

## **EFFECT OF GENDER EQUALITY PROCESSES ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF RURAL WOMEN IN RWANDA CASE STUDY: GICUMBI DISTRICT**

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## ABSTRACT

**T**he main objective of this study was to assess the effect of gender equality processes on the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda. Specifically, the study examined the behavior change processes and uplifting the rural livelihoods of women, the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in terms of gender equality and, finally, assessed the gender mainstreaming in Gicumbi district. This study has adopted a descriptive approach. The target population comprised the inhabitants of Gicumbi district, estimated to 395,606, with 86,075 households. The sample size of 45 households was selected based on Slovin's formula. Data were collected through documentary sources, structured interviews and a survey by questionnaire. Data processing tools, such editing, coding and tabulating of the data were also used. The study results revealed that 84.44% of the respondents don't understand the meaning of gender concept. This confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality testifies the ongoing challenges of gender equality to reduce poverty. With regard to the advantages of gender equality in Gicumbi district, the study results revealed that 51.11% of the respondents agreed that Gender equality improved as greater educational participation and technological advancement provided new employment opportunities for women, 28.89% of the respondents stated that gender equality encouraged the evolution of new social institutions and norms that overcome prior discriminatory practices while 15.56% of the respondents argued that there is more equal income distribution and higher growth rates thanks to gender equality. No one mentioned increased opportunity costs of staying home or a decline in fertility, which could exert a large positive effect on the labor force participation rate across the country. This is because their basic needs for food, clothing and shelter are not met. The poverty levels in the district are high compared to the national levels, where more than 44% of the children suffer from stunting because of a lack of adequate nutrition, 49.3% of the population is under poverty line and 33.9% of the population is in extreme poverty. This happened mainly due to the high percentage of Female Headed Households (more than 25% of the households), a high increase of the population, inadequate water and poor sanitation, high rates of soil erosion, poor waste management and high unemployment rates where 71.8% are unemployed as small scale farmers. As a result, women from Gicumbi district are unable to control their own destiny. In relation to the M&E mechanisms in terms of gender equality, the LogFrame and RBM Approaches have been adopted but have been criticized to focus on activities and outcomes instead of actors, which limit understanding of the processes and people involved in change and do not account for power relations and individuals' voices. Those approaches have also been criticized to not adequately assess and explore the role of context, such as exploring the systemic contributions to poverty or gender inequality, or acknowledging the broader socio-political factors that may constrain, advance, or reverse change. With regard to gender mainstreaming, this study identified the existence capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in civil society and public sector, but gender mainstreaming is treated as a goal rather than as a strategy. Concerning the private sector, capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning are missing because there is confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality, the tendency to treat gender mainstreaming as a goal rather than as a strategy and when gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was not linked in meaningful way to the expected results. Finally, the study suggests a number of recommendations, such as all development sectors, especially the private sector should treat gender mainstreaming as a strategy.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

The issue of gender inequality is embedded in patriarchy as a system that accords more powers to men than women. Thus, boys are attributed more values than girls. This is evident in different overarching issues, including poverty, which is felt more acutely by women than men. A number of studies have suggested a direct link between family-friendly policies and the existence of a thicker glass-ceiling in organizations. The study done by the International Labor Office has identified that the developed countries are internationally reputed for their gender equality policy provisions. Sweden has actively pursued gender equality legislations and has employed the best successful work/family balance policies in the world (Marlow & Carter, 2009).

#### 1.1.1 Changes in the Female-Male Gap in Labor Force Participation Worldwide

Sakellariou (2011) has explained that changes in educational attainment and demographic profile of the population, explain changes in the female-male gap in labor force participation, especially in rural communities. Changes in education and literacy contribute to the explanation of variation in female labor force participation within a country (Ogawa and Masuma, 2007; World Bank, 2010; Gallaway and Bernasek, 2004).

Recent findings by Cipollone, Patacchini, and Vallanti (2012) show that increasing (positive) effect of the level of education and diminishing (negative) effect of fertility choices play important role in explaining women's participation to the labor market, with important differences across EU countries characterized by different institutional and welfare settings.

