co-workers, churches, local and global societies. In this regard, the most important benefit gained from partaking in global encounters is that there is a benefit that is going beyond leaders as individuals: in a way or another, the benefit goes straight to the society – the ultimate beneficiary of any learning. Be it little or big, learning brings some change in the society, for the benefit of the learner and of all mankind together. In addition to self-reliance and to meeting some inherent needs within the church leader's family, the many returns such opportunities bring about to the society include (a) empowerment, (b) connectivity-related benefits and (c) professional benefits.

Empowerment

The study at hand shows that the church's leaders have been empowered in a variety of ways, as their informal knowledge, life skills and/or competences are tremendously developed. By the perception of church's leaders, the results show clearly that they are now able to implement self-reliance projects and make money for themselves and their households, for which they meet basic needs, on the one hand; they perceive themselves also capable of mobilizing most of their organisations' members to commit to giving alms, tithes, individual/choral thanksgiving offerings to sustain the church's budget and projects, on the other hand. Besides, they perceive themselves as able to manage fundraising strategies, implement new approaches – with regard to carrying the evangelism mission, to engage in poverty alleviation projects for the whole population good, or to cope with diversity in a certain measure within the church and society. This increases their self-esteem indeed, helps for their competitiveness on the ground and sustains their efforts for change at different levels – personal, organisational and societal.

Connectivity-related benefits

My research shows that, for the travelling Protestant church's leaders and their respective organisations, the travelling opportunities have resulted in perceived connectivity. By the perception of church's leaders, their network is now so broadened that they collaborate more and more with local church fellow Christians, as they cope with the many friendships built during their travels and stays abroad. Not only, they have minimized pre-conceptions and assumptions towards other people and cultures, leaving room for mutual support and partnerships beyond national boundaries for their own good and the one of their institutions; but also, for having discovered a lot of places and people, they feel free to live anywhere they like, or to approach anybody in a clear communication, in order to reach their goal. In every situation, within any culture, they can behave accordingly. A change of perspectives and mindset is thus obvious on their behalf; and most of them have kept advocating for such an understanding among their fellows.

Professional returns

This study also shows that, thanks to the learned material through travelling abroad and exchange visits, the workplaces are perceived as affected in a positive way for the different church's leaders concerned herewith. A different management of resources – material, temporal, financial, human and informational resources, an improved work climate resulting from the new life of church's leaders who now perceive themselves as role-models, together with attempting to hire more and more women, and developing more and more positive relationships with all are keys aspects of such returns. Inclusive workplaces, teamwork and perceived increased productivity for all is thus observed as flowing from the knowledge passed on others through sharing experiences and testimonies, offering trainings and restitution sessions, and effective collaboration at work.

5.1.3 The Protestant church leaders' understanding of the church's wealth is limited

The results of this study show that the travelling Protestant church's leaders from the Democratic Republic of Congo experienced wealth in the host churches abroad during the global encounters in which they partook therein. Money is a very important resource to run an evangelical mission, as it is for any other human activity. A close look at the organisational change-oriented learning type proves how money is important so far as bringing change within churches is concerned. So, church fundraising strategies are not only part of their exposure as experience within the church international network; but also, they are enlisted as self-reported learning, ways of learning application, benefits for society (church) and encountered challenges when applying the learned. Therefore, it is apparent that wealth within the church did draw the Congolese Protestant church leaders' attention a lot. From their utterances, it is not surprising to learn about overseas churches, that their pastors are rich, run prosperous projects of their own, or that churches have big compounds with beautiful temples, pay well their employees (all people serving therein including choir singers), have big financial budgets, or afford sending choirs on far country missions, for example. As for how those global churches came as far as that level, nothing consistent is visible from the interviews dealt with in the present research. The international church wealth has been like an iceberg to the hosted churches' leaders: at the surface, they saw to which extent churches are wealthy, but they still hold a limited perception of the said wealth, the mechanisms behind it being not fully unveiled to them. In other words, the travelling Protestant church's leaders testified other churches' wealth, but did not understand fully how wealth is constructed within those churches, for church sustainable finances and prosperity.

5.1.4 Applying locally the globally-learned material is challenging

The study at hand shows that, as the travelling church leaders embark on applying the globally-learned material, they encounter some challenges.

These include (a) context-bound challenges, (b) church management-bound challenges and (c) people-bound challenges.

Context-bound challenges

My research shows that the first challenges local church's leaders face in implementing the globally-learned material are contextual. The eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, which is their area of work, has been characterised by increasing insecurity for decades now, to the extent that putting into action new ideas is likely to be a fiasco. The massive killing of the local population, the presence of armed groups in differing locations, together with theft and/or looting at leisure, hinder creativity and/or entrepreneurship development. A lot of local churches and congregations (parishes) are now void of their members, most of whom having either been killed or displaced in some areas that they think are relatively secure – namely big cities, to live miserably, because of unemployment. Such a situation causes constant fear and unnamed trauma in most of the affected population. The business climate is weak, as the area is somewhat cut from the rest of the region on the one hand, almost from the rest of the world on the other. Besides, the population is generally poor, despite the country's riches in natural resources and potentials; so, even though most of the church members are willing to participate financially in the church's budget and projects, they are not able to fulfil the promises made. All this causes the individuals and/or the churches to keep lagging behind, despite the good will regarding the improvement of the situation.

Church management-bound challenges

This study shows that the Protestant church's leaders are confronted with challenges that pertain immediately to how their church is managed in general. At a more personal level, the church management does not provide pastors and other church's workers with sufficient wages so they can get prepared and feel able to carry out properly their self-financing pro-

jects; nor do the church headquarters give sufficient support to the projects as planned at the local level. Such a weak financial support affects greatly the life of the church's leaders – mainly congregations' pastors, as well as their efforts and/or initiatives to come out of poverty. Besides, most of the churches experience a lot of issues with regard to human resources management, especially so far as their allocation and teambuilding strategies are concerned. Nepotism, internal conflicts and criticisms are still named therein, thus hindering sometimes allocating the right person in the right place, and the ownership of improvement ideas by their team members.

People-bound challenges

The study also shows that the third category of challenges that the traveling church's leaders face as they attempt to apply the gained knowledge from global encounters pertains to the people with whom they work or for whom they are responsible. Being issued from cultures that are different from the ones that church leaders experienced abroad, these fellows consequently display a different mindset, with different beliefs about innovation and change. Cultural values and traditions, which weigh so greatly on their spirit to the extent that they have not only preconceptions on others, but also little comprehension for improvement ideas. Such constraints oppose mainly to effective inclusion and diversity, hindering the church's stepping towards new perspectives within a globalized and interconnected world.

5.1.5 All types do not have the same effectiveness on society

Education is a social need, and therefore any learning intends to ultimately impact the society for which it is designed. However, not all types of learning produce the same effects and/or impact on the society. A close look at the five types dealt with in this study shows that the world society-oriented type has much more impact on the society than would have the personal well-being-oriented one, which produces minimal effects on it. In other words, as one moves from the personal well-being-oriented type

to the world society-oriented one, the effects in the society keep increasing. For example, the personal well-being-oriented learner seeks his/her personal welfare – and therefore, undertaking income-generating activities is the key transfer, whereas the world society-oriented one envisions networking with people and places – thus, advocating for appreciation of diversity is the central transfer. Consequently, in order to generate the respective learning outcomes, all the types do not entail the same learning efforts. In this spirit, experiencing the church leader's self-reliance in life is not as demanding as getting in touch with diversity of cultures and of priesthood, or what it requires to embark on international travels, for example. Certain conditions need being fulfilled for a better learner to learn better. The world society-oriented learner would need overcoming biases and prejudices – everybody has prejudices (Gaine & Gaylard, 2010: 3; Scheunpflug, 1997: 112), forget about one's local tradition, culture and daily routines, use metacognition and feel fully secure (safe), accepted, loved, and supported by others – to cite a few conditions – in order to get engaged. I daresay, some preparation by the sending church, the traveller's prior knowledge, clear communication, mutual trust, openness and hypocrisy-free talk, respect, and a welcoming learning environment would greatly account for a type-one or type-two learner to move little by little to meeting type five. The utterances of the participants expand on such conditions, and a change of perspectives and mindset is subsequently reported as uttermost benefit.

5.1.6 All the types do not contribute equally to learning and society development

The results of this study include a typology that classifies the learning of Congolese Protestant church's leaders from its eastern part into five types. However, when considering the contribution of each type to societal development, and in line with the scientific discourse, it is apparent that three types out of the five have better social outcomes. They are: the local society-oriented learning, the organisational change-oriented learning, and the world society-oriented learning types. Whereas the two other types (the personal well-being-oriented learning and the own ministry-oriented

learning) centre on the individual learner's welfare and the nuclear family (in other words, on just one of the society's basic components – the workplace), the three types stated above target the society as whole, be it local or global. This is seen through the relating descriptors with respect to the corresponding criteria. Today's society, and consequently the church today, is longing to develop into a more and more globalized/interconnected, inclusive though diversified, coherent, just and bettered society (Jarvis, 2008: 162-163) where poverty and all other global challenges need to be addressed openly and overcome. The three types referred to are moving in a way or another in the direction of bringing a solution, though little it may be, to these challenges. Their contribution to learning is therefore higher than it is for the two others.

5.2 Discussion of results: Informal learning for socio-organisational improvement

Exercising leadership and learning are said to be inseparable. In connection with this assertion, the study at hand was undertaken; as mentioned earlier, it aims at understanding the learning of the Protestant church's leaders of the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo with regard to their involvement in global encounters. In this regard, church's leaders from three major Protestant denominations in the country's eastern part were given room to share their perceptions about global encounters – namely with regard to international travels and exchange visits – held in the perspective of the international church network. The relating results articulate on the church leader's learning through experiences within a global world (chap. 5.1). In this second section, these results are discussed in line with the discourse that already exists, so far as out-of-school learning for adult people and church leadership and/or management are concerned. Three steps are covered within this section: the results worth discussing are presented first; then, some insights from the discourse that relate to my findings are exhibited; and last, what this study contributes to the discourse is highlighted.

From the array of results as dealt with above (chap. 5.1), two main aspects are worth to be discussed herewith. First, I am going to discuss

the learning through experiences within a global world (chap. 5.2.1), where a close look is set on the adult's informal learning key experiences, motives, and best learning strategies in the era of globalisation. In fact, partaking in global encounters is plainly shown as a learning opportunity; but so far as grasping the most important and useful insights from it for self and one's organisation is concerned, this is not evidenced. The inter-relatedness of the world is obvious, and the church is already experiencing a lot of challenges connected to globalisation. Therefore, based on the influencing role of leadership coupled with management, the second point for discussion goes straight to the church leadership and management within an interconnected world, where I reflect the global – and therefore local – church key challenges, as it is called upon to fulfil its roles in this era, which is characterized by much complexity (chap. 5.2.2). By discussing these two main points among so many others, the study contributes to the discourse by evidencing (a) the role of exchange visits for global learning and change, (b) the key attitude to adopt as one learns from global encounters, (c) the key attitude for church leadership/management today, (d) the church's leader as role-model with regard to own and/or church's self-reliance, and (e) the importance of financial empowerment for sustainable finances in the church and/or the home.

5.2.1 Learning through experiences within a global world

This study shows that, although the primary motive to engage in international travels and exchange visits is not to acquire knowledge as such; nonetheless, the travelling Protestant church's leaders have learned a lot of things from the global encounters in which they were involved – namely from the people that they met or lived with abroad, the visited places, and all other differing situations through which they went. From their attitudes and perceptions, as they talk about their numerous experiences abroad and the many challenges encountered along the way – either while still indoors or beyond national boundaries, it is apparent that they have not only learned a lot; but also, they have experienced the transformative power of learning, and therefore they are willing to apply the learned

despite some limitations. Grasping the conditions required for such a tremendous experiential, informal and global learning on the one hand, the idea behind it, the nature of experiences and the key strategies that account for it on the other hand, together with the content of such an adults' education to produce the reported benefits and/or effects, is of great importance.

Conditions for better informal global learning outcomes

The results of my study show that best informal learners from global encounters fall in three ideal types, that is the *local society-oriented*, the *organisational change-oriented*, and the *world society-oriented* types. These types are emerging as bearing better outcomes for the society development in that they focus on the larger society as a whole, rather than focusing on selfish needs. From the interviews, it is apparent that within global encounters the Protestant church's leaders from the Democratic Republic of Congo – here referred to as participants – felt enthusiastic about getting new knowledge, in addition to fulfilling the mission for which they travelled abroad. The travelling church's leaders did not only experience love, acceptance, consideration in host families or churches abroad; but also, they report about a set of qualities (namely collaboration, comprehension, trustworthiness, openness, role model, and respect) that characterise their fellow church's leaders therein. The latter (and most of the people they encountered) are thus described – to cite a few characteristics – as amenable, helpful, caring, loving, hospitable, joyous, kind, hard-working, devoted to the work of God, generous to God and to other people, disciplined, attentive to other people's needs, respectful to time, orderly, well-organised, humble, collaborative, and interested in other people (strangers). As for the government, guests report about having travelled to safe countries, free from harassment and threat. They testified in a certain way respect for human rights, inclusion and diversity in the church and society, social justice, respect owed to God's servants (the pastors) by all, generosity of church's members in offering to God and to other people, their adaptability or resilience, and love for well-done jobs.

Such an environment might have been conducive to better learning, and therefore yielding better learners worth ranking in the three ideal types stated above. According to the United States' National Research Council & Institute of Medicine (2004: 31-38), to get fully engaged in learning calls on both behaviours (for example, persistence, effort, problem solving, attention, completing one's work, active participation, seeking assistance when facing difficulties, taking challenging classes, and using metacognitive strategies) and emotions (for instance enthusiasm, interest, and self-confidence with regard to succeeding in one's endeavour) from the learner's side. These authors opine also that students need feeling socially connected, cared for, encouraged and accepted by their peers and teachers to perform well in school (p. 42-43). Marzano and collaborators (2003: 53) join in by focusing on the personal attention of the teacher, a sign of taking much interest in the students, which impacts positively students' learning. Teachers need teaching with love, mutual respect, and treat learners with dignity and respect, thus providing them with a model to follow (Fay & Fay, 2016: 21; Schleicher, 2016: 26; Jarvis, 2008: 162; Fullan, 2007: 50). As for Brookfield (2017), in addition to teaching in team to develop learners' full competences, whenever possible, best teachers should "model for students whatever it is they wish those students to do" (p. 3). Although learners construct their own knowledge on a social basis, the teacher's support to the students' learning is of great importance (Wahl & Mason-Innes, 2020: 6; Cohen et al., 2010: 182-183). This may be seen through interaction, collaboration, cooperation, feedback, and encouraging students in differing ways. The teacher should create an environment that is conducive to learning for maximal achievements of the learner; such a climate should be "free from disruptions, distractions, and threats to their safety and well-being" (Cangelosi, 2014: 3). In addition to considering the intrinsic motivation, the content of the learning material, the prior knowledge at disposal of learners, and the possible ways of the learning transfer, researchers opine that best learning entails reflection and critical thinking about the learned material – instead of accepting roughly everything presented to them (Blatherwick & Cummings, 2017: 105; Beard & Wilson, 2013: 28; Gitari, 2012: 36; Cabezudo et al., 2008:10).

