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Edutainment taking root in East Africa

by **Kawira Mutisya** — February 11, 2019 in **East Africa**

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Education innovations is changing the ways that girls and boys are typically portrayed in the media.

Ubongo is a non-profit social enterprise that creates 'edutainment' Originally launched in Tanzania and now aired in parts of East Africa and West Africa

Akili and Me a show created with funding from HDIF, create positive role models and gender norms for girls and women

2.8 Million households tune in every week

CHILDREN'S EDUTAINMENT COMMUNICATING GENDER EQUALITY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Children's edutainment takes root in East Africa

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A non-profit social enterprise in Tanzania is paving way for children's edutainment programs in Africa.

The program, dubbed Ubongo portrays a diverse cast that aims to drive gender

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equality through characters that are empowered by the education they gain.

As Tanzania stands in the midst of the Fourth Industrialisation Revolution, digital forces are changing the way children are educated and how they perceive the world around them.

The program is currently airing in households across East and West Africa with an estimated 2.8 million viewers every week proving that this method of education has the potential to reach and positively affect children across the continent.

The 5th Sustainable Development Goal calls for gender equality and one avenue to install this principle at an early stage is through educational cartoons that encourage children to normalise equality between the sexes and expand the notion of gender roles in day-to-day life.

According to a statement seen by *The Exchange*, the shows portray young boys that treat their female counterparts equally and perform domestic and household work.

One of the edutainment series from Ubongo Media, *Akili and Me*, a program that was funded by the Human Development Innovation Fund (HDIF) has *Akili*, a young girl as the main protagonist whose life is filled with adventure and excitement.



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“It is important to portray characters in media that young children can identify and connect with and learn from. These approaches will uplift and motivate the generation of today to become the leaders and innovators of tomorrow,” reads the statement.

In East Africa, most Partner State governments are adopting universal education policies, private universities have gained even greater importance, as governments need private options to absorb the significantly large numbers the primary and secondary education systems produce today.

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