With respect to the effect of culture, rapid development is particularly likely to be accompanied by greater gender rigidity in a country with a tradition of patriarchal institutional arrangements. Boserup (1970) and Shukri (1996) have found that Muslim and Latin American countries – countries with strong socio-religious views about women's role in the public sphere and the workplace - are more likely to be characterized by entrenched patriarchal institutions.

In addition, the inter-state conflict literature, such as the seminal work by Hegre, Ellingsen, Gates, and Gleditsch (2001) supports a quadratic relationship between democracy and gender equality. Democracy could unleash women's labor market potential and open up the decision-making process to the less privileged, including women, resulting in redistributive policies benefitting these groups. Democracy could also reduce gender inequality by increasing expenditures on social programs.

Largely due to the impact of female education on fertility and the creation of human capital of the next generation, a lower gender gap will spur economic development. While some earlier studies have suggested that gender inequality in education might actually increase economic growth (Barro, 1991; Barro and Xala-I-Marin, 1995; Barro and Lee, 1994), more recent works have shown that the opposite appears to be the case (Knowles, Lorgelly, and Owen, 2002; Forbes, 2000; Klasen, 2002). These studies not only differed from previous analyses in their findings of the impact of gender inequality in economic growth, but also were able to explain why earlier studies have found the opposite effect and why more careful econometric techniques yielded the new findings that gender inequality in education reduces economic growth. These macro studies are consistent with findings using micro data that show that girls have a higher marginal return to education, and even more so, if the impact of female education on fertility and education of the next generation is included (World Bank, 2001).

### 1.1.2 Gender Equality in Middle East and Africa

Gender inequality is sizable in South Asia or the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). In fact, Klasen (2002) estimated that 0.9 percentage points of the 1.8 percentage point annual per capita growth difference between the countries in MENA and those in East Asia and the Pacific can be attributed to higher initial gender inequality in education there as well as a slower closing of the gap vis-à-vis East Asia and the Pacific. While these results are instructive, they are based on information on gender equality and economic performance until 1990. Recently, new data on gender equality and economic performance have become available that now stretch to 2015.

While there is some literature that claims that high earnings gaps, combined with high female labor force participation rates, helped spur economic growth in some Asian countries (Seguino, 2000), there has not been a thorough empirical investigation of the role of gender gaps in *employment* on economic growth. Klasen (2010) included growth in female employment as a variable explaining economic growth and found a positive effect. This might have accounted for another 0.3 percentage points in the growth difference between the MENA region and East Asia and the Pacific (EAP). But these findings have to be treated with caution as they might suffer from reverse causality. In particular, it may be the case that high growth draws women into the labor force (rather than increasing female participation increases economic growth). There are no easy ways to correct this econometrically. Also, there are questions about the international comparability of data on labor force participation rates. These issues can be better treated in a panel framework, where one considers the impact of initial female labor force participation on subsequent economic growth.

Seguino (2000) found that growth in East Asia was heavily dependent on female-dominated export oriented light manufacturing. On the other hand, the absence of gender equality is among major development challenges, which face the African continent in its bid to achieve sustained growth and development in the 21st Century. Addressing these challenges is vital for achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in Africa, and thus the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The UN MDGs intended to reduce by half by 2015 the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day. There are 54 countries in Africa with a total population of more than 778 million. Its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) amounts to about \$535 billion, which translates into a GDP per capita of \$688 (Molla, 2000). The GDP for the whole continent is slightly less than that of Spain, a country with about 39 million inhabitants. Africa today accounts for less than 2% of global GDP, and sub-Saharan Africa for barely 1% (the figure is much lower, if the Republic of South Africa is excluded).

Africa's share of global GDP has stagnated since the 1970s and has actually shown a decline since 1980. The continent has most of the poorest countries, including Rwanda, as measured by the UNDP Human Development Index.

### 1.1.3 Gender Equality in Rwanda

In order to ensure sustainable development, it has become imperative to recognize the importance of the two sexes (male and female) as complementary biological entities and moreover, to respect full equity and equality of each of the two genders. The roles of men and women are socio-political and cultural constructs, which have evolved through history, and vary from one society to another. It is in this context that Rwanda has put more emphasis in promoting and empowering women and it has been successful to the extent that 45.5% of civil servants are women and 54.5% are men (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda [NISR], 2011).