Then only, can they learn it “fully and usefully” (Crawford et al., 2005: 1). The best learners learn under certain learning conditions. These relate mostly to the teacher, who gets involved by creating a good learning environment mainly at the psychosocial level, on the one hand, and to the learners themselves, who need being attentive, reflective and interested in the learning material.

With regard to the Protestant church leaders’ learning in connection with partaking in global encounters, this study contributes by emphasizing on the learning climate in informal learning, particularly the rapport that should be built between the teacher and the learners – and consequently among all learners, as key incentive for better learning and learning achievement.

Social improvement as key learning motive

The findings for this study witness to the idea of informally/globally learned material for the improvement of the targeted society. The travelling church’s leaders engage in global encounters for themselves as individuals – and their households, of course – and therefore for their ministries, local societies, churches and the global society. Participating therein so to bring some improvement is viewed in a permanent way on their behalf, to the extent that they suggest that other church’s leaders should join in travelling beyond national boundaries to learn and change. Change in personal life conditions, change of personality and of perspectives, preparedness to act and to engage with one’s society or church for the common good are just some examples of the improvement learning from global encounters has brought about, to cite a few. In a nutshell, the travelling Protestant church’s leaders see themselves as change agents; they dedicate to it by acting as role-model on the one side, and by making awareness within their respective local churches, on the other. From the global encounters, they did not only realize that they can live better, but also that their churches – consequently the society/community – can improve.

To a large extent, these findings line with what the already existing discourse states about adults’ experiential learning. In fact, it depicts

learning as a social need for ultimate societal improvement. Any learning being based on experiences (Lin & Lee, 2014: 129) – although it is not evident that all learning is experiential (Beard & Wilson, 2013: 24), it leads not only to a change in behaviour; but also, it manifests clearly as one applies it through doing something different in the world (Cameron & Green, 2012: 16; Findsen & Formosa, 2012: 117). By doing that, they are learning not only for individual adjustment and accommodation, but for social change in mind as well (English & Mayo, 2021: 26). The human being capacity of learning so as to adapt to new situations differentiates this species from any other; therefore, the fact that learning is an increasing preoccupation for many is no longer surprising (Kolb, 2015: 2). Experiential learning is only meaningful when its recipients are able to take something for themselves from what happens, and therefore producing certain changes in judgements, feelings and skills (Beard & Wilson, 2013: 25). This empirical study complements the discourse by adding a new dimension, the one of taking concrete actions to participate in societal improvement, and the perspective of empowerment.

Purpose-driven experiences as key exposure

The study shows that, for the Protestant church's leaders, although most of the travel opportunities relate to visits for exchange of experiences within partner churches globally, only the experiences that line with the individual purpose and intrinsic motivation result in learning. This is seen from the utterances of church's leaders as they talk about their experiences abroad; they seem limited by their personally-stated objective for engaging in global encounters, thus exhibiting less attention to other matters. For instance, a pastor focuses on the church administration and the life of a pastor, but does not devote enough time to other aspects of the partner church and the society in which it evolves.

In fact, according to research, the knowledge that an adult individual intends to get needs to align with the individual need first, and therefore with the one of his/her organisation (OECD, 2020: 66; Ekundayo, 2001a: 1). This allows for the fulfilment of his/her dreams (Hussain & Haladu, 2013: 39). Most of the time, independent learners learn new things to gain

mastery and understanding in a specific domain of knowledge, or just to acquire what is needed to complete a specific project (Stark, 2013: 171). That is, adult learning is meant to be useful – and not acquired just for the sake of learning. Intrinsic motivation and participation within a learning opportunity are inseparable (Findsen & Formosa, 2012: 117); therefore, the adult – who is rather an autonomous/self-directed learner – is full of potential to run learning in accordance with the purposes that he/she has identified for himself/herself (p.147). As self-directed learning, it happens without the help of a formal teacher. In other words, not everything is learned in classroom settings; learning results from experiences, no matter where they occur (English & Mayo, 2021: 15; Herod, 2012: 13; McGivney, 2006: 14). Therefore, learning being continuous and lifelong/life-wide, the informal/experiential component offers a way to engage with the many educational activities meanwhile engaging people with solutions that would not be open to them through more formal approaches (Halliday-Wynes & Beddie, 2009: 7). Formal learning and informal/experiential learning should thus be understood and distinct but complementary modes of acquiring knowledge (Field & Tuckett, 2017: 4). The fact that informal/experiential learning happens in social contexts – or better far from formal and non-formal institutions – makes it rather diverse, multi-purposed and life-wide (Findsen & Formosa, 2012: 5; Edwards et al., 2006: 7; McGivney, 2006: 11). In acquiring learning, people are related to their own intrinsic needs, as some people would assume this to be the sake of own person. Thus, this study contributes by making it visible that in programmes of churches for the sake of institutions, the needs of the participants need to be considered, as well.

Reflection for quality informal global learning

The results of my study show that the travelling church leaders refer to a variety of experiential learning strategies. Depending upon the individual learner, these approaches include observation, imitation, experiencing/learning by doing, asking questions, trial and error, and visiting web-sites. For the few most advanced informal/experiential/global learners, in order to keep record of what they are learning, they take shorthand notes,

or record the information using their handsets for late processing. As for the church leaders' overall perception on global encounters, they are depicted from the good spot: all of the travelling leaders seem to be enthusiastic about staying abroad, no-one claiming that journeys or stays beyond national boundaries are useless, nor does anybody focus on negative experiences. What interests is that, for most of them, the action or attitude taken is thoroughly reflected and thought through. For having accumulated a lot of experiences, reflexivity and critical thinking shape the life of adults, especially as they learn in a diverse and complex world. The suitable learning strategies are tributary to the material to be learned and the relating objective; in all likelihood, people use a combination of them. With regard to internal learning, they are numerous (as stated above), including reading books, attending lectures, discussing/collaborating with others, explaining/teaching what you are learning, attending workshops, taking online classes, watching television, listening to the radio, visiting libraries, volunteering, learning through trial and error, engaging in workplace mentoring, visiting websites, using social medias, and learning from family, friends and co-workers (Stark, 2013: 171; Halliday-Wynes & Beddie, 2009: 2). It is surprising that such a long list leaves apart 'reflection and encounters' as learning strategy. With regard to teaching and learning strategies for the thinking classroom, Crawford et al. (2005: 1) opine that, in order to learn '*fully and usefully*', it is imperative that learners think about what they learn, and see ways to apply it in real situations. If reflection plays such an important role in learning from formal and/ or non-formal settings, it is equally worthwhile for informal/experiential/ learning, which is rather ubiquitous, incidental, transcultural, and global. In an explicit way, there is no need of using rote learning strategies and memorization, but to question, and examine closely the material to sort things for themselves in order to solve problems – their own and/or the ones of the community to which they belong. This also means that, as Beard & Wilson (2014) puts it saying, "we do not learn by experience; we learn from reflecting on experience" (p. 28), they have to reflect on what happened, how it happened, and why. There are numerous circumstances in which experiences do not result in new insights or learning, as people

do not pay attention to them. On new experiences and adaptation, Wahl & Mason-Innes (2020: 5) state that they either merge with what is routinely done ('assimilation'), or, if they are different enough and/or incompatible with the existing system, the developing/growing organism coins a new system to accommodate ('accommodation') the newly processed information, in order to create a kind of equilibrium. In other words, for an experience to draw the learner's attention and therefore constitute a learning one, it needs to be challenging enough (Wahl & Mason-Innes, 2020: 5-6; Scheunpflug, 1997: 113). Without being the only determinant of learning, reflection is a key component of the whole learning process, which can be summed up as experiences, reflection and/or thinking, and acting (Kolb, 2015: 57; Dotlich et al., 2009: 196). This study does show that reflection is important, even in talking about experiences, as all interview partners liked to talk to the researcher. Then only can one take advantages of learning from experiences.

Summary

To sum up, it is worth mentioning that the discourse on informal/experiential learning highlights the learning environment, together with any other condition for quality teaching and learning, and what the implications are for better societal outcomes. This study is contributing to discourse by emphasizing on the required characteristics of an ideal learning climate within a diverse, global and complex world, where both the learner and a more knowledgeable person are called upon to join their efforts. Although the learning holistic dimension is not apparent, the results complement the discourse by stating that reflexivity needs to be undertaken by learning recipients so as to experience fully and usefully its transformative power.

5.2.2 The church leadership/management within an interconnected world

Moving in the perspective of the church's leaders and their numerous roles, this study shows that the travelling Protestant church's leaders are

becoming globally-minded, although still ministering to their local churches. From their perceptions and self-reported learning, it is apparent that most of them are getting transformed from within; therefore, they are prepared to act as agents of change. They come out of the many global encounters aware of global realities – namely the interconnectedness (and oneness) of the globe – and therefore the universality of the church and the notion of unity in diversity. In a sense, they have acquired global learning; yet, they have to apply it locally. They have also discovered themselves (self-discovery), especially with regard to their own life, as learning through exchange of experiences attends to differences and commonalities. Understanding in a deep but concise way what all this implies for their local churches, together with reflecting about what accounts for a sustainable improvement of their personal life and/or the one of their organisations, is thus judged worth covering extensively herewith.

Church leadership and management in times of globalisation

The findings for this study testify about a positive attitude held by the travelling church's leaders towards new horizons. All of them are positive with the global encounters, and are eager to learn, to change, to adopt or to adapt the material learned informally therein, although the needed means may not be at their disposal.

According to Wahl & Mason-Innes (2020: 23), global learning is a high-impact educational practice. It allows people to explore world views that are different from their own, focusing on challenging issues that are affecting humanity nowadays (p. 23); and one of its crucial components is diversity (p. 25). Wahl and Mason-Innes (2020) add that the two main aspects of global learning are: (a) a way of thinking about the world as a “closed interconnected system”, and (b) a reference to the “process of learning”, both of which pointing to the notion of “local and global identities”, and that all earthly people should understand that their “respective local identities”, as well as “their global identity”, are interconnected (p. 24). Interconnectedness calls back to among other issues the ones of inclusion, interculturality, and diversity. Reconciling such conflicting and complex realities within the new local church leadership environment is

likely to be challenging (Dotlich et al., 2009: 10). In addition, research recognises that great organisations do not only have great management committees; but also, their boards need to be diverse for effectiveness sake – namely with regard to decision-making (Brown, 2021: 20). According to Mullins (2016), globalisation is a trend to have organisations integrate, operate and compete in worldwide economy; and one of the underlying factors that explain it is “great cross-cultural awareness and acceptance of the advantages of diversity” (p. 21). Today, the priority of diversity for every company and leadership team is due to, among other factors, globalisation, immigration and technology; besides, it is not only perceived as “both an urgent challenge and an urgent opportunity”, but also, it requires that one accepts “to walk a mile in someone else’s shoes – someone with whom you have little in common – to adapt to their expectations and appreciate their strengths”, lest you get overtaken by competitors (Trilling & Fadel, 2009: 18; Dotlich et al., 2009: 10-11; Paine, 2005: 27). As for the benefits a cultural understanding would bring about, Mullins (2016: 23) opines that, in addition to accounting for the organisation’s effectiveness and accomplishment of its goals, it increases self-awareness, sensitivity to difference and diversity, helps to question one’s own assumptions and knowledge, lessens their ignorance, prejudice and hatred. Today, as Dotlich and collaborators (2009) reveal, diversity is not only a “strategic imperative”; but also, it is being considered by many as “the right thing to do for right-thinking organisations” (pp. 19-20). Put simply, change is departing from the status quo (Rothwell et al., 2016: 39) but this is not always easy to run in a practical way (Martin & Osberg, 2015: 39). Countries are becoming nowadays more and more culturally diverse; so, leading and managing need reducing ethnocentrism in order to leave room for much collaboration, flexibility, care, and sensitivity with regard to people from differing backgrounds (Kottler & Marriner, 2009: 3). Gaine & Gaylard (2010) puts it otherwise, saying that people should consider cautiously the differences that are likely to lead to injustice and inequality by combating discrimination, promoting equal opportunities for all, as they value/ac-

cept diversity/difference for its enriching feature (p.2-3). My study therefore shows that informal learning by encounters opens up to the acknowledgement and acceptance of diversity in the unity of churches.

The local church organisational culture change

The results of this study also show that, for having experienced the reality of several churches abroad, the protestant church's leaders figure out ways of implementing the learned locally, especially so far as changing the church organisational culture is concerned. To some extent, partaking in global encounters has resulted in change in local church organisational culture, namely with regard to how liturgy is dealt with, how offerings are collected, how strangers are being entertained, and hiring women at certain positions. To come up there, they share their experiences with fellow workers and local church members, organise training sessions to tell them about change, take time to share their vision with others, attempt to live/act as role-model, send in other people for exchange of experiences, and/or – for some of them – use their influence circle to help others own the vision. Despite such a range of strategies to bring about change by making awareness, many church members keep being sceptic about integrating certain aspects from abroad into *their* church organisation. A striking concept is the one of diversity and/or interculturality. For example, they question the 'ministry of women' (as ordained pastors, who therefore serve as responsible for a congregation), the way in which choir singers are dressed, or a young preacher's hairstyle. Such a kind of resistance to change is termed by the interviewed church's leaders as weight of culture or traditions. No doubt, global encounters bring some significant changes within the local church's organisational culture, although this sounds difficult to set in place.

This era is experiencing a lot of change, especially because of globalisation, to the extent that every organisation needs to adapt to change in order to survive (Int). In a way or another, reflecting on changing an organisation involves changing its culture, for culture is seen as either the key issue to be changed or something crucial to consider in order to make

change possible. Neglecting aspects of organisational culture is thus a major reason why efforts targeting organisational change usually fail to materialize as planned (Alvesson & Sveningsson; 2016: 3). This would mean that few if any organisational changes can navigate around culture. Culture refers back to people sharing something in common, whether such sharing implies traditions of doing and thinking in a particular way, systems of meanings, or assumptions that govern people in certain directions (Alvesson & Sveningsson: 2016: 41). In other words, culture is a mental phenomenon depicting what stands behind the individual's (or group of individuals) behaviour – and not the behaviour itself; it encompasses norms, values, beliefs and ways of behaving which function as key characteristics to the manner in which people combine to get things done (Burnes, 2009: 198-200). As to the question of knowing whether an organisational culture can be managed and changed, researchers diverge, their ideas moving in three directions (Alvesson & Sveningsson: 2016: 46-54): (a) under certain conditions an organisational culture can be changed by the organisation's top management, (b) changing an organisational culture is merely difficult, or (c) culture is beyond managerial control. The general belief is however that for people to be open and receptive to new ideas, values and meanings is central for a cultural change to be accomplished (p. 55). This entails that people develop greater sensitivity and responsiveness to persons from different backgrounds through direct contact with them and their cultures (Kottler & Marriner, 2009: 3). For any organisation, changing its culture focuses on the human side of change, in that it is the people that make the change be effective therein, its ultimate success being determined by their ability to absorb and assimilate new ways of operating (Voehl & Harrington, 2016: 4). Since attempting to change an organisational culture aims at improving it by altering how people (employees and others) do their work there (p. 3), setting time to learn through exchange of experiences with the behaviour role-models in their work settings accounts not only for quick mastery, absorption and assimilation of the new ways to do things/to behave, but also it quickens its implementation in new situations. In this respect, my study shows to

which extent encounters of the church's leaders are important in order to enhance change within a community.

