Marie-Christine Ghanbari Jahromi aims to increase the self-esteem, motivation, and empathy of her students, using action-oriented learning methods, such as her Sportpatenproject, which strengthens and encourages children with the help of a sports mentor and physical activities. The participatory and collaborative nature of her sports project has also helped refugee children in Germany (from countries like Iran) integrate more readily into German society.

Using sport and keep-fit methods to strengthen children also encourages them to believe in themselves and teaches them to take responsibility and solve problems themselves. Incorporating findings from her dissertation researching the movement behaviour of children in Nigeria, her teaching incorporates African movement games. Her philosophy is that “It’s not about winning or losing, it’s about rhythm and team spirit” which is how less sporting children can be inspired and not left behind by such activities.

Her combination of research and teaching, sports methods and maths innovation wedded to technological tools, has led to the implementation of various social projects in schools, targeting refugee children and socially deprived children, in both Germany and Nigeria, to offer them hope, happiness and equal opportunities. The projects enable inter-cultural learning and learning from other systems, inside and outside the classroom, all of which adds up to Marie-Christine being a role model for her students, supporting them socially, psychologically, mentally and physically.

Marie-Christine, who studied mathematics and sports science at the University of Münster, has received various awards including the first prize at the Cusanuswerk in Germany in 2013, a nomination for the German Citizen Award 2016 and received the Future Leader award at Africa’s GoFPEP 2014.