However, according to United Nations Human Development Index (2014), Rwanda is still among the least developed countries. For the total population of Rwanda estimated to 11 million, approximately 53% are women. Around 5.2 million women live in poverty and 3.6 million of them in extreme poverty.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Rwanda has put more emphasis in promoting and empowering women and it has been successful to the extent that 45.5% of civil servants are women and 54.5% are men. However, after more than a decade, Rwanda is still among the least developed countries. The country has managed to reduce the incidence of poverty by 3.5 percent but the poverty incidence is much higher in rural areas (66%) than in urban areas (11% in Kigali city). While the incidence of poverty among FHHs (Female Headed Households) was reduced by 6.1%, the rate is still higher than that of the national average. The difference is more striking when comparing the percentage of FHHs living in extreme poverty (43.5%) with that of their male counterparts in the same group (35.1%).

Rwanda still has a long way to go because 57% of Rwandan people live below the poverty line, 37% live in extreme poverty and 44% of Rwandan children suffer from stunting because of a lack of adequate nutrition. Gender equality failed to reduce poverty in Rwanda because of the following factors: limited capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in all development sectors, including the public sector, private sector and the civil society; resistance to behavior change and poor understanding of gender concept; limited capacities, skills, agricultural assets and technologies to transform the agriculture of subsistence into a market oriented agriculture for food security and income generation; unsystematic and uncoordinated monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The main objective of this study was to assess the effect of gender equality processes on the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The specific objectives of the study were the following:

1. To examine the behavior change processes on uplifting the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda.
2. To determine the influence of the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms on uplifting the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda.
3. To assess the influence of gender mainstreaming on uplifting the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following are basic questions to the study:

1. Does behavior change processes uplift the rural livelihoods of women in Rwanda?
2. What is the influence of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in uplifting the livelihood of rural women in Rwanda?
3. What is the influence of gender mainstreaming on uplifting the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda?

### **1.5 Justification of the Study**

Rwanda has been successful in promoting and empowering women and several studies praised Rwanda for being a model in developing countries in terms of gender equality. However, none of them dared to assess the effect of that initiative, especially in rural areas. This study is likely to equip the researcher with appropriate skills and experience in conducting important future researches. It was also carried out in order to boost the capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in all development sectors.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study focused on assessment of the effect of gender equality processes on the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda, from 2003 to 2016. Gicumbi district has been chosen because it is among the poorest rural areas, with the population estimated to 395,606. It is located in the Northern Province.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The first limitation concerns the cross-disciplinary nature of this research project. The effect of gender equality was studied within the context of uplifting the livelihoods of women in rural areas. There is a perceptible jeopardy involved whenever concepts are borrowed from related disciplines and then applied in the present context. The second limitation is the extent to which the findings can be generalized beyond the case studied. To overcome all these limitations, further empirical evaluations would be needed to replicate the findings in different contexts.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the literature related to gender equality and women empowerment. It is subdivided into six sections: The theoretical review, the conceptual framework, the empirical review, the critique of the existing literature, the summary and the gaps analysis.

### **2.2 Empirical Literature Review**

There is a considerable literature that analyses the effect of gender equality processes on the livelihoods of local people. Anyanwu & Darline (2012) conducted their research and revealed that the key factors affecting gender equality in employment relate to the level/stage of economic development, globalization, demographic factors, macroeconomic factors, infrastructure availability, education, cultural and social norms, perceptions and expectations, and political systems. There is evidence that, as countries develop, female labor force participation, for example, displays a U-shaped trajectory. A number of hypotheses have been put forward as to why female labor force participation first falls before rising with economic development levels.

The research conducted by Boserup (1970) suggested that men's greater access to education and technologies implies that they displace women from the labor force during the early stages of a country's development. As development continues and women gain more access to education and technologies, female labor force participation increases. Another well-established hypothesis for this phenomenon focuses on income and substitution effects. As development occurs, households' unearned incomes rise, reducing the incentive of women to work outside the home. The negative impact of rising incomes on women's labor

force participation is termed the “income effect,” since greater household income implies that households are able to afford more female leisure time.