The Protestant church's financial sustainability

This study shows that one of the key challenges that the Protestant local churches are facing is relating to finances. In order to carry out their evangelism mission, raising fund for the church congregation – and therefore for themselves – is a master concern of church's leaders. In fact, not only fundraising strategies, global church leaders' financial success and material comfort are perceived here and there as key experiences within the international church network; but also, a particular emphasis is put upon fundraising and self-reliance, as they implement the learned locally. From the church leaders' subjective learning, it is apparent that people are taught to give various offerings so to be prayed for and get blessed. Besides, unemployment and poverty of the population to which the church is catering stand out as real problems for the church growth, thus accounting for its weak financial support.

This situation poses two main concerns worth analysing. On the one hand, such a shortage of financial and other necessary resources is likely to plunge certain local church's pastors in confusion concerning their spiritual call, especially when they compare themselves with their fellow pastors who are serving the same God and Lord abroad. Interviewees present the latter servants-leaders as full of qualities, including being concerned with the youth (and other people) as they help them get a job or trained for it, providing them with a good salary if they are involved in church services, visiting believers and providing food for the needy, having the church grant loans to believers to sustain their projects proficiency, and so on. On the other hand, the church runs the risk of leading astray their members, because of a gospel that emphasises on money and prosperity.

For non-profit organisations, fundraising has always been a preoccupation, as mentioned by Bray (2010: 33), who relates it first to interacting with people outside the organisation, that is donors, foundations funders,

board members or others. He assumes that many people are full of altruism, which pushes them to give to charity organisations accordingly (p. 97). Klein (2016: 3) shares the same idea, by saying that, despite the fact that some people are generous and some others are not, there is need of focusing one's fundraising effort on the people. For him, not only givers give, but also many people give when they are asked to do so (p. 10-13). Concerning money in the church, researchers are diverging in viewpoints. According to Wilhelmsson (n.d.: 34), because of greed and love of money, false prophets in the church deceive themselves by thinking that a church leader's luxurious living is synonymous to God's blessing in their life and ministry, and that wealth symbolises God's approval and their faith as leaders. Rather, it is not true that the more faith one has, the more money he/she has; asking people to give to the church in order to be blessed is a manipulative strategy to extract their hard-earned money from their pockets. So, from his perspective, to automatically tie evangelism to giving alms is unbiblical (p. 147-148). Lindsay (2001: 69), siding with him, qualifies such a teaching that states that the size of one's purse symbolises one's spiritual status as very dangerous. In other words, churches are accused of grabbing money, to the extent that some faithful church's leaders feel unspiritual when they talk about it (Townes, n.d.: 66). Others sustain that God wants his people to be rich and prosper – therefore, they are not deceived by greed. To the contrary they know God's purpose for prosperity in that He (God) wants to bless His people so, in turn, they can be a blessing to others – the 'living to give' – including the church (Adelaja, 2016: 33; Dollar, 1999: 63; Copeland, n.d.: 5 & 24; Harrisson, n.d.: 5). That is why, Copeland ascertains that, for those who have money, they are managing God's mutual funds – theirs and His; and, therefore, their money is not all God's, and it is not all theirs, either (p. 5). To the question why some people keep poor, they diverge as well, making its underlying reason spiritual. For example, Copeland (n.d.: 7) opines that it is due to a wrong belief that there is something inherently devilish about money – the devil lying about poverty as something noble, or something which makes one become more pious. Harrisson (n.d.: 5) on his behalf, links poverty to ignorance, which binds them financially in *lack* and *debts*

(therefore, they are not set free), for not knowing the truth or not acting in accordance with the truth they know. As to how committed believers attain prosperity, most of its proponents argue for a profession of faith – uttering words of prosperity from their mouths (Dollar, 1999: 59) or giving to the church by faith (a practice known as ‘seed-faith’/planting the ‘seed of faith’ by some) to obtain God’s blessings, namely health, wealth – an attitude qualified as similar to the selling of indulgences in the Middle Age (Wilhelmsson, n.d.: 147). As for Towns (n.d.: 20), giving money to the cause of Christ results from the anointed preaching of the gospel, as people find their spiritual gifts, respond to Christian service and feel the presence of God. Teaching that people prosper only when they give (to God, the church or others) is erroneous; to the contrary, true prosperity results from the production of goods and services, anything else being considered as an exploitation of the weak for personal gain (2016: 29-32). As Adelaja (2016) continues, asking church members to bring money to church or pastor, if they are not involved in the process of production, is deceptive on the church leader’s side. Equally important, teaching that all that accounts for a church member’s financial prosperity is to be active in the church services or faithful in giving different kinds of offerings is half-truth, the only person who is likely to become wealthy being the one on the receiving end (p. 30-33). Towns (n.d.: 66), opposing such a view point, opines that, for church leaders, mentioning stewardship is rather obeying God – who says so in the scriptures; besides, having church members give money characterises growing and healthy churches, as do their regular attendance and involvement in its programmes. Church members, like their church’s leaders – who share full membership with them – share among other responsibilities to participate in the church’s finances; but they need getting productive in order to keep giving in a sustainable way. The present study provides a specific case for the accomplishment of this duty for all – members and leaders.

Summary

In a nutshell, the findings for this study do not only present the Protestant church’s leaders as inward-transformed people by the learning gained

from global settings, but also as change agents working for the common good. By outlining the cultural diversity and the related church organisational and cultural change challenges, this study contributes by making awareness for better preparation with regard to leading church organisations within an interconnected world. There is need that both leaders and church members be involved in productive activities in order to fully participate in church finances and projects, for its sustainability and much more visible effects.

5.2.3 Informal learning for global church leadership

The discourse on informal learning within global encounters indicates that it has a transformative power for individuals, organisations and societies (Avramovska et al., 2017: 9; Onderi et al., 2014: 40; Fry et al., 2009: 9-10; Cabezudo et al., 2008: 13; Schugurensky, 2000:6). For Protestant church's leaders, travelling for exchange of experiences is a full learning occasion, allowing for getting aware of what is happening (Orridge, 2009: 45) as they seek for adaptation to the ever-changing world in which the church is operating today (Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006: 38). Globalisation, competition, interculturality, complexity, diversity, and inclusion are some of the keywords that shape today's interconnected world, to the extent that every organisation has to face these challenges – or seize them as opportunities, for its survival therein (Woodbridge & James, 2013: 835; Dotlich et al., 2009: 10-11). Although learning is not their primary objective in engaging in global encounters; nonetheless, they come from them with insights and skills worth applying for their own development, as well as the one of their church organisations and society.

From science, it is noted that informal learning is lifelong and life-wide, incidental and ubiquitous, and most of the time it goes unrecognised by society (English & Mayo, 2021: 15; Ministry of Education, 2007: 14; Kaija, 2005: 18; Barros, 2012: 124). As people learn from others globally, they question the routine with which they operate locally, change their mindset, get new perspectives for themselves and their organisations (Fry et al., 2009: 10; Schugurensky, 2000: 6). In order to come up

there, both their behaviours and emotions need to be involved, so to engage fully in learning acquisition (Cohen et al., 2010: 181; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2004: 31). This implies a need for acceptance, encouragement, love, interest, mutual respect, consideration, support, connection and collaboration with a more knowledgeable person (who models behaviours) and peer learners (Alt & Reichel, 2018: 95; Brookfield, 2017: 3; Fay & Fay, 2016: 21; Jarvis, 2008: 162; Marzano, 2003: 53). Threats, disruptions and distractions need to leave room for feelings of safety, well-being and belongingness for great learning achievement (Cangelosi, 2014: 3; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2004: 17). As they apply the learned material, they set off for change, in a gradual way.

Therefore, in presenting its life or society-changing capacity from getting involved in global encounters and the prerequisites for better learning outcomes, this empirical study has contributed to the existing discourse by introducing therein international travels and exchange visits as a key experience for global learning and change, meanwhile focusing on the importance of an environment conducive to learning.

With regard to internal learning, one comes across a range of informal learning strategies and approaches (Stark, 2013: 171; Halliday-Wynes & Beddie, 2009: 2). Reflecting and thinking critically about what is being learned are most of the time associated with adult learners, who rather exhibit some maturity and who learn more independently and purposefully (Denys, 2013: 3; Fry et al., 2009: 14; Bin Abdullah, 2008: 106; Livingstone, 2001: 2). However, in addition to learning from formal settings and non-formal ones, everyone learns informally – the three types making a continuum, and no clear-cut among them being evidenced (Krieter et al. 2020: 191; Cuinen et al. 2015: 3; Eraut, 2004: 250). Within a globalized and knowledge-based world much characterized by complexity, change, uncertainty, chaos, diversity, and sometimes by confusion (Erçetin, 2016: 507), a certain dose of reflection is worthwhile in order to fully take advantage of informal learning (Dennerlein et al., 2020: 388; Dotlich et al., 2009: 193). Education and learning need to be useful for its recipients;

having learners discuss, analyse, examine, question, debate, think and reflect about the material being learned helps them come out with adequate solutions to society's problems (Beard and Wilson, 2013: 28-30; Crawford et al., 2005:1). Adult informal learning proves purposeful, being oriented towards responding to a particular issue for self or the society to which one belongs (Bellamy & Oppenheim, 2009: 127). This study shows that engaging in challenging learning experiences coupled with reflection results in useful and full learning (Herod, 2012: 5-10; Crawford et al., 2005: 1). As shown in this study, learning experiences should also align with the individual purpose; then only can one grasp what he/she can apply in local real situations, or towards further learning, as he/she continues learning in an independent way (Gessler & Hinrichs, 2015: 51). So, as a further contribution, this study shows that being reflexive and applying one's critical thinking stands out as key strategy or approach for quality learning.

Coming to the era in which church leadership is being exercised today, and therefore where informal learning is occurring, it is characterized most importantly by globalisation. The world is so interconnected that people's local identities mingle with global ones (Wahl & Mason-Innes, 2020: 24-25; Paine, 2005: 23; Rieder, n.d: 58 & 197), thus posing a lot of leadership/management challenges to local churches, namely those pertaining to diversity, interculturality and inclusion (Woodbridge & James, 2013: 835; Dotlich et al., 2009: 10). A lot of changes are subsequent to globalisation, which is rather considered as both a challenge to face and an opportunity to seize; so, there is urgent necessity of adaptation, in order to counteract the increasing competition linked to it (Dotlich et al., 2009: 11; Cook & Macaulay, n.d.: 1 & 22). This implies a change in mindset and perspectives with regard to how people from differing backgrounds join in to form the church, and participate therein as full members (Madlin, 2019: 57; Alvesson & Sveningsson; 2016:3; Kottler & Mariner, 2009: 228-229; Dollar, 1999: 59). Participating in global encounters impacts the local church organisational culture, which needs being changed and adapted accordingly to meet the expectations of a diverse audience (Alvesson & Sveningsson; 2016: 3). Based on the experiences of the travelling church leaders, and how such global issues have been dealt with

at local level, this study has contributed to science by showing that openness and receptiveness to diversity is a key attitude for church leadership and management today. In order to carry out its evangelism mission, any church needs to evidence its universal character, not only by enabling people's global learning through encounters, but also by seeking global encounters in order to experience the universality and inclusivity of the church (Lase, 2022: 150; Nganza, 2022: 187). Leadership implies influencing, motivating and enabling others to act and contribute to the success of the organisation or society to which they belong (Wahl & Mason-Innes, 2020: 13-14; Guenzi et Ruta, 2013: 39; Maxwell, 2013: 26). For survival sake within a world of much change and operational complexity, organisations need having strong leaders and managers (Cook & Macaulay, n.d.: 2) – especially with regard to moving beyond differences and learning from one another (Butarbutar, 2022: 50; Towns, n.d.: 38). This accounts both for adaptation and success within a globalised world (Peterson, 2022: 172). Through encounters and dialogues, people get not only intercultural learning; but also, they see, get immersed in the milieu of the other, analyse and work against what divides humanity to construct sustainable relationships (Sturgill, 2020: 11). As a characteristic of a globalised world, diversity is inevitable (Butarbutar, 2022: 44). It is therefore the duty of the church to prepare and enable its members namely with regard to how to learn with and from others – locally and globally – for mutual understanding, peace and reconciliation (Lase, 2022: 144; Mujiyono, 2022: 173; Slimbach, 2010: 19). Like any other person, church members often act on the basis of their beliefs; and all belong to a broader community, which needs flourishing, as do individuals (Mooney, 2017: 45). For informal global learning sake, the leader's role becomes thus determining, especially with regard to initiating and creating spaces for mutual encounters (Mujiyono, 2022: 174). This includes not only facilitating participation in learning acquisition for others and equipping them with the necessary predeparture information; but also, his active participation in the formed network, for church's universality sake. As the leader keeps learning informally, so he/she increases his/her influence over others. Besides, as

he/she uses his/her connecting capacities, his/her relationships with others get more and more stronger, and his/her sense of community improves (Maxwell, 2010: 16). In line with this global view, and by exhibiting the travelling Protestant church leaders' attitude towards the universality of the church, and ipso facto their belonging to a broader community, this study has contributed to science by presenting the church as both an informal learning facilitator and an informal learner-initiator. As change agents and influential persons within their communities, church's leaders do not only encourage their church' members and the whole society for informal global learning; but also, they set the model with regard to learning from global encounters.

Summary

In summary, departing from the utterances of the participants (the Protestant church's leaders from the Democratic Republic of Congo), this study contributes not only by introducing international travels and exchange visits into the scientific discourse as key experiences for global learning and change, but also by emphasizing on challenging experiences coupled with much reflexivity and critical thinking for quality (informal) learning. The environment in which learning takes place is worth of it to yield the expected changes. Moving in the direction of the leaders and organisations' managers, in addition to enabling informal learning for all meanwhile being a learning role-model, this study invokes openness and receptivity to new ideas and diversity as key attitudes in exerting leadership and/or management in the current era.

6 Implications of the study

In this section, the implications both for further research in the light of the thematic dimensions discussed herewith (chap. 6.1) and for the practice (chap. 6.2), together with the limitations and difficulties encountered in carrying out this study (chap. 6.3), are presented.

6.1 Implications for further research

This section deals with some possible themes for further research in the light of informal/experiential/global learning, especially with regard to education, and the church leadership in the era of globalisation.

