

Democratic Republic of the Congo

STUDIO HIRONDELLE-DRC

Studio Hironnelle-DRC is a project run by the Hironnelle Foundation, established in the Democratic Republic of Congo since 2014. Its goal is to contribute to the consolidation of democracy in the country through greater involvement of Congolese citizens, particularly women and young people, in public life thanks to professional and committed media outlets.

Its programs, broadcast in five languages (French, Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba, and Swahili) by a network of 88 media partners, put people at the center by providing them with reliable and independent information and amplifying their voices through strengthened local media. Since January 2024, its work has focused primarily on fact-checking and media literacy.



Map of Studio Hironnelle-DRC's partner media network in 2025.

ANNUAL BUDGET

500'000 CHF

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- European Union
- Switzerland (SDC Basic Contribution)
- Communication Partnership Agreements

More information is available on the website: www.studiohirondellerdc.org

Key FIGURES 2025



88 radio stations
partner



1.8 million weekly
listeners (2025)



759 people
trained



60'800 followers on
social media



5 languages of
distribution



20'300 website
users

Context

In 2025, fighting between the Congolese army and the M23 armed group intensified in the east of the country, forcing hundreds of thousands of people to flee their homes and exacerbating community tensions. In this context, the Congolese media, already weakened by a lack of resources, were particularly vulnerable to exploitation, especially in the face of growing challenges from disinformation on social media linked to issues of governance and peace.

Citizen-led and engaged media to strengthen democratic culture and combat misinformation

In 2025, Studio Hirondelle-DRC produced two weekly magazines and one monthly studio or public debate in five languages (French, Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba, Swahili). These programs addressed key national and local issues, including analysis of public policy and civic and political engagement among young people.

In Kinshasa, Kananga, Goma, Bukavu, and Lubumbashi, media partners received training in fact-checking and conflict-sensitive journalism. The editorial staff of Studio Hirondelle-DRC received support to refine its digital strategy. It also received training in fact-checking. In 2025, Studio Hirondelle-RDC also received training in analyzing disinformation on social media. The year 2025 was marked by the implementation of a pilot project to detect hate speech using AI on community radio stations in Goma and Bukavu.

Studio Hirondelle-DRC broadcast its programs through its network of 88 community radio stations partners across the country. In 2025, the Studio developed new digital formats for distribution on social media, particularly Facebook and YouTube, but also targeting young audiences on TikTok and Instagram.

OUR IMPACT

In addition to its radio and web media productions, Studio Hirondelle-DRC is making a special effort to increase its presence on social networks popular with young people (TikTok and Instagram). This is a way of reaching a different audience, increasing audience engagement, and expanding the reach of the content produced. It also corresponds to a development of Fondation Hirondelle

TESTIMONIAL

"The debate programs and magazines we have broadcast have played a key role in managing and preventing tensions within our communities. By directly addressing the sources of conflict and inviting the various parties to express themselves in a respectful setting, we have helped to calm situations that were in danger of exploding."

Partner radio station manager in Goma
(July 2025)

Studio Hirondelle-DRC continues to offer radio content while maintaining its added value: short, impactful, balanced, and relevant formats. The studio addresses issues related to the crisis affecting eastern DRC through weekly magazines as well as debates and round tables with local citizens and political and humanitarian actors. The team offers fact-checking content to help decipher false information. Media literacy programs are produced to support citizens in their critical consumption of different sources of information. These media literacy sessions are also offered at universities in Kinshasa.

In 2026, Studio Hirondelle-DRC uses digital tools capable of monitoring false information and hate speech online. The Studio team plans to strengthen its digital presence, particularly on TikTok and Instagram. Increasing the use of artificial intelligence to detect hate speech on community radio stations is also an important goal for 2026, with monitoring being extended to 100 radio stations across the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Training sessions are provided to both Studio journalists and partner media outlets. The topics covered include investigative techniques, fact-checking, data analysis, and humanitarian issues. Finally, in 2026, a partnership with Radio Okapi, the United Nations radio station in the DRC, will enable weekly rebroadcasting of content produced by Studio Hirondelle-DRC, increasing the audience for our productions.

PRIORITIES

- ▶ Humanitarian challenges related to the crisis in the east of the country
- ▶ Fact-checking
- ▶ Media literacy
- ▶ Strengthening its digital strategy

ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Broadcasting of 3.5 hours of programming per week in 5 languages
- ▶ Training for journalists from the studio and partner media outlets
- ▶ Monitoring misinformation and hate speech online and offline

BENEFICIARIES

Thanks to a national network of 88 media partners located in every province of the country, Studio Hirondelle-DRC's programs cover the entire country, with a potential audience (Kantar, 2019) of more than 30 million Congolese.

In addition to citizens, the entire media sector benefits from the productions and capacity building of media actors.

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

- Combating disinformation and misinformation
- Media literacy
- Strengthening democratic culture

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A journalist and the digital desk manager at Studio Hironnelle-DRC record a video for social media. April 2025.
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