On the other hand, the substitution effect works in the opposite direction—as female wages rise, more women have the incentive to enter the labor market (Bloom, Canning, Fink and Finley, 2009; Tam, 2011). The stylized U-shaped curve holds for African countries. Countries like Namibia, Tunisia, Equatorial Guinea, Botswana and Gabon have substantially higher levels of female employment ratios than the continental average relative to their per capita GDP levels, while employment ratio is near the continental average in countries such as Nigeria and Comoros. The pattern of female employment ratio in Africa partly reflects natural resource endowment structure, whereby female employment ratio is lowest in fossil fuel-rich economies. For example, Algeria, Egypt, and Libya have very low employment ratios relative to their income levels. This pattern tends to conform with the often analyzed “cultural effect” in Muslim dominated countries where female employment is considered socially and culturally acceptable as long as it does not interfere with women’s primary role as wives and mothers given the notion, belief and persistent stereotypes that motherhood and child care represent a “woman’s true vocation” (Blackburn, 2004). As the case of Tunisia, however, demonstrates, legislation can codify social norms and “gendered beliefs” into gender-equalizing labor practices.

Eastin & Prakash (2013) find a curvilinear relationship between economic development and gender inequality (‘S shaped’), with three distinct stages. In the first stage, economic development improves gender equality because it enables greater female labor force participation. In the second stage, labor force stratification and gender discrimination encourage divergent male/female income trajectories, which decrease opportunity costs of female labor force withdrawal and lend credence to social resistance against rising gender norms. As a result, there is a decline in initial equality gains. In the final stage, gender equality again improves as greater educational participation and technological advancement provide new employment opportunities for women, increase opportunity costs of staying home, and encourage the evolution of new social institutions and norms that overcome prior discriminatory practices.

Recent empirical work finds that globalization can improve gender equality because Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and international trade can generate employment opportunities for women (Richards and Gelleny, 2007). According to Oostendorp (2009), inflows of foreign capital to local markets are held to have positive effects on gender equality as Multinational Corporations (MNCs) frequently provide women with employment outside of the home – often in countries where these opportunities would not have existed in its absence. However, in the long term, FDI may make women more likely to either lose their jobs to men or be pushed down the production chain into subcontracting work. Furthermore, FDI may further widen the gender gap as technical training is mostly offered primarily to men, thereby “improving male technical knowledge and reducing women’s access to technology and employment” (Parpart, Connelly and Barrideau, 2000). Also, foreign investment could have a disproportional adverse effect on women if it serves to reinforce existing gender inequalities (Ward, 1984). However, economic integration can solidify gendered occupational segregation, which forces women into poorly paid jobs. At the same time, policies designed to increase trade and FDI inflows reduce state revenue, and therefore reduce the government’s capacity to provide social services. Because women are often the key beneficiaries of these services, economic integration can undermine gender equality in many dimensions.

In a recent study, Tseloni, Tsoukis and Emmanouilides (2011) find that a relatively greater participation of women in paid employment is evidenced in more populous countries, with a greater share of women in their

populations, more equal income distribution, and higher growth rates, but lower level of economic development, democracy ratings or international capital mobility (i.e., current account surplus or deficit/GDP). Also, declines in fertility have been found to exert a large positive effect on the labor force participation rate across the world (Bloom et al., 2009)

According to the findings of Niemi and Lloyd (1981), inflation has an independent, positive impact on female labor force participation. As a result of women's lower cash holdings relative to men, it is possible that women are less adversely affected than men (Cardoso, 1992).

Chen (2004) shows that increases in the level of ICT infrastructure tend to improve gender equality in labor activity rates. In addition, the author shows that education among the general population, gender equality in education, and economic development are important for improving gender equality. Lin (2012), in a study of the Japanese case, found that most of the aggregate changes in the country's gender employment gap result from changes in the regular and the non-regular employment between sectors. The combined effects of structural changes and the business cycle play the main roles in explaining the employment changes in Japan. Industry ICT intensity has increased the share of male regular employment in sectors that hire a larger proportion of professional workers but the opposite story is found in the case of women. This suggests that there is a gender bias in ICT usage within specialist/managerial occupations, with a larger share of women possibly involved in less complex computer tasks relative to men, and those tasks are more likely to be substitute by computer and irregular workers.