Research on informal learning in the Democratic Republic of Congo

It is well known from science that human beings learn informally. Unfortunately, the aspect of informal learning is not fully researched globally, nor is it given any attention. As for the Democratic Republic of Congo, not any research has been undertaken in that direction, so far. However, it is well known from the existing literature that informal learning takes place in various settings, including homes, museums, workplaces, websites, social medias, in addition to the formal and non-formal classroom setting (Findsen & Formosa, 2012: 5; Edwards et al., 2006: 7; McGivney, 2006: 11). Therefore, undertaking a qualitative research about the informal learning in various sectors is of great importance in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Such an endeavour would also move in the direction of understanding the approaches used as they foster informal learning, to which extent such approaches help build both their local and global identities, and what the returns can be for the schools, organisations, local and global societies, and the students themselves. Besides, studying informal learning would be important to understand the quality of education provided to citizens, since this needs to go hand in hand with social justice – as poor people do not have enough possibilities for global learning.

Research on the conditions for better informal learning

Learning is not only a fundamental aspect of human life but also the driving force for human growth and development (Jarvis, 2008: 161). This study resulted in the typology of learning for Protestant church's leaders in connection with getting involved in global encounters. Three types, namely the local society-oriented learning, the organisational change-oriented learning and the world society-oriented learning, are considered as having better outcomes, as they contribute to learning and the development of society. The purpose for engaging in learning centres upon bringing some change within the broader society, both local and global, as church leaders display much more social awareness and social responsibility (Alt & Reichel, 2018: 6). The present study is, however, not explicit about the conditions that accounted for such a development, although this might presumably be related to the repetition of the experiences, the prior knowledge that the travelling church leaders had, the content relevance for the exposure, and the idea behind the learning transfer (Gitari, 2012: 36-37). An alternative explanation would relate this to certain characteristics of the hosting churches – a welcoming conducive learning climate – or of the sending ones – for example investing time to prepare people and give the necessary support, even by accompanying the travelling person in order to enhance their reflexivity, and by this their learning (Krogull, 2017: 22; Slimbach, 2010: 19; Scheunpflug, 1997: 115). Nonetheless, the participants' utterances do not show this clearly. Therefore, conducting a qualitative research with regards to the enabling conditions for better informal/experiential/global learning and society development sounds opportune and motivated.

Research on diversity in church organisations

Because of globalisation, the world is interconnected; and one of the many challenges the church is likely to face is linked to diversity, interculturality and inclusion. Diversity is said to be a strategic imperative and therefore it should be accepted in order to give room to the promotion of lasting justice and equality. According to Dotlich et al. (2009: 19-20), diversity has

different aspects; these include gender, religion, race and ethnicity, age, disability, and social class. Globally, there is great need of understanding other cultures and stakeholders, of being empathetic and full of understanding for the community, of doing things differently (for instance, by reducing ethnocentrism, treating people fairly, and so on) in order to build churches and societies which are more and more inclusive, diverse, and transcultural. As for the church, its message addresses all, without any distinction of culture, race, gender, or social background. As they exchange experiences within the Global North or Global South, church leaders from the Democratic Republic of Congo come across diversity-related realities. Basing on the importance attached to it for the accomplishment of organisations' objectives today, it will be interesting to understand how church's leaders of the Democratic Republic of Congo deal with this issue of diversity, as it is presented from a global perspective. Therefore, conducting a qualitative study in this regard is recommended.

Quantitative research on learning types distribution

The study results show that, so far as partaking in global encounters, there is way of classifying the informal/experiential/global learning of the Protestant church leaders of the Democratic Republic of Congo into five types: the personal well-being-oriented learning, the own ministry oriented-learning, the local society-oriented learning, the organisational change-oriented learning, and the world society-oriented learning. Being a qualitative empirical study, it focused on the experiences of the travelling church's leaders for a deeper understanding of their learning without seeking to know the representativity for each ideal type. Departing from the self-reported utterances of the participants, it has however laid a grass-root information on the subject under study. Rich details on the phenomenon have been provided; but, still no inference of the results to the whole population is possible. Now that there is detailed information, undertaking a quantitative study aiming at the distribution of the five types stated above is more than recommended. Such a study would reveal which type is the most represented, which one is less or average within the provided classification.

Research on churches' transnational partnerships and networks

As the world is becoming more and more interconnected, the need of working together for the common good is increasing, too. Connecting is now recognised as vital for any person (or organisation) who wants to achieve success (Maxwell, 2010: 14-24). No church is an island; its mission is unique and universal; so, partnering and networking both within and beyond the national boundaries sounds more than compulsory. Partnerships and networks function basing on among other principles compatible theology, mutual trust, shared vision, equal responsibilities, and working together – planning, managing, learning and solving problems together. Meanwhile, tremendous differences are observed all over the globe, namely with regard to wealthy and poor nations, and therefore creating ineluctably powerful and weak churches. So far as Sub-Saharan Africa is concerned, and particularly the Democratic Republic of Congo, seeking to understand, through a qualitative empirical study, how churches' transnational and transcultural partnerships and networks function is very important. This would help get informed about their challenges and further perspectives, together with how members feel both distant and close to one another, as they keep learning together.

6.2 Recommendations for practice

Learning needs being applied in new contexts to produce its effects. Therefore, applying the results of this study in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo sounds necessary. This section formulates some recommendations for practice. These move in the direction of the recognition of the informally learned material and the timing/programming for informal learning by policy-makers (chap. 6.2.1), the need for further exchange visits by the church (chap. 6.2.2), and the use of reflection strategy by teachers (chap. 6.2.3).

Recommendations to Protestant church leaders

The results of this study show that, for a church's leader, to be out of the church for a while – whether for personal leave, international meeting or project visits – brings about a lot of advantages. This allows for a clear understanding of what goes on around him/her in the world; he/she comes back from global encounters with new perspectives for his/her household, ministry, society and church organisation. When applied locally, the acquired informal/experiential/global learning, which is mostly made of improvement ideas, empowers the church in different aspects for its multiform growth and advancement. Therefore, it is important that church's leaders should encourage such mobility for pastors and their collaborators, either by providing them with financial support or having the relating fees in their local church yearly financial planning, on the one hand. On the other hand, there is need of having an international strategy by using partnership contacts, installing mentors, enhancing reflexivity through systematic debriefing, and spreading the learning by using the people who had been travelling in accordance with their learning experiences. They are serving in churches during the era of knowledge economy; so, should they foresee ways of making step changes in how they present the gospel to church members, to adapt to a changing world. As adult people, their knowledge needs constant updates through life-long/life-wide learning in general, the informal/experiential/global learning in particular. Putting at their disposal what is necessary to boost their acquisition of knowledge in a continuous yet fruitful way sounds compulsory. The necessary resources include inter alia books in the language they speak, magazines, journals, and websites.

Furthermore, this study shows that Protestant churches are facing financial challenges. Until leaders and their collaborators engage in goods and service production, presumably, their wages from the church will keep insufficient, and consequently they will keep being unable to afford such trips on their own, in addition to life itself. The study reveals that church members are giving money to the church as a response to the many fundraising strategies put in place; but the givers being themselves

confronted to poverty, and many other challenges of a global economy, it is apparent that raising funds is not yet sustainable. This entails that the money at their disposal be managed efficiently for accountability sake, on the one hand; and that they keep reflecting self-financing projects for themselves and the church, in addition to empowering their fellows financially, on the other. This would help combat poverty, avoid being dependent, and fulfil their role in the church international networks/partnerships to which they belong.

Additionally, basing on the discourse, the study at hand presents diversity as a strategic imperative for this century – another challenge that local churches are facing, or if put otherwise, another opportunity they have to seize. As change agents, this entails that they get concerned with building inclusive church communities where diversity is accepted and implemented in all its aspects, whenever possible. Also, in order to keep building a global citizenship for all church's leaders on the one hand, and with regard to the results displayed herewith on the other, the study would encourage them to keep on organising exchange programmes with other church organisations globally in different aspects of church life. To ensure that the delegated people understand fully the travelling mission, and to facilitate the targeted informal/experiential/global learning for the common good, it is important that the sending church accompanies them in differing ways – for instance by providing prior preparation, information and psycho-social support, and reflecting with them namely about goals and expectations, before engaging in global encounters (Slimbach, 2010: 22). As full members, lay persons play an important role within the churches, which belong to them in the same way as it is for pastors and other leading staff members. Most of the time, speaking about the church, they refer to it as *their* church. In this respect, church's leaders should see ways of involving them, as well, namely by having them willingly contribute financially, or getting those who have already travelled globally on their own share their experiences with those who are not yet experienced – or the leaders themselves, for example.

The study results also show that the travelling church leaders from the Democratic Republic of Congo witnessed the prosperity for their fellow church's leaders who serve abroad. Besides, fundraising strategies for a church organisation are part of the much larger learning stuff they gained from global encounters. As they come back for implementation within their local churches, they unfortunately face their own poverty and the one of their churches' members. From their experiences, it is apparent that churches function with a great deal of money mostly collected from local churches' members on the one hand; on the other hand, for having lived abroad or experienced what goes on in other churches globally, church leaders are likely to become more and more demanding. Fundraising strategies within local churches – namely offerings collection – would be therefore getting more and more numerous, in the hope that they will yield enough money from givers, so to attain an improved life standard for themselves, and for the church that they are serving. Although research sustains that many a donor are from middle or lower-income class (Bray, 2010: 97-99) and that givers always give (Klein, 201: 9-12), a critical context analysis shows that such a fundraising is challenging. When applied to the Democratic Republic of Congo, it runs not only the risk of becoming weary to the givers – who are poor, for most of them – in the long-term; but also, such a financial situation proves weak, unsteady and uncertain so far as carrying out a sustainable evangelical mission is concerned. The viewpoint revealed herewith is that the travelling church's leaders saw the wealth of churches abroad; but they did not fully understand the mechanisms behind it, nor what it takes to make a church run efficiently at the financial level. Financial resources being an asset for an evangelism mission – which needs growing and spreading – and poverty being an inherent and contextual challenge, this study recommends deeper conceptual exchanges on church finances and church social justice with other church globally. Such exchanges would mostly target church finance departments, therefore allowing all to get a broader understanding of financial matters in their churches.

Recommendations to Congolese education stakeholders

This study shows that informal/experiential learning happens in diverse settings. Such venues are amongst others the households, playgrounds, museums, church parishes, formal and non-formal classrooms – be they from pre-primary, primary, secondary or university levels, and adult education. It also shows that most of the knowledge people possess is learned in informal environments. Therefore, it is clear that school is just one of the many settings and contexts available to students to learn. In this global era, it sounds opportune to reconsider the learning for students basing on the informal learning opportunities which are now numerous and available to them (Carr & Cameron-Rogers, 2016: 10; Lemke, 2010: 259-260). No doubt, there is not a clear-cut among the types of learning, all of them making a continuum; so, extending the formal or non-formal learning to other settings and vice-versa seems to be a responsibility of all who are involved in educating the youth. This would entail that they get familiar with the informal learning in which their students and children are engaged beyond school so that they can link or integrate it with their learning experiences. In fulfilling their role-model responsibility towards learners, all education providers should become learners themselves, by using collaborative approaches and working within professional learning communities. They should work hand in hand with other education partners from other educational institutions, and/or people from other domains, even from other parts of the globe. Such a network is likely to provide sufficient out-of-school learning opportunities both for themselves, and their students.

In addition, the study at hand shows that reflection is a key strategy for any learning experience, most importantly for the informal one which is rather self-directed, unstructured, ubiquitous and unconscious – to name some of its features. While providing education, Congolese teaching practitioners should therefore create moments to trigger or activate the individual and choral reflection and critical thinking skills of their students. Students need to discuss about what they learn, examine it fully, work in teams, and the like – all being strategies that make them connect

and cooperate – in an active and participatory approach. This would help them learn how to learn in an independent way from further situations on the one hand. On the other hand, this would help develop the skills and competencies required for the 21st century – namely critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, innovation, problem-solving, and imagination – and become progressively self-reliant, self-directed and lifelong learners.

Recommendation to the government of the DR-Congo

The results of this study show that the Protestant church's leaders are confronted with a lot of challenges, one of which being insecure environments. Such environments counteract mobility, thus causing obstacles to the adequate acquisition of informal learning. The improvement ideas and inspirational initiatives gotten from abroad by the travelling church's leaders, and any other activity that they undertake are failing because of insecurity, as they report. As a consequence, people keep being poor despite their good will and efforts of getting involved in productive activities locally. Restoring security and peace all over the national territory should be given priority, so that people live peacefully therein, and undertake their activities in conducive environments. Then only can poverty be alleviated, and real development occur within the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Recommendations to policy-makers

This study has highlighted the importance of informally-acquired knowledge within the experiences from which human beings learn. It provides a vivid proof about the skills and practical knowledge that people develop from being just in contact with others, or other places beyond the classroom setting, whether locally or globally (Stiglitz & Greenwald, 2014: 69). In fact, people are involved in everyday experiences in their homes, workplaces, playgrounds, churches, libraries, museums, schools, during leisure time, and within the large community. Out-of-school activities are

very important with regard to building a variety of skills – namely interpersonal and intercultural skills – both for adults and in-school students. Their network enlarges, and their understanding of the world in which they live broadens, to the extent that little by little they feel as global citizens.

Therefore, the education policy-makers of the Democratic Republic of Congo should create possibilities for informal learning in schools and outside schools for young people and adults. This could be an incentive to devote time slots to out-of-school activities when they reflect upon course curricula, so that learning is extended beyond school walls. Choirs, sport activities, reading books, partaking in church services, and community centres are such learning opportunities for adults, and therefore worth encouraging. They should put in place mechanisms that allow teachers – who constitute a key aspect in schools – to assess informally-acquired knowledge, as for the formal and non-formal ones. Besides, they should see ways of promoting informal learning within other learning venues as stated above, by providing the needed support. Most of the time, informal learning goes invisible, and unrecognised. However, the developed skills therein are not only being used to accomplish certain duties within the community; but also, the prior learning/knowledge of students accounts for their quick integration in school. Policy-makers should therefore commit to recognising the students' prior learning, and/or their informal learning, as well as the competencies developed by adult people far from school. This would help employers to act accordingly, as they hire people to work and reflect their wages.

6.3 Limitations of the study and difficulties encountered

I personally acknowledge that this study was conducted under difficult political circumstances and great insecurity by war; its power is thus limited. Thence, there is great need for compensation through further research. The increasing and volatile security situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo in general, its eastern part in particular, disturbed this study a lot in its fundamental phase. In fact, the study was designed to be investigated with a sample population taken from three provinces in the

country's eastern part, that is South Kivu, North Kivu and Ituri provinces. Due to challenges that result from the ongoing massacre of the local population in Beni, Butembo and Ituri areas, and the unceasing wars and raids by armed groups almost everywhere in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the researcher was compelled to take a sample from North Kivu province only. The sample was therefore not fully purposeful. When possible, further research should be conducted in the remaining part, or even on the whole country.

Besides, the diversity within the sample population with regard to educational qualification posed a challenge. The interview guide, which was intended to be administered in French at the beginning, was rather implemented in French and Kiswahili, thus making the translation work more difficult than planned. This made the researcher spend a lot of time on preliminary phases, before getting fully to the core of the matter. As for the targeted church leaders, they referred to a biblical jargon not well understood by the researcher, who took time to adapt. In such conditions, a 'blessing' may be used instead of 'what I learned', 'what I understood from the experience', 'what I noticed', or simply a 'benefit', for instance. Reading the transcripts several times while listening to audiotapes helped the researcher get the point anyhow, although it was time-consuming.

The newness of the topic in the context of the study posed the challenge of access to relevant literature. The subject is under-researched globally, and when it comes to Sub-Saharan countries in general, the Democratic Republic of Congo in particular, the situation with regard to literature drastically worsens. Further investigations need to be undertaken to help overcome all these challenges.

7 Conclusion

To finish, this study, which focuses on travelling abroad and leaving for exchange visits within the Protestant churches' international network, attests the importance of acquiring knowledge beyond the classroom setting. Through the subjective utterances of the participants, the initially-thought-of as *invisible* informal/experiential/global learning is made *visible* as its effects are felt in the life of its recipients, the church and the society. They show that global encounters are learning occasions from which attentive and reflective people come with a lot of insightful knowledge. The knowledge and skills they gain are primarily in connection with the motives – bringing some improvement or change – behind engaging in such encounters for their own life and the one of the communities and churches that they are serving. Being change agents, church's leaders are willing not only to act as role-models; but also, they are ready to empower their fellow workers as well as church and community members, as they make awareness to embrace change at different levels. Therefore, no-one should bypass informal global learning, especially with regard to the multidimensional and positive changes the Protestant churches are longing for to happen in this globalised era. These changes need starting within the people themselves, as key actors. So, this study concludes with a quote from the former United States of America President Barack Obama (Trilling & Fadel, 2009: 84), who calls on everyone to contribute to bringing about change for self and the community:

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change we seek” (Barack Obama).

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Guide | English version

Topic: Learning of Protestant church's leaders from global encounters: a qualitative empirical study from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

Themes to be covered:

- Protestant churches leaders' informal learning in the churches' international network (*knowledge / adopted and/or adapted*)
- Benefits of such partnerships and global learning
- Changes experienced in churches / work ever since
- Challenges in implementing improvement ideas

Interviews will be conducted in Kiswahili (or French for some depending on the level of education of the respondent), then transcribed in English.

Interview guide

Thank you for having accepted to join me today for a work time slot. I am very much interested in your experiences with regard to travelling abroad. Our talk will be recorded as I have to transcribe it entirely afterwards as a whole. All information provided will be treated confidentially. I will neither mention your name, nor make any reference to you. I am really eager to know a lot about your experiences as a church (choir, or else) leader in the international learning network.

Main re-search ques-tion	Sub-questions	Interview questions
How has the DR-Congo Protestant church leaders' informal learning been shaped in the (church) International network?	(a) What have Protestant churches' leaders been learning in the International network through trips?	1. You are travelling for your church. I am sure this is a very special experience – tell me from your experiences! 2. You are travelling for your church, tell me what these travels mean for your church and for you in the church 3. I am really interested in your (frequent/ recent) travel(s) abroad. What was (were) the occasion (s) and how (was) were (it) they? Please tell me? 4. You as a church leader, what relationship is there between your trips and your church? Please tell me. 5. Aha, tell me what you have been learning from other people (church leaders, believers, or other people) there.
	(b) What have been the benefits of such trips for you personally and your organisation?	6. How important have you found these occasions, both for you and your organisation? Tell me, please, about the benefits of such travels!
	(c) What changes have they been experiencing in their lives since they got in touch with other churches and the believers therein?	7. You as a pastor (or else), if you look back, how was your organisation (church, choir, etc.) before you get in touch with that other church (choir, etc.)? And how is it for the moment? Tell me? 8. Up to now, what have you been doing with the new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values you learned from there, tell me! 9. From your perspective, has anything changed in your organisation ever since, tell me!

	(d) What challenges church leaders are facing in their implementation of their new knowledge?	10. With such an adventure, does everything move smoothly or do you experience some difficulties; please, tell me about a situation / situation you really found challenging when implementing change/practising what you saw and learned. 11. What would you suggest to overcome such challenges in the future?
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Follow up questions and probes (some examples):

1. What do you mean when you say...?
2. Can you please give an example of ...?
3. You have just spoken / mentioned _ _ _ _ , what do you mean exactly?
4. Somewhere you mentioned..., can you please expand it further?
5. When did you last visit another church abroad? / How long have you been partnering with it?
6. Is it the only place you have visited? Which other one have you visited, and could you please tell your experience with it?
7. *Etc.*

Conclusion:

Is there anything else you think you can tell me so as I fully comprehend your experiences with travelling abroad? If any, please tell me.

Thank you for your collaboration and participation!

Background questionnaire for potential interviewees

Items worth considering	Options / Responses
Gender	Male ☐ Female ☐
Marital status	Widow(er) ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐
Age	
Level of studies	Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary ☐
Responsibility (Position) in church:	
Church denomination you	

Appendix 2 : Interview Guide | French version

Sujet : L'apprentissage des dirigeants des églises protestantes de la RD-Congo issu des rencontres globales : Une étude qualitative empirique à l'Est de la République Démocratique du Congo

Thèmes à couvrir lors de l'interview :

- L'apprentissage informel des dirigeants des églises protestantes dans le réseau mondial / international des églises (connaissances, adoptée et/ou adaptée)
- Les bienfaits du partenariat et de l'apprentissage global
- Les changements expérimentés dans l'Eglise / travail depuis lors
- Les défis rencontrés dans la mise en œuvre des idées d'amélioration

Les interviews seront menées en Kiswahili (ou en français, selon le niveau d'instruction du répondant), puis traduites en anglais.

Guide de l'interview

Merci beaucoup d'avoir accepté de vous joindre à nous aujourd'hui pour quelques moments de travail. En réalité, je suis très intéressé par vos expériences par rapport à vos voyages hors du pays. Notre entretien sera enregistré. En fait, je devrais le retranscrire in extenso. Toutes les informations que vous livrez seront gardées avec confidentialité. Je ne ferai donc pas mention de votre nom, je ne me référerai à vous non plus lors du traitement de l'information. J'attends de connaître davantage sur vos expériences comme (choriste, dirigeant ou autre) dans votre église, dans ce réseau international d'apprentissage.

Question principale de recherche	Sous-questions	Questions d'interview
Comment l'apprentissage des dirigeants des églises protestantes de la RD-Congo a-t-elle pris forme ?	a) Qu'est-ce que les dirigeants des Eglises protestantes sont en train d'apprendre dans le réseau international à travers les voyages ?	1. Vous faites des voyages pour le compte de votre Eglise. Sûrement, c'est une expérience assez spéciale pour vous ! Racontez-moi votre expérience s'il vous plaît ! 2. Vous voyagez pour le compte de votre Eglise ; dites-moi, que signifient ces voyages pour vous personnellement, et vous dans votre église ? 3. Je suis très intéressé par vos voyages (fréquents/derniers) à l'étranger. Quels en étaient les occasions et comment étaient-ils ? Racontez-moi un peu ! 4. Vous en tant que dirigeant d'une Eglise, quelle relation y'a-t-il entre vos voyages et votre église ? Racontez-moi s'il vous plaît ! 5. Ahah ! Racontez-moi ce que vous êtes en train d'apprendre des autres (dirigeants d'églises, fidèles chrétiens, ou autres peuples) là-bas.
	b) Quels ont été les bénéfices (avantages) de tels voyages pour vous personnellement, et votre organisation ?	6. A quoi ces occasions de voyager sont-elles importantes pour vous, et votre organisation ? Racontez-moi, s'il vous plaît, les avantages (bénéfices) de ces voyages !
	c) Quels sont les changements que	7. Vous en tant que Pasteur (ou autre), si vous jetez un regard der-

	vos sujets (choristes, fidèles chrétiens, etc.) expérimentent dans leur vie depuis qu'ils sont en contact avec d'autres églises, et leurs membres ?	rière, comment était votre organisation (ou chorale, église, etc.) avant que vous soyez en contact avec cette autre église (chorale, etc.) Et comment est-elle pour le moment ? Racontez-le-moi. 8. Jusqu'à présent, qu'est-ce que vous avez fait de ces nouvelles connaissances, habilités, compétences, attitudes et valeurs apprises à partir des autres ? Dites-moi ! 9. Selon vous, quelque chose a-t-il change dans votre organisation (église) depuis lors ? Racontez-moi !
	d) Quels sont les défis que vous comme dirigeant rencontrez dans la mise en œuvre de ces nouvelles connaissances ?	10. En pareille situation, les choses marchent-elles aisément ou faites-vous face certaines difficultés ? S'il vous plaît, racontez-moi une situation ou des situations que vous avez trouvées vraiment défiantes lorsque vous vouliez mettre en œuvre (pratiquer) ce que vous aviez vu et appris ! 11. Quelles sont vos suggestions pour vaincre de telles difficultés à l'avenir ?

Des questions de suivi et d'incitation (Quelques exemples) :

1. Que voulez-vous signifier quand vous dites... ?
2. S'il vous plaît, pouvez-vous donner un exemple de ... ?
3. Vous venez de dire/mentionner _ _ _ _ , que voulez-vous signifier exactement ?
4. Vous avez mentionné quelque part que., pouvez-vous revenir sur ce point et raconter un peu plus ?
5. Quand avez-vous visité la dernière Eglise à l'étranger ? / Vous êtes en partenariat avec elle depuis combien de temps ?

6. Est-ce la seule place (Eglise) que vous avez visitée ? sinon, quelle autre avez-vous visitée, et pouvez-vous me raconter votre expérience avec elle aussi ?
7. Etc.

Conclusion:

Y'a-t-il autre chose que vous pensez me racontez pour que je comprenne totalement votre expérience par rapport à vos voyages à l'étranger ? S'il y en a, racontez-moi s'il vous plaît !

Merci pour votre collaboration et participation !

Questions sur le background du répondant

Information à considérer	Options / Réponses
Genre	Homme ☐ Femme ☐
Etat civil Veuf (ve) ☐	Célibataire ☐ Marié ☐
Age	
Niveau d'études Primaire Secondaire ☐	universitaire ☐
Responsabilité (position) dans l'église:	
Communauté d'appartenance:	
Lieu de l'église partenaire Rwanda ☐	Tanzania ☐ Kenya ☐
Allemagne ☐ France ☐ Suisse ☐	Angleterre ☐
Canada ☐ Etats-Unis d'Amérique ☐	Autre _____
Nombre des voyages à l'étranger 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 et plus ☐	
Nom(s) de Sponsor(s) de voyages :	

Appendix 3 : Interview Guide | Swahili version

Mada Kujifunza kwa viongozi wa kanisa la Kiprotestanti kutoka kwa mikutano ya kimataifa : utafiti wa kisayansi kutoka mashariki mwa Jamhuri ya Kidemokrasia ya Kongo
Mambo makubwa-makubwa ya kuzungumzia :

- Kanisa la Kiprotestanti viongozi wa mafunzo yasiyo rasmi katika mtandao wa kimataifa wa makanisa (maarifa/kuchukuliwa na/au kuchukuliwa)
- Faida ya ushirikiano kama vile na elimu ya kimataifa
- Mabadiliko ya uzoefu katika makanisa/kazi tangu
- Changamoto katika utekelezaji wa mawazo ya uboreshaji

Mahojiano itakuwa uliofanywa kwa Kiswahili (au Ufaransa kwa baadhi kulingana na kiwango cha elimu ya mhojiwa), basi tukiyaandika kwa Kiingereza.

Mwongozo wa mahojiano

Asante kwa kuwa na kukubaliwa kujiunga na mimi leo kwa ajili ya kazi yanayopangwa wakati. Nina hamu sana ya uzoefu wako kuhusu kusafiri nje ya nchi. Majadiliano yetu itakuwa kumbukumbu kama mimi na ku-fasiri kabisa baadaye kwa ujumla. Taarifa zote zinazotolewa zitakuwa kutibiwa siri. Wala sijui jina lako. Nina hamu sana kujua mengi kuhusu uzoefu wako kama Kanisa (Kwaya, au mwingine) kiongozi katika mtandao wa masomo wa kimataifa.

Swali kuu la utafiti	Maswali-ndogo	MASWALI
Ni kwa jinsi gani mafunzo ya viongozi wa Kanisa ya DR-Congo yalikuwa na umbo katika mtandao wa kimataifa?	a) Ni nini viongozi wa makanisa ya Kiprotestanti walikuwa wanajifunza katika mtandao wa kimataifa?	1) Unatembea ugenini kwa tiketi ya kanisa. Ninaamini hii ni experience specieli kwako –basi nielezee ya experiences zako! 2) Unatembea kwa tiketi ya kanisa, tafazali nielezee safari hizo zina maana gani kwa kanisa lako, na kwako katika kanisa! 3) Masikio yangu yanawasha kujua mengi kuhusu safari yako (ya kila mara/ya nyu-manyuma) ugenini. Z(iliikuwa) safari gani / Ilikuwa nini, na kwa occasion gani? Tafazali niambie marefu ! 4) Wewe kama kiongozi ya kanisa ao mmoja wa viongozi, kuna uhusiano gani kati ya safari zako na kanisa lako ? Nielezee ! 5) Aha, nielezee ile umejifunza kutoka watu wengine (viongozi wa makanisa, wakristo, ao watu wengine) huko ngambo.

	b) Nini imekuwa faida ya safari hizo kwako binafsi na Shirika lako ?	6) Umezipata safari hizo kuwa muhimu kiasi gani, kwako na kwa kanisa lako. nielezee tafazali faida ya safari hizo!
	c) Mabadiliko gani yamekumbana nayo katika maisha yao kwa vile walikuwaliana na makanisa mengine na waumini ndani yake ?	7) Wewe kama pasta (ao kiongozi mwingine), ukiangalia nyuma, kanisa lako (kwaya yako, etc.) imekuwa namna gani kabla hujawaliana na kanisa (kwaya, etc.) hiyo nyingine? Na sasa kanisa/kwaya, etc. yako iko vipi siku hizi, nielezee tafazali! 8) Mpaka sasa, namna gani umetendesha ujuzi, maarifa, na yote umejifunza kutoka wale watu wa ngambo, nielezee tafazali! 9) Kwa mafikiri/maoni yako, je kuna kitu Fulani kimebadilika katika kanisa/kwaya, etc. yako tangu umesafiri huko ngambo, nielezee!
	d) Ni changamoto gani viongozi wa Kanisa wanakabiliwa katika utekelezaji wao wa maarifa yao mapya ?	10) Pamoja na safari kama hizo, je mambo yanatembea bila shida, ao je kuna shida na matazito ? Tafazali nielezee jambo ao mambo ambayo

		unafikiri yakuletea changamoto katika kutaka kutendesha uliyojifunza ili ulete mabadiliko huko kwetu ! 11) Unapendekeza nini ili kusuluhisha/ku-tatua changamoto hizo ? Nielezee!
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Maswali za ufuatiliaji (mifano fulani)

1. Unamaanisha nini unaposema...?
2. Tafazali, je waweza kutoa mfano wa ...?
3. Sasa hivi umetoka kusema juu ya ..., unataka kusema nini kwa kweli?
4. Mahali fulani, ulisema (ulisema juu ya ...), je waweza ongeza kidogo ili nifahamu vizuri?
5. Umetemelea kanisa lingine wakati gani, kwa mara ya mwidho? Umekuwa ukishirikiana nalo/nao kwa muda gani?
6. Je ni ile nafasi tu njo umetembelea, ao kuna ingine ? Niambie experience yako na hiyo kanisa jingine!
7. Nk.