Sakellariou (2011) has explained that changes in educational attainment and demographic profile of the population, explain changes in the female-male gap in labor force participation, especially in rural communities. Changes in education and literacy contribute to the explanation of variation in female labor force participation within a country (Ogawa and Masuma, 2007; World Bank, 2010; Gallaway and Bernasek, 2004).

Recent findings by Cipollone, Patacchini, and Vallanti (2012) show that increasing (positive) effect of the level of education and diminishing (negative) effect of fertility choices play important role in explaining women's participation to the labor market, with important differences across EU countries characterized by different institutional and welfare settings.

With respect to the effect of culture, rapid development is particularly likely to be accompanied by greater gender rigidity in a country with a tradition of patriarchal institutional arrangements. Boserup (1970) and Shukri (1996) have found that Muslim and Latin American countries – countries with strong socio-religious views about women's role in the public sphere and the workplace - are more likely to be characterized by entrenched patriarchal institutions.

In addition, the inter-state conflict literature, such as the seminal work by Hegre, Ellingsen, Gates, and Gleditsch (2001) supports a quadratic relationship between democracy and gender equality. Democracy could unleash women's labor market potential and open up the decision-making process to the less privileged, including women, resulting in redistributive policies benefitting these groups. Democracy could also reduce gender inequality by increasing expenditures on social programs.

Klasen & Lamanna (2003), while using cross-country and panel regressions, they investigated to what extent gender gaps in education and employment reduce economic growth. Investigating a long time period (1960-2000), they updated the results of previous studies on education gaps on growth and extended the analysis to employment gaps using panel data. They then calculated the magnitude of the effects by comparing actual growth in the Middle East and North Africa with growth that would have taken place if they had the much

smaller gender gaps in East Asia and the Pacific. Their point estimates suggested that the growth 'costs' of gender gaps in education, when considered alone, amount to about 0.7 percentage points per capita per year, and the combined 'costs' of education and employment gaps there amount to 0.7-1.5 percentage point differences in growth, based on their preferred specification. Gender gaps in employment appeared to have a larger effect than gender gaps in education, although their findings should be treated as preliminary.

Largely due to the impact of female education on fertility and the creation of human capital of the next generation, a lower gender gap will spur economic development. While some earlier studies have suggested that gender inequality in education might actually increase economic growth (Barro, 1991; Barro and Sala-i-Martin, 1995; Barro and Lee, 1994), more recent works have shown that the opposite appears to be the case (Knowles, Lorgelly, and Owen, 2002; Forbes, 2000; Hill and King, 1995; Klasen, 2002). These studies not only differed from previous analyses in their findings of the impact of gender inequality in economic growth, but also were able to explain why earlier studies have found the opposite effect and why more careful econometric techniques yielded the new findings that gender inequality in education reduces economic growth. These macro studies are consistent with findings using micro data that show that girls have a higher marginal return to education, and even more so, if the impact of female education on fertility and education of the next generation is included (World Bank, 2001). The effects found are quite large for the regions where gender inequality is sizable, such as South Asia or the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). In fact, Klasen (2002) estimated that 0.9 percentage points of the 1.8 percentage point annual per capita growth difference between the countries in MENA and those in East Asia and the Pacific can be attributed to higher initial gender inequality in education there as well as a slower closing of the gap vis-à-vis East Asia and the Pacific. While these results are instructive, they are based on information on gender equality and economic performance until 1990. Recently, new data on gender equality and economic performance have become available that now stretch to 2016.

A number of Rwandan researchers have conducted researches on gender and development. Recently, Munyaneza & Bayisenge (2016) after conducting an exploratory research on poverty reduction among women households in Gicumbi District, they discovered that microfinance has contributed to poverty alleviation among women heading households allowing them access to adequate accommodation, to find food easily, to find clothes easily, and access to education for children etc. but with numerous challenges such as lack of mortgage, lack of their husbands' support, high interest rate, insufficient loans, and diversion of funds.

## **2.3 Theoretical Review**

This section deals with gender and development approach, the confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality, theories about when during design gender analysis is not linked to the expected results, the relationship between gender and business failure and, finally, the professional status and gender disadvantage.

### **2.3.1 Gender and Development Approach**

Gender and development approach focuses on the socially constructed basis of differences between men and women and the need to challenge existing gender roles and relations (Reeves, 2000). This approach was majorly influenced by writing of academic scholars such as Oakley (1972) and Rubin (1975) which emphasize the social relationship between men and women. These relationships they argue have systematically subordinated women (Moser, 1993). This departs from the theory of women in development

which perceived women's problem in terms of their biological differences rather than gender. Influenced by this work, by the late 1970s, some practitioners working in the development field started questioning the adequacy of focusing on women in isolation. This theory focuses primarily on gender division of labor and gender as a relation of power embedded in institutions. However, this theory has been criticized for emphasizing the social differences between men and women while neglecting the bonds between them and also the potential for changes in roles (Reeves, 2000).

### **2.3.2 Confusion about Concepts and Objectives Relating to Gender Equality**

According to World Bank (2001), the ongoing challenges of gender equality to reduce poverty is the confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality. This needs to be addressed through dialogue with partners, and capacity building within agencies. It is still common for the word "gender" to be used as a synonym for "women", and men are missing from most evaluations reports. This means that there is little or no focus in these evaluations on gender relations (economic, social and power relations between men and women), how these relations influence women's capacity to participate or benefit, and on the impact that development activities may have on gender equality. Another problem is the tendency to treat gender mainstreaming as a goal, rather than as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men.

### **2.3.3 During Design Gender Analysis Is Not Linked to the Expected Results**

It has also been investigated that when gender analysis is undertaken during design, it is often not linked in any meaningful way to the activities to be implemented, or to the expected results. A failure to integrate gender analysis with overall social, poverty and sustainability analysis increases the likelihood that women will be marginalized during design and implementation. Integrated social, gender and poverty analysis needs to identify: the different vulnerabilities of females and males to becoming poor (such as differences in access to employment, productive resources, education, and lack of decision-making power over life choices); the different experiences of males and females living in poverty (such as in access to basic services, legal redress, and vulnerability to violence, illness and various forms of exploitation); the different options which females and males have to escape poverty, and their priorities; and, different impacts of poverty reduction interventions on males and females (World Bank, 2001).

### **2.3.4 Relationship between Gender and Business Failure**

Knotts, Jones and La Preze (2004) established the relationship between gender and business failure. They argued that despite the growth of women-owned businesses, females still face challenges compared to men. They found that despite the similarities between male-owned firms and female-owned firms, they took different routes to success based on the owner's preferences. These authors examined potential gender differences in strategic orientation to determine the impact it had on survival for potential mass merchandizing supplies. They found that male and female entrepreneurs achieved similar success rates by different means although the difference between production and marketing activity reliance was not as great for females as it was for males. A key supposition in entrepreneurship research is that a firm's resources at the start-up are critical determinants of success and survival: Intangible assets in the form of human capital, and tangible resources from the environment (e.g. capital, partners, employees and suppliers). To the extent that deficiencies in human capital render new firms vulnerable, those started up by women are more likely to have higher odds of discontinuation than those started by men.