Kwa kumaliza:

Je kuna jambo jingine fulani nafiri ni ya muhimu kunielezee, ili nielewe kabisa experience yako kuhusu kutembea ugenini? Kama iko, tafazali nielezee!

Asante kushirikiana nami!

Maulizo kuhusu wewe binafsi (Background questionnaire)

Mambo ya kuzingatia	Majibu yako
Jinsia	Muke ☐ Mume ☐
Hali yako kindoa	Mjane ☐ Kapela ☐ Umeoa/olewa ☐
Umri (miaka)	
Masomo uliyosoma	Kiprimari ☐ Kisegondari ☐ Ya juu ☐
Kazi yako katika kanisa lako:	
Jina la kanisa lako:	
Bara la kanisa mfidhili (partenaire)	Rwanda ☐ Tanzania ☐ Kenya ☐
Ujerumani ☐ France ☐ Usuisi ☐ Uingereza ☐	

Canada	☐	USA/Amerika	☐	Ingingine	_____					
idadi ya matembezi ugenini	1	☐	2	☐	3	☐	4	☐	5 au zaidi	☐
Majina ya wafadhili wa safari zako :										

Appendix 4: Participant consent form | English version

Bulaya PhD Research | Participant Consent Form

Project Title: Learning of Protestant church’s leaders from global encounters: a qualitative empirical study from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

Consent to take part in research

- ☐ I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- ☐ I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- ☐ I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- ☐ I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- ☐ I understand that participation involves sharing my experiences with regard to learning in informal situations, namely travelling abroad and/or attending experience change sessions.
- ☐ I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- ☐ I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- ☐ I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

- ☐ I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous.

This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people and/or places I speak about.

- ☐ I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the PhD dissertation and conferences.
- ☐ I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm, they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.
- ☐ I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in the researcher's computer, and/or secured files until the exam board confirms the results of the dissertation].
- ☐ I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years from the date of the exam board.
- ☐ I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- ☐ I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

K. Bulaya J. Eraste, MA | Educational Quality, Tel.:

Signature of research participant

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

Signature of researcher

Date

Appendix 5: Participant consent form | French version

Bulaya PhD Research | Participant Consent

Project Title: Learning of Protestant church's leaders from global encounters: a qualitative empirical study from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

Consentement à participer à la recherche

- ☐ Moiaccepte de participer volontairement à cette étude/recherche.
- ☐ Je comprends que même si j'accepte de participer maintenant, je peux me retirer à tout moment ou refuser de répondre à telle ou telle question sans aucune conséquence.
- ☐ Je comprends que je peux retirer la permission d'utiliser les données de mon interview dans les deux semaines qui suivent l'interview, ce qui fait que le matériel (mes propos) sera supprimé.
- ☐ J'ai eu l'explication sur le but et la nature de l'étude par écrit et j'ai eu l'occasion de poser des questions sur l'étude.
- ☐ Je comprends que la participation implique le partage d'expériences concernant l'apprentissage informel lié aux voyages à l'étranger et/ou sessions d'échanges d'expériences
- ☐ Je crois comprendre que je ne bénéficierai pas directement de la participation à cette recherche.
- ☐ J'accepte que mon entrevue soit enregistrée en audio.

- ☐ Je comprends que tous les renseignements que je fournis pour cette étude seront traités de façon confidentielle.
- ☐ Je crois comprendre que dans tout rapport sur les résultats de cette recherche, mon identité restera anonyme. Cela se fera en changeant mon nom et en déguiser tous les détails de mon interview qui peuvent révéler mon identité ou l'identité des personnes dont je parle.
- ☐ Je comprends que des extraits déguisés de mon entrevue peuvent être cités dans la thèse de Doctorat (Dissertation) ou les conférences, selon le cas.
- ☐ Je comprends que si j'informe le chercheur que moi-même ou quelqu'un d'autre est à risque de peut avoir à signaler cela aux autorités compétentes - ils en discuteront avec moi en premier, mais peuvent être requis de se présenter avec ou sans ma permission.
- ☐ Je crois savoir que les formulaires de consentement signés et les enregistrements audio originaux seront conservés dans l'ordinateur du chercheur, ou une farde à tringles sécurisée jusqu'à la cotation du travail par le Comité d'Evaluation
- ☐ Je crois comprendre qu'une transcription de mon entrevue dans laquelle tous les renseignements seront conservés pour deux ans à partir de la date de la commission d'examen].
- ☐ Je comprends qu'en vertu de la légalisation de la liberté d'information, j'ai le droit d'accéder aux informations que j'ai fournies à tout moment pendant qu'elles sont stockées comme indiqué ci-dessus.
- ☐ Je comprends que je suis libre de communiquer avec l'une ou l'autre des personnes impliquées dans la recherche pour des raisons de clarification et d'information.

Signature du participant à la recherche

-----Signature du participant

Date

Signature du chercheur

Je crois que le participant donne son consentement éclairé à participer à cette étude

du chercheur

-----Signature

Date

Appendix 6 : Participant consent form | Kiswahili version

Mimi..... Kwa hiari yanu nakubali kushiriki katika utafiti huu.

- ☐ Ninaelewa kwamba hata nikikubali kushiriki sasa, ninaweza kujiondoa wakati wowote au kukataa kujibu swali lolote bila matokeo yoyote ya aina yoyote.
- ☐ Ninaelewa kwamba ninaweza kuondoa ruhusa ya kutumia data kutoka kwa mahojiano yangu ndani ya wiki mbili baada ya mahojiano, katika kesi ambayo nyenzo zitafutwa.
- ☐ Nimekuwa na madhumuni na asili ya utafiti ulionielezea kwa maandishi na nimepata fursa ya kuuliza maswali kuhusu utafiti.
- ☐ Ninaelewa kuwa ushiriki unajumuisha kushiriki uzoefu wangu kuhusiana na kujifunza katika hali zisizo rasmi, yaani kusafiri nje ya nchi na / au kuhudhuria vikao vya muungano wa makanisa.
- ☐ Ninaelewa kuwa sitaifaidika moja kwa moja na kushiriki katika utafiti huu.
- ☐ Nakubaliana na mahojiano yangu kuwa ya sauti.
- ☐ Ninaelewa kwamba habari zote nitakazotoa kwa ajili ya utafiti huu zitashughulikiwa kwa siri.
- ☐ Ninaelewa kwamba katika ripoti yoyote juu ya matokeo ya utafiti huu utambulisho wangu utabaki bila kujulikana.
- ☐ Hii itafanywa kwa kubadilisha jina langu na kutoa maelezo yoyote ya mahojiano yangu ambayo yanaweza kufunua utambulisho wangu au utambulisho wa watu na / au maeneo ninayozungumza.

- ☐ Ninaelewa kwamba dondoo zilizofichwa kutoka kwa mahojiano yangu zinaweza kunukuliwa katika uandishi wa PhD na mikutano.
- ☐ Ninaelewa kwamba nikimjulisha mtafiti kwamba mimi mwenyewe au mtu mwingine yuko katika hatari ya madhara, anaweza kula-zimika kuripoti hili kwa mamlaka husika - watajadili hili na mimi kwanza lakini wanaweza kuhitajika kuripoti au bila ruhusa yangu.
- ☐ Ninaelewa kuwa formu za idhini zilizosainiwa na rekodi za sauti za asili zitahifadhiwa kwenye kompyuta ya mtafiti, na / au faili zilizohifadhiwa hadi bodi ya mtihani ithibitishe matokeo ya uandishi].
- ☐ Ninaelewa kwamba nakala ya mahojiano yangu ambayo habari zote za kutambua zimeondolewa zitahifadhiwa kwa miaka miwili kutoka tarehe ya bodi ya mitihani.
- ☐ Ninaelewa kwamba chini ya uhuru wa habari kuhalalisha nina haki ya kupata habari niliyotoa wakati wowote wakati iko katika uhifadhi kama ilivyoelezwa hapo juu.
- ☐ Ninaelewa kuwa niko huru kuwasiliana na mtu yeyote anayehusika katika utafiti ili kutafuta ufafanuzi zaidi na habari.

K. Bulaya J. Eraste, MA. Education Quality, Tel.:

Saini ya mshiriki katika utafiti (na tarehe)

Appendix 7: Sampling Table

Interviewee's full name	Respondent's characteristics															Time of service	Number of travels abroad
	Gender		Age					Level of education			Church			Church location	Status of visited country		
	Man	Woman	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 & above	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Church 1	Church 2	Church 3	Urban	Rural	Global North	Global South
																Pastor	Choir
																	Administration
																	Youth
																	Women & Family
																	Children
																	Elder of church
																	Project
																	Full time
																	Part-time
																	Retired
																	1 to 2
																	3 to 4
																	5 & above
Be-u		x			x				x	x				x		x	x
Bukavu	x			x					x	x				x		x	
Bulengera	x			x				x	x	x	x			x		x	
Fizi		x		x					x	x	x			x	x		
Goma		x	x					x		x	x			x	x		x
Idjwi		x		x			x		x		x			x	x		
Kabambare	x			x				x	x		x			x	x		x
Kabare	x			x				x	x		x			x	x		
Kailo	x				x			x	x		x			x	x		x
Kalehe	x		x					x		x	x			x	x		
Karisimbi	x		x					x	x		x			x	x		
Kasongo	x			x				x	x		x			x	x		x
Kibombo	x		x					x	x		x			x			x
Kindu		x		x				x	x		x			x	x		x
Lubero	x		x					x	x		x			x		x	x
Lubutu		x	x					x	x		x			x	x		X
Maniema	x				x			x	x		x			x	x		x
Masisi	x		x					x	x		x			x			x
Mulekera	x	X						x	x		x			x			x
Mwenga	x	x						x	x		x			x	x		x
Nyiragongo	x			x				x	x		x			x	x		x
Oicha		x			x			x	x		x			x	x		x
Pangi	x				x			x	x		x			x	x		x
Punia	x					x		x			x	x		x	x		x
Rutshuru	x	x						x			x	x		x	x		x
Shabunda	x			x				x		x	x			x	x		x
Uvira	x		x					x	x		x			x	x		x
Vulamba		x	x					x	x					x		x	x

Appendix 8: Coding system

Categories	Sub-categories	Description	Codes
1. Perception of Church leaders on international journeys, travels and exchange visits	1.1. Meaning of travels and/or exchange visits	A school / learning occasion	1.1.1
		A leisure occasion	1.1.2
		A space for exchange of experiences and knowledge	1.1.3
		A space of new knowledge acquisition	1.1.4
		A world exploration occasion	1.1.5
		A time for rest	1.1.6
		An occasion for maturity	1.1.7
		An occasion for discovery...	1.1.8
		A privilege (honour)	1.1.9
		Is the greatest book of the world	1.1.10
		Make up an intellectual luggage for traveller	1.1.11
		An occasion for advocacy	1.1.12
		An occasion of making known one's church	1.1.13
		An occasion for communion with others globally	1.1.14
		An occasion of giving one's contribution to the network	1.1.15
		An occasion of exhibiting ownership for the partnership	1.1.16
		An occasion to partake in the restoration of God's kingdom	1.1.17
		An experience	1.1.18
		An exploration moment for places and people	1.1.19

		An occasion for acquisition of experiences	1.1.20
		A prerequisite for further international travels	1.1.21
		Very necessary/important	1.1.22
		An occasion of mutual enrichment	1.1.23
		An opportunity to be seized	1.1.24
		A special favour (grace)	1.1.25
		Proof of confidence and trust from the church	1.1.26
		Travelling is formative	1.1.27
		A way towards achieving goals	1.1.28
		Travelling is education	1.1.29
		A resource centre	1.1.30
		A way of finding solution to certain problems	1.1.31
		1.2. Knowledge integration in daily lives	Adapted to context
	Adopted as such		1.2.2
	Rejected as a whole		1.2.3
	Selectivity (select what is good and reject what is bad)		1.2.4
	1.3. Issues faced when visiting abroad	Adaptability	1.3.1
		Communication / Language issue	1.3.2
		Insufficient self-preparedness	1.3.3
		Confusion in things / items	1.3.4
		Manipulation of devices Handling things relating issue	1.3.5
		Refusal of access to border Immigration	1.3.6
		Hunger/little food	1.3.7
		Harassment by police /border officer	1.3.8

		Different climate than the one at home	1.3.9
		Different tribes and cultures	1.3.10
		Missing one's flight	1.3.11
		Having nobody to provide guidance	1.3.12
		Going through non-straight ways	1.3.13
		With finding one's gate	1.3.14
		Not enough knowledge on certain things	1.3.15
		Refusal of entry in host country	1.3.16
		Discouraging testimonies from prior travellers	1.3.17
		Getting lost/missing one's way	1.3.18
		Affording charges for travels	1.3.19
		Having one's belongings stolen	1.3.20
		Children's education relating issues	1.3.21
		Not finding the person who would pick you at airport	1.3.22
		Being dropped far you're your destination	1.3.23
	1.4. Self-feelings associated with travels/visits	Traumatized / stressed/upset/stressful	1.4.1
		Joy/happiness	1.4.2
		Solitude loneliness/being left alone	1.4.3
		Uncertainty about how things will move on	1.4.4
		Travelling is good/interesting	1.4.5
		Ambivalence (joy and stressed all together)	1.4.6

		Surprise / amazement	1.4.7
		Astonishment	1.4.8
		Thankfulness (to God)	1.4.9
		Suspicious about something harmful	1.4.10
		Reserve from greeting unknown people	1.4.11
		Travelling abroad is tiresome	1.4.12
		Good experience	1.4.13
		Embarrassment/confusion with regard to how things will go	1.4.14
		Boredom due to long time waiting for flight	1.4.15
		Shocked /wounded within	1.4.16
		Overwhelmed by doubts	1.4.17
		Fear/afraid/fearful	1.4.18
		Agony/disappointment	1.4.19
		Almost weeping	1.4.20
		Frustration	1.4.21
		In need of encouragement	1.4.22
		Travelling abroad is complex	1.4.23
		Travelling is bothersome	1.4.24
		Like (love)	1.4.25
		Risky	1.4.26
		Tiresome	1.4.27
	1.5. Prior personal Knowledge on International travels	No knowledge	1.5.1
		Sufficient knowledge	1.5.2
		Awareness about checking and/or immigration procedures	1.5.3
		No guidance at all	1.5.4
		Having some knowledge about international travels	1.5.5
		Theoretical explanation	1.5.6