### 2.3.5 Professional Status and Gender Disadvantage

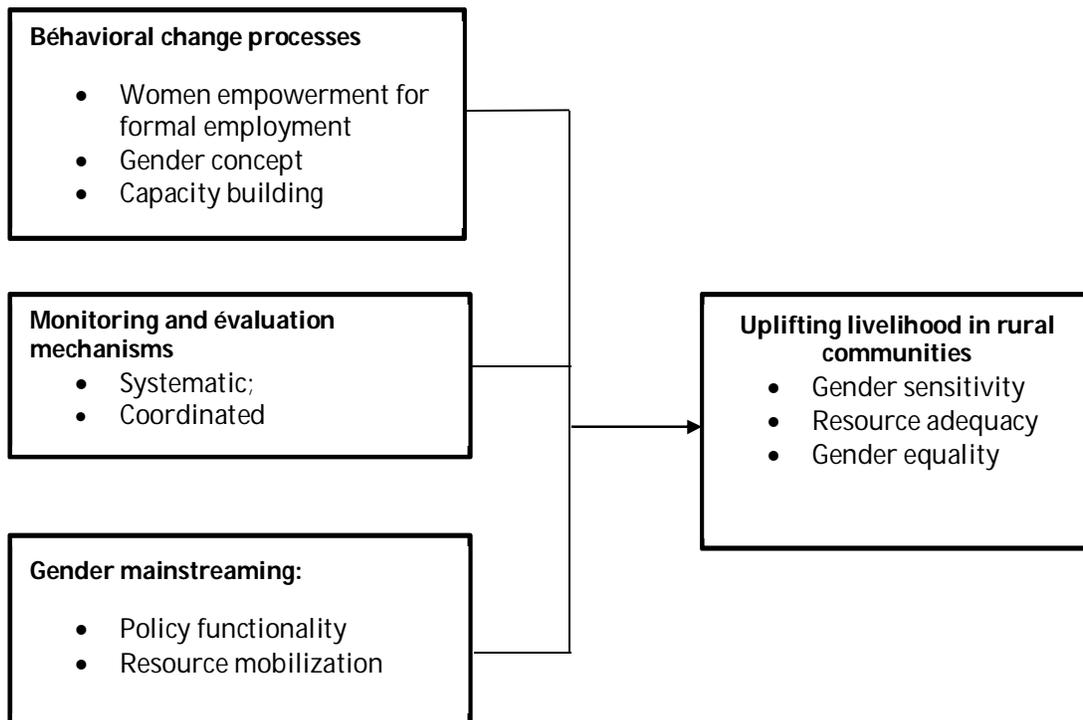
Marlow & Carter (2004) suggested that the difference in performance or success is often due to differences in the industries that are chosen most often by each gender. This choice is often a consequence of differing interests or concerns between males and females, not structural barriers, and results from a higher proportion of males seeking profit goals and females seeking social goals. These motivational differences may be the reason that males and females concentrate on different industries, at least to some extent, and these industry differences may account for some performance disparities.

### 2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in this study is based on the relationship between independent and dependent variables. In this case, it is to assess the effect of gender equality processes on the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda.

#### Independent Variables

#### Dependent Variables



**Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework**

As figure 2.1 indicates, without ignoring the moderating variables such as climatic factors, demographic factors, personal causes, economic causes and social causes, the effectiveness of gender equality processes is the main factor influencing the livelihoods of rural women.

#### 2.4.1 Dependent Variable

According to Tseloni, Tsoukis and Emmanouilides (2011), the livelihoods of rural women are uplifted when: There is gender sensitivity, Resource adequacy and gender equality which result in greater

educational participation and technological advancement provided new employment opportunities for women; Evolution of new social institutions and norms that overcome prior discriminatory practices; There has been decline in fertility (fewer children); There is more equal income distribution and higher growth rates; Women are able to control their own destiny. A relatively greater participation of women in paid employment is evidenced in more populous countries, with a greater share of women in their populations, more equal income distribution, and higher growth rates, but lower level of economic development, democracy ratings or international capital mobility (i.e., current account surplus or deficit/GDP).

Declines in fertility have been found to exert a large positive effect on the labor force participation rate across the world (Bloom et al., 2009). In addition, Niemi and Lloyd (1981) stated that inflation has an independent, positive impact on female labor force participation. As a result of women's lower cash holdings relative to men, it is possible that women are less adversely affected than men (Cardoso, 1992).

### **2.4.2 Independent Variables**

The effectiveness of gender equality processes are measured by behavior change processes, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms together with gender mainstreaming:

#### **2.4.2.1 Behaviour Change Processes**

The behaviour change processes about gender are characterized by the following: Women are empowered for formal employment; people understand gender concept; and there is capacity building in terms of skills, agricultural assets and technologies to transform the agriculture of subsistence into market oriented agriculture.

Chen (2004) shows that increases in the level of ICT infrastructure tend to improve gender equality in labor activity rates. He also shows that education among the general population, gender equality in education, and economic development are important for improving gender equality. Lin (2012) found that most of the aggregate changes in the country's gender employment gap result from changes in the regular and the non-regular employment between sectors. The combined effects of structural changes and the business cycle play the main roles in explaining the employment changes. Industry ICT intensity has increased the share of male regular employment in sectors that hire a larger proportion of professional workers but the opposite story is found in the case of women. This suggests that there is a gender bias in ICT usage within specialist/managerial occupations, with a larger share of women possibly involved in less complex computer tasks relative to men, and those tasks are more likely to be substitute by computer and irregular workers.