		Interpersonal competencies	1.5.7
		Some knowledge in international language	1.5.8
1.6. Purpose (opportunity) of trips/travel or visits		To satisfy an interest of sightseeing	1.6.1
		Exchange visits /Exchange of experiences	1.6.2
		Training empowerment	1.6.3
		Evangelism / gospel crusade/spreading Good News	1.6.4
		International /regional conference or meeting	1.6.5
		Studies (tertiary education)	1.6.6
		To represent one's organisation /church	1.6.7
		Medical treatment sake	1.6.8
		Family visits	1.6.9
		Leisure/touring	1.6.10
		Holidays	1.6.11
		Service Mission	1.6.12
		Partnership between institutions framework	1.6.13
		Prayer meeting (intercession)	1.6.14
		Volunteering programmes	1.6.15
		Showing sympathy for friend in trouble	1.6.16
1.7. Importance of travels & trips		Helps get feedback	1.7.1
		Consolidates partnerships	1.7.2
		Open one's mind	1.7.3
		Open doors/provides opportunities	1.7.4
		Help make friends/connect to people	1.7.5

Strengthen/improve one's ministry	1.7.6
Help perform better	1.7.7
Awaken desire of self-fulfilment	1.7.8
Inspire a new vision and/or orientation	1.7.9
Dispel prejudices and biases	1.7.10
Open barriers /internationalize	1.7.11
A way of progressing mentally and physically	1.7.12
A way of getting rich mentally	1.7.13
A way of acquiring new things	1.7.14
Help see what others do	1.7.15
Help get new knowledge, understanding	1.7.16
Travelling itself is the first experience	1.7.17
Help know who you are, where you're from ...	1.7.18
Help understand God's greatness, intention	1.7.19
Perception of reality, contrary to seeing from far/in books	1.7.20
Help the church come to maturity	1.7.21
To see what not seen before	1.7.22
To gain new skills	1.7.23
To see and live reality	1.7.24
To gain potential	1.7.25
Help live true love and practical faith	1.7.26
Testifies how valued you are/how church confides in you	1.7.27

		Make reflect on what goes on at home	1.7.28
		Provide for interaction opportunities between nations	1.7.29
		Help understand the oneness /universality of the church	1.7.30
		Help get/exchange experiences	1.7.31
		For global learning	1.7.32
		Allow for spread of the gospel	1.7.33
		Strengthen God's people communion	1.7.34
		Help get beyond one's comfort zone	1.7.35
		Help to see what other people do/how they do it	1.7.36
		For better understanding of the world	1.7.37
		Help to learn about other people's culture	1.7.38
		For conflict-resolution between nations	1.7.39
		To live new experiences	1.7.40
		Help to learn by experience	1.7.41
		Sustain/sensitize self-evaluation	1.7.42
		Provides an added value in ministries	1.7.43
2. Learning gained from trips and/or exchange visits (Livingstone, 2001:13;	2.1. Knowledge	International travel matters	2.1.1
		Competence-based approach	2.1.2
		Reality outside one's country	2.1.3
		People behaviour	2.1.4

UNESCO,
2016:19; DeNo-
bile et al., 2014.:
32)

Recognition of gap in one's practice	2.1.5
Religion / spirituality	2.1.6
Roles of a leader/pastor	2.1.7
Qualities of a leader	2.1.8
Church organisation and culture	2.1.9
Understanding of planetary boundaries/Internationalization	2.1.10
Questioning of routine at workplace/churches	2.1.11
Questioning of hegemony in church affairs	2.1.12
Cultural riches/heritage/domain of other people	2.1.13
On other resources (time, information, earth/soil, etc.)	2.1.14
Impact/Role of church on society (Believers & government)	2.1.15
Prerequisites for success	2.1.16
On how pastors (church leaders) live	2.1.17
Other countries security matters	2.1.18
Other countries' general organisation	2.1.19
On reality about education and learning	2.1.20
On importance of taking care for oneself (body, spirit, soul)	2.1.21
The uniqueness of everybody	2.1.22
Clear meaning of poverty	2.1.23
Meaning and necessity of being entrepreneur	2.1.24
Accountability/being accountable	2.1.25

Importance of actions, in opposition to mere talk	2.1.26
Meaning of the Gospel/Good News	2.1.27
General awareness on facts	2.1.28
Capacity of individuals	2.1.29
Differences and commonalities	2.1.30
Basics of native language	2.1.31
Requirements of international travels	2.1.32
Seriousness of affairs abroad	2.1.33
Importance of International language	2.1.34
People living conditions	2.1.35
The right of a church leader (pastor)	2.1.36
How other people live	2.1.37
Women's ministry in the church	2.1.38
Women's education and role in society	2.1.39
Responsibilities (obligations & duties) of church members	2.1.40
On the church mission on earth	2.1.41
Importance of relationships	2.1.42
Importance of adding training to natural gifts/talents	2.1.43
Importance of documenting events and activities	2.1.44
Choreography & harmony for choirs	2.1.45

	Church implantation techniques	2.1.46
2.2. Skills to bring about change	Interpersonal / Communication skills	2.2.1
	Organisational skills	2.2.2
	Managerial skills	2.2.3
	Technical skills	2.2.4
	Fund raising skills	2.2.5
	Leadership skills / Servant leadership	2.2.6
	Entrepreneurial skills & creativity	2.2.7
	Financial skills	2.2.8
	Time management skills	2.2.9
	Reflexive/thinking skills	2.2.10
	Collaborative skills	2.2.11
	Adaptability/adaptivity	2.2.12
	Training/mentoring skills	2.2.13
	Supervisory skills	2.2.14
	Problem-solving skills	2.2.15
	Marketing/selling (launching) skills	2.2.16
	Agro-pastoral skills	2.2.16
	Project writing skills	2.2.17
	International journey relating skills	2.2.18
	Money saving (sparing) skills	2.2.19
	Strategic management skills	2.2.20
2.3. Values and attitudes	Appreciation of diversity	2.3.1
	Respect of human rights	2.3.2
	Social justice	2.3.3
	Respect for rights of others	2.3.4
	Empathy for others	2.3.5
	Antipathy towards global issues	2.3.6
	Sense of community membership	2.3.7

Cooperation	2.3.8
Care for others	2.3.9
Tolerance/patience for difference	2.3.10
Humility/simplicity	2.3.11
Rigor and/or temerity	2.3.12
Self-discipline	2.3.13
Love for well-done jobs	2.3.14
Hard-working	2.3.15
Respect for pastors /The Lord's servants	2.3.16
Being independent	2.3.17
Self-acceptance	2.3.18
Being attentive	2.3.19
Being orderly	2.3.20
Encouraging other people	2.3.21
Acting and not only talking about an action to take	2.3.22
Respect for the elderly	2.3.23
Faithful to one's promise	2.3.24
Cleanliness	2.3.25
Readiness/increased understanding for change	2.3.26
Courage /being courageous	2.3.27
Generosity in offering to God	2.3.28
Being timely/respectful for time	2.3.29
Being orderly, organised	2.3.30
Hospitality/entertaining visitors	2.3.31
Respect for other people	2.3.32
Proactivity	2.3.34
Serving God out of love	2.3.35
Being supportive to others	2.3.36
Creativity	2.3.37

		Being devoted to God's work	2.3.38
		Being flexible in organising things	2.3.39
		Keeping one's distance (limits)	2.3.40
		Being tolerant, patient	2.3.41
		Integrity	2.3.42
		Being adaptive	2.3.43
		Being reflexive/critical thinking	2.3.44
		Objectivity	2.3.45
		Gender balance	2.3.46
		Friendliness (Being friendly)	2.3.47
	2.4. Self-description of learning	What helped ...	2.4.1
		What I discovered	2.4.2
		What interested...	2.4.3
		What makes... happy/fun	2.4.4
		What makes ... grow up	2.4.5
		What builds ... up	2.4.6
		What/Something good ... seen	2.4.7
		Something that amazed /I was amazed of	2.4.8
		Something... noticed	2.4.9
		Something ...thankful for	2.4.10
		A blessing	2.4.11
		What attracted me	2.4.12
		What I enjoyed	2.4.13
		What catches attention	2.4.13
		What surprises	2.4.14
		What I realized	2.4.15
		What I found	2.4.16
		Something witnessed	2.4.17
		Something worth imitating	2.4.18
		What impressed me	2.4.19
		What I have understood	2.4.20
		By observing /seeing	2.5.1

	2.5. Means of learning acquisition	By taking shorthand notes/note taking	2.5.2
		By recording information via telephone	2.5.3
		By asking questions /inquiring	2.5.4
		By trial and error	2.5.5
		By visiting websites	2.5.6
		By reflecting upon the experience	2.5.7
		By imitation	2.5.8
		By informal training	2.5.9
		By experience (living the experience itself)	2.5.10
		Through remarks and observations given	2.5.11
		By referring to medias (flash disk)	2.5.12
		Through visitors' feedback	2.5.12
		Using mass memory (audios, handouts, computer)	2.5.13
	2.6. Subjective description of people	Welcoming/hospitable people	2.6.1
		Kind /good/nice people	2.6.2
		Unwelcoming/ bad people	2.6.3
		Hard-working /entrepreneurial	2.6.4
		Courageous/brave	2.6.5
		Self-reliant	2.6.6
		Devoted (engaged) to God/to church activities	2.6.7
		Disciplined	2.6.8
		Respectful/considerate to God's servants (pastors)	2.6.7
		Respectful to church service steps and worship	2.6.8

Dedicated to the work of God	2.6.9
Love for God	2.6.10
Belief in the power given to a pastor	2.6.11
Trained to work –not doing anything by chance	2.6.12
Pastors are rich	2.6.13
People are happy/joyful/cheerful, delighted	2.6.14
People are loving	2.6.15
Attentive to needs and concerned with others	2.6.16
Have mastered techniques/are knowledgeable	2.6.17
Helpful/amenable	2.6.18
Guiding/orienting	2.6.19
Generous to God/to other people	2.6.20
Respectful to time	2.6.21
Come in church to 'learn' –they even take notes	2.6.22
Sincerity/No hypocrisy in them	2.6.23
Like praying /being prayed for	2.6.24
People are motivated to work	2.6.25
People are developed /have progressed	2.6.26
People are just/righteous/upright	2.6.27
People are thankful to God (in choral)	2.6.28
Role-model	2.6.29
People are orderly and organised	2.6.30
People are humble/simple	2.6.31
Work in unity	2.6.32

Ready to share knowledge/communicating	2.6.33
Respectful to hygiene and decent dressing	2.6.34
Bad/not good people/reserved	2.6.35
Bothersome/uncaring people	2.6.36
Inquisitive	2.6.37
Appreciative	2.6.38
Lacking in organisation and order	2.6.39
Compassionate	2.6.40
Provocative	2.6.41
People are willing to learn	2.6.42
Award a choice place to children	2.6.43
Encouraging for others	2.6.44
Respectful to other people	2.6.45
Solution-oriented /overcoming challenges	2.6.46
Keep their distance	2.6.47
Respectful to individual ministry	2.6.48
Addicted to cleanliness	2.6.49
Active and enthusiastic	2.6.50
Prove interested in others	2.6.51
People are creative	2.6.52
Open-minded	2.6.53
Faithful to engagement	2.6.54
Friendly	2.6.55
Respectful to church service target group	2.6.56
Tolerant & patient	2.6.57
Hypocritical	2.6.58

3. Benefits of travels & exchange visits (Bruns, 2019: 2-14; Matras et al. 2013: 2)		Transformed by the Word of God	2.6.59
		People are highly educated	2.6.60
	3.1. Connection with people and places	Information / New knowledge acquired	3.1.1
		Exploration time for places	3.1.2
		Social cohesion	3.1.3
		Bridges built among people	3.1.4
		Friendships / strong relationships developed	3.1.5
		Teamwork strengthened	3.1.6
		Escape from preconceptions, and assumptions	3.1.7
	3.2. Institutional benefits	Mutual support /partnerships	3.2.1
		Collaborative coaching	3.2.2
		Empowerment & capability	3.2.3
		Discovery of new viewpoints and approaches	3.2.4
		Commitment to new approaches	3.2.5
		Time and attention focused on topic	3.2.6
		Sharing ideas	3.2.7
		Networking perspective / enhanced connectivity	3.2.8
		Advocacy /lobbying rendered possible	3.2.9
		Joint projects implemented	3.2.10
		New and improved actions	3.2.11
		Increased financial capacity	3.2.12
		Getting famous locally	3.2.14
		Problem-solving strategies enhanced	3.2.16

3.3. Personal / Individual benefits	Own network enlarged having friends beyond national boundaries	3.3.1
	Mutual support	3.3.2
	Collaborative coaching	3.3.3
	Discovery of (famous) places and people	3.3.4
	Experiencing life out of one's comfort zone	3.3.5
	Promotion further responsibilities given locally	3.3.6
	Enhanced skills	3.3.7
	Boldness with regard to further travels abroad	3.3.8
	Capacity of approaching (unknown) people easily	3.3.8
	Resilience and flexibility	3.3.9
	Feeling of belonging to large family	3.3.10
	Making money/material things acquired	3.3.11
	Self-esteem/self-confidence developed	3.3.12
	Knowing how to behave in every circumstance and society	3.3.13
	Making friends	3.3.14
	Getting new knowledge & experience	3.3.15
	Provision of lessons and experiences	3.3.16
	Ability of problem-solving/Capacity to cope on their own	3.3.17
	New language learned	3.3.18
	Personal qualities development	3.3.19
	Open mind & horizons	3.3.20

		Increased perception capacity	3.3.21
		Increased potential and capability	3.3.22
		Improved communication skills	3.3.23
	3.4. Self-feelings associated with experience abroad	Surprise /astonishment /amazement	3.4.1
		Joy/gladness /happiness	3.4.2
		Wonder	3.4.3
		Being blessed	3.4.4
		Secure	3.4.5
		Things are good there	3.4.6
		Ease/finding oneself at ease	3.4.7
		Liking	3.4.8
		Self-pity/acting by compliances	3.4.9
		Stressful	3.4.10
		Inferiority	3.4.11
		Disoriented	3.4.11
		Wonderful	3.4.12
		Weeping for love	3.4.13
		Good experience	3.4.14
		Somewhat proud	3.4.15
		Rewarding	3.4.16
		Impressed	3.4.17
		Significant	3.4.18
		Shocked	3.4.19
4. Changes brought about by travels and exchange visits (Matras et al. 2013:2; World Bank Group, 2017: vi)	4.1. At the visitor/traveller's level	Knowledge and practices improvement	4.1.1
		Change in awareness, attitude and/or understanding	4.1.2
		Much more confidence in one's ability	4.1.3
		Conviction to take action	4.1.4
		Self-esteem	4.1.5
		Change in routine /Working in new ways	4.1.6

		Preparedness for taking action	4.1.7
		Change of perspectives	4.1.8
		Change in personality	4.1.9
	4.2. At the organisational / Church level	Improved consensus / collaboration increased,	4.2.1
		More funds raised	4.2.2
		Better life for pastors and/or other people working in church	4.2.3
		Communion/Partnership of churches reinforced	4.2.4
		Better organisation in church affairs	4.2.5
		Improved productivity	4.2.6
		Clear way towards success (goal) now in place	4.2.7
		Increased number of people serving in the church	4.2.8
		Change of perspectives/mind-set on the church members side	4.2.9
		Change in routine /Working in new ways	4.2.10
		Preparedness for taking action	4.2.11
		Better consecration to God and church activities	4.2.12
		Change in awareness, attitude, beliefs and/or understanding	4.2.14
	4.3. Strategies for change in the community	By living/acting as role model	4.3.1
		By organising restitution and/or training sessions	4.3.2
		By building other people capacities	4.3.3

	Starting with small groups (leaders)	4.3.4
	People need to see how things are done /By sending peers for exchange visits and live reality	4.3.5
	Being courageous in sharing one's vision	4.3.6
	One has to push/keep on/move forward	4.3.7
	Discussing on what to take and what not	4.3.8
	Involving all in the process	4.3.9
	Show humility and integrity	4.3.10
	Learn about group management and dynamics	4.3.11
	By telling about change	4.3.12
	By sharing the vision with others	4.3.13
	By writing literature	4.3.14
	Explanation and reporting on innovation	4.3.15
	By sharing one's experiences with others	4.3.16
	Talking to people for awareness building	4.3.17
	Collaboration and tolerance	4.3.18
	Being role-model, blameless, pious, attached to God	4.3.19
	Addressing hidden need of people for their improvement	4.3.20
	Proactivity >< reactivity	4.3.21
	By using one's influence circle for vision ownership	4.3.22

4.4. Key knowledge/skill implemented when traveller is back home	Fund raising relating strategies	4.4.1
	Evangelism approach	4.4.2
	Entrepreneurship relating knowledge	4.4.3
	Church services relating knowledge	4.4.4
	Organisation relating knowledge	4.4.5
	Hygiene and dressing manner	4.4.6
	Hospitality/entertaining strangers	4.4.7
	Project writing skills	4.4.8
	Education relating knowledge	4.4.9
	Women's education and role in society	4.4.10
	Training/mentoring skills	4.4.11
	Religion / spirituality, praying techniques	4.4.12
	Appreciation of diversity	4.4.13
	Money sparing (saving) skills	4.4.14
	Time management skills	4.4.15
	'Discipleship approach'	4.4.16
	Leadership in humility	4.4.17
	Parenting strategies	4.4.18
	Church self-financing strategies	4.4.19
	Reflexivity in decision-making/critical thinking	4.4.20
	Contextualizing biblical messages	4.4.21
	Women's ministry in the church	4.4.22
	Idea of Training & talents associated for real success	4.4.23

		Idea of documenting ><verbalizing events	4.2.24
		Church service organisa- tion and culture	4.2.25
	4.5. Subjective knowledge on change	Change is not easy	4.5.1
		Change is gradual/a pro- cess	4.5.2
		Change is possible	4.5.3
		Change is a must	4.5.4
5. Challenges faced in imple- menting im- provement ideas (World Bank Group, 2017: 2)	5.1. Weak envi- ronment for change	Weak stakeholder /client ownership of new ideas	5.1.1
		Lack of consensus on ap- proaches/not having the same vision	5.1.2
		Weak coordination among stakeholders	5.1.3
		Weak communication among stakeholders	5.1.4
		Lack of mutual trust among stakeholders	5.1.5
		Failure to conceptualize or consider a better ap- proach	5.1.6
		Dictatorship in actions	5.1.7
		Insecurity in the area	5.1.8
		Nepotism in recruitmen	5.1.9
		Political issues	5.1.10
		Weak business (affairs) climate	5.1.11
		Constraints of customs and traditions	5.1.12
		Little comprehension of change / innovation	5.1.13
		The church leadership is unaware about the con- tent/material	5.1.14
		Illusion about change	5.1.15
		Criticism and/or com- plaint	5.1.16
		Overt-taxing services	5.1.17

5.2. Inefficient policy instruments	Weak administrative rules /Administrative rigidity	5.2.1
	Weak laws and regulations	5.2.2
	Contradictions in churches	5.2.3
	Weak standard operating procedures	5.2.4
	Weak adaptability potential for church	5.2.5
	Weak support from the government	5.2.6
5.3. Ineffective organisational /institutional arrangements	Inadequate systems	5.3.1
	Inadequate funding / Lack of finances	5.3.2
	Inappropriate staff / staff lacking in capacities	5.3.3
	The organisation is too big to cover	5.3.4
	Not enough (no) time awarded to restitution sessions	5.3.4
	Inefficient communication from church leadership	5.3.5
	Interfering in someone else's planning	5.3.6
	Refusal from church leaders that an activity be run	5.3.7
	Prioritization issues	5.3.8
	Accessing resources	5.3.9
	Laziness	5.3.10
	Technology	
5.4. People relating factors	Resistance to change	5.4.1
	Travelling to learn nothing	5.4.2
	Mind-set (never-change) & unwilling heart	5.4.3

	Preference of money to partnership and knowledge	5.4.4
	Poverty of local population	5.4.5
	Little comprehension of one's role	5.4.6
	Less care for change	5.4.7
	Search for self-glory/fame	5.4.8
	Sticking to routine	5.4.9
	Unemployment	5.4.10
	Unavailability for training	5.4.11
	Low qualification and inexperience	5.4.12
	Discouragement	5.4.13
	Expecting but money from partners	5.4.14
5.5. Consequences of not accepting improvement ideas and change	Less/no impact	5.4.1
	Less/no blessings	5.4.2
	Discouragement of the leader	5.4.3
	Working is waste of time	5.4.4
	Gospel does not illuminate	5.4.5
	No development, no growth observed	5.4.6
5.6. Ways of overcoming challenges	Refer to local groups' initiatives	5.5.1
	Advocacy and/or lobbying	5.5.2
	Determination (push, never give up)	5.5.3
	Being courageous	5.5.4
	Analysing the context to know what's going on	5.5.5
	Reflect and discover the unexpressed need	5.5.6
	Never hurry up to change things	5.5.7

		Have a critical mind and build on assets found locally	5.5.8
		Value local resources	5.5.9
		Sell your vision to a group for ownership	5.5.10
		Sticking to what the Gospel states	5.5.11
		Separate Gospel from traditions in preaching	5.5.12
		Entrepreneurial mind-set & Being creative	5.5.13
		Doing briefing/making awareness, informing, communicating	5.5.14
		Keep acting, others follow on at seeing the results	5.5.15
		Being enlightened by the Word of God	5.5.16
		Applying servant leadership in the church	5.5.17
		Self-sacrifice of the leader	5.5.18
		Believing in people's capacity	5.5.19
		Do what you can /start small	5.5.20
		Address the unexpressed need of people for their betterment	5.5.21
6. Suggestions with regard to travelling abroad	6.1. Self-preparedness	Learning more than one language	6.1.1
		Getting acquainted with foreign currencies	6.1.2
		Information about what goes on abroad	6.1.3
		Have travels documents	6.1.4
		Take some money with you	6.1.5

	Get encouragement from others	6.1.6
	Get support from your church	6.1.7
	Do first step/invest yourself in it	6.1.8
	Have a clear vision, a goal	6.1.9
6.2. Tips on safe and sound travels	Understand well timing/schedule	6.2.1
	Communicate efficiently	6.2.2
	Check documents	6.2.3
	Read labels carefully	6.2.4
	Ask questions	6.2.5
	Keep time / be in time	6.2.6
	Check gate	6.2.7
	Make sure you prepared	6.2.8
6.3. General conduct of traveller	Adapt to everything, especially diet	6.3.1
	Avoid to copy bad things /stick to good sides	6.3.2
	Seize the (good) opportunities	6.3.3
	Capitalize the strengths of others /minimize their weaknesses	6.3.4
	Avoid negative judgments on others	6.3.5
	Be ready to get out of one's comfort zone	6.3.6
	Develop interpersonal competencies	6.3.7
	Get rid of illusions	6.3.8
6.4. General recommendations to church	Preaching the Gospel – not anything else	6.4.1
	Avoidance of dependence	6.4.2
	Sending others abroad to learn and change	6.4.3
	Implementing what was seen for improvement	6.4.4

Listening to those who travelled for instruction	6.4.5
Find out what is good from abroad and behave accordingly	6.4.6
Getting rid of out-dated ideas	6.4.7
(When called abroad) be ready to go /let(encourage) others travel, too	6.4.8
Avoiding competition	6.4.9
Bring some new ideas from travel	6.4.10
Seek ways of influencing positively the government	6.4.11
Let the church accomplish its roles	6.4.12
Moving out of the box, leaving for abroad, going	6.4.13
Expect great things from God	6.4.14
Have a broad /global vision	6.4.15
Avoiding prejudices	6.4.16
Openness to novelty	6.4.17
Keeping one's distance sometimes	6.4.18
Having the pastor live far from church compound	6.4.19
Teach good manners/behaviours to church members	6.4.20
Being ready to share knowledge	6.4.21
Identify gifts in church and let them be used	6.4.22
Church members should sustain/encourage the pastor's travel abroad	6.4.23

		Multiply international encounters and partnerships	6.4.24
		Like (love) travelling –especially women	6.4.25
		Determination in implementing ideas leading to change	6.4.26
		Keeping making awareness about change	6.4.27
		Communicating on arrival of partners	6.4.28
		Making the travelling team come together for reflection on experience and way forward	6.4.29
		Having people involved in exchanges present a written report	6.4.30
		Building pastors' capacity in International language	6.4.31
		Award to traveller time for restitution	6.4.32
		Keep preaching love, unity among people	6.4.33
		Get involved in exchange of experiences to learn	6.4.34
		See the world from the perspectives of others	6.4.35
		Reconsider/Value women's ministry	6.4.36
		Have gift come before studies for hiring servants	6.4.37
		For its stability, use the potential of all believers	6.4.38
	6.5. To donors and international partners	Keep providing support for exchanges visits and travels	6.5.1

Appendix 9: Names of interviewees**Anonymization of Participants**

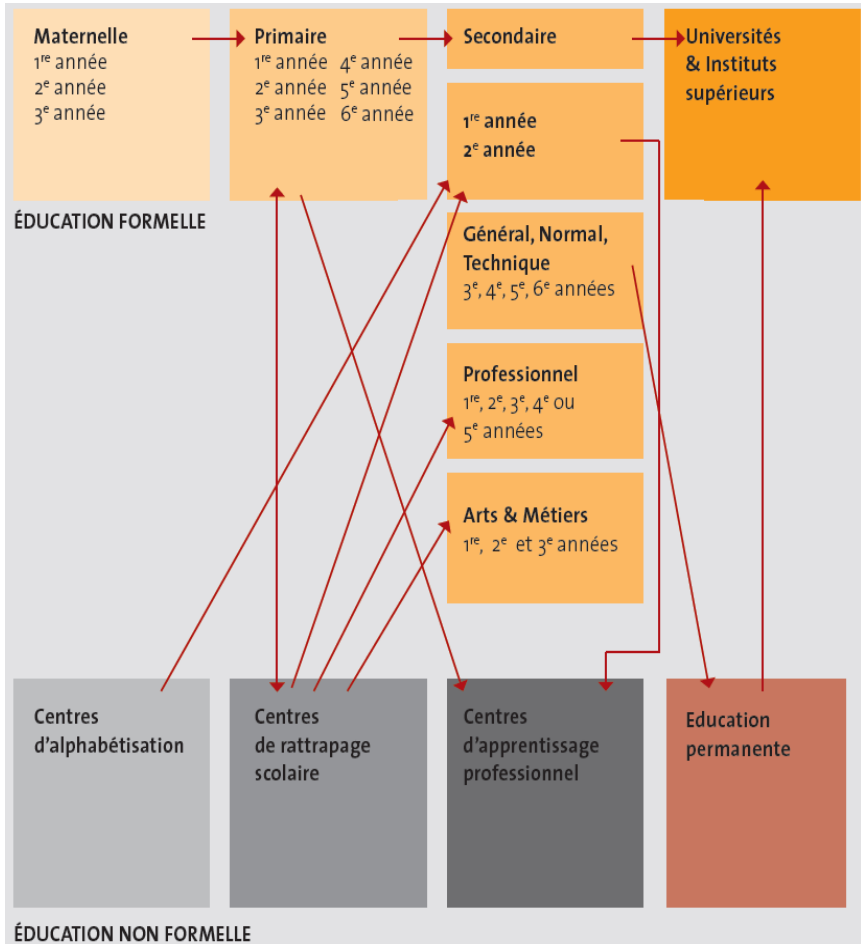
Names of territories and urban municipalities (communes) in ancient Kivu province (i.e. North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema current provinces)

Inter- view code Portrait	Name of interviewee	Gender	Observa- tion 1	Observa- tion 2
001	Be-u	Female		
002	Bukavu	Male		
003	Bulengeru	Male		
004	Fizi	Female		
005	Goma	Female		
006	Idjwi	Female		
007	Kabambare	Male		
008	Kabare	Male		
009	Kailo	Male		
010	Kalehe	Male		
011	Karisimbi	Male		
012	Kasongo	Female		
013	Kibombo	Male		
014	Kindu	Female		
015	Lubero	Male		
016	Lubutu	Female		
017	Maniema	Male		
018	Masisi	Male		
019	Mulekera	Male		
020	Mwenga	Female		
021	Nyira- gongo	Male		

022	Oicha	Female		
023	Pangi	Male		
024	Punia	Male		
025	Rutshuru	Female		
026	Shabunda	Male		
027	Uvira	Male		
028	Vulamba	Female		

Appendix 10: Educational system of the Democratic Republic of Congo

Source : Baba-Moussa, A. R., Glanz, C. & Grauwe, A. (2014 : 18)





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This study explores the learning acquired by the Protestant church's leaders with regard to partaking in global encounters. It was conducted in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, a Sub-Saharan country that has been facing heavy crises due to armed conflicts and unstable political institutions for decades. The study focuses on the church leader's learning outside academy, as they get in touch with other people and places globally. The research discourse sums up what education or learning would be as 'lifelong learning'. For church leaders from the Democratic Republic of Congo, so far, no research has been conducted about their global and informal learning, their global encounter-related experiences and the implemented improvement ideas brought from abroad. Being conceptualized as a qualitative empirical research, the relating data were collected using individual semi-structured interviews with 28 Protestant church leaders from three major Protestant church denominations in the area of study. From the content analysis applied to them, five ideal types of learning from global encounters emerged, namely the personal well-being-oriented learning, the own ministry-oriented learning, the local society-oriented learning, the organisational change-oriented learning, and the world society-oriented learning. These types were discussed in light of quality global/informal learning and its importance in shaping both local and global societies. Recommendations for practice and further research close the study.



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