Sakellariou (2011) has explained that changes in educational attainment and demographic profile of the population, explain changes in the female-male gap in labor force participation, especially in rural communities. Changes in education and literacy contribute to the explanation of variation in female labor force participation within a country (Ogawa and Masuma, 2007; World Bank, 2010; Gallaway and Bernasek, 2004).

Cipollone, Patacchini, and Vallanti (2012) show that increasing (positive) effect of the level of education and diminishing (negative) effect of fertility choices play important role in explaining women's participation to the labor market, with important differences across EU countries characterized by different institutional and welfare settings.

#### **2.4.2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms**

For gender equality processes to be effective, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms must be systematic and coordinated. The ongoing challenge of gender equality to reduce poverty is the confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality. This needs to be addressed through dialogue with partners, and capacity building within agencies. It is still common for the word “gender” to be used as a synonym for “women”, and men are missing from most evaluations reports. This means that there is little or no focus in these evaluations on gender relations (economic, social and power relations between men and women), how these relations influence women’s capacity to participate or benefit, and on the impact that development activities may have on gender equality (World Bank, 2001).

#### **2.4.2.3 Gender Mainstreaming**

For gender mainstreaming, there must be policy functionality and resource mobilization that result in capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning in the public sector, the private sector and the civil society. There is another problem of gender equality, which is the tendency to treat gender mainstreaming as a goal, rather than as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men (World Bank, 2001).

Despite the similarities between male-owned firms and female-owned firms, they take different routes to success based on the owner’s preferences. Male and female entrepreneurs achieve similar success rates by different means although the difference between production and marketing activity reliance is not as great for females as it is for males. A key supposition in entrepreneurship research is that a firm’s resources at the start-up are critical determinants of success and survival: Intangible assets in the form of human capital, and tangible resources from the environment (e.g. capital, partners, employees and suppliers). To the extent that deficiencies in human capital render new firms vulnerable, those started up by women are more likely to have higher odds of discontinuation than those started by men (Knotts, Jones & La Preze, 2004).

### **2.5 Critique of the Existing Literature**

Several studies discovered positive relationship between gender equality and livelihoods of women in developed countries. Developing countries have been criticized to fail to uplift the livelihoods of women because there is a lack of gender equality. So, gender equality was supposed to help them to uplift the livelihoods of women.

While there is some literature that claims that high earnings gaps, combined with high female labor force participation rates, helped spur economic growth in some Asian countries (Seguino, 2000), there has not been a thorough empirical investigation of the role of gender gaps in *employment* on economic growth. Klasen (1999) included growth in female employment as a variable explaining economic growth and found a positive effect. This might have accounted for another 0.3 percentage points in the growth difference between the MENA region and East Asia and the Pacific (EAP). But these findings have to be treated with caution as they might suffer from reverse causality. In particular, it may be the case that high growth draws women into the labor force (rather than increasing female participation increases economic growth). There are no easy ways to correct this econometrically. Also, there are questions about the international comparability of data on labor force participation rates. These issues can be better treated in a panel framework, where one considers the impact of initial female labor force participation on subsequent economic growth.

Gender inequality reduces the average amount of human capital in a society and thus harms economic performance. It does so as by artificially restricting the pool of talent from which to draw for education and thereby excluding highly qualified girls (and taking less qualified boys instead). Moreover, if there are declining marginal returns to education, restricting the education of girls to lower levels while taking the education of boys to higher levels means that the marginal return to educating girls is higher than that of boys and thus would boost overall economic performance (Knowles et al., 2002; World Bank 2001).

A second argument relates to externalities of female education. Promoting female education is known to reduce fertility levels, reduce child mortality levels, and promote the education of the next generation. Each factor in turn has a positive impact on economic growth. Thus gender gaps in education reduce the benefits to society of high female education (Lagerlöf, 1999, Galor and Weil, 1996, World Bank, 2001).

A third argument relates to international competitiveness. Many East Asian countries have been able to be competitive on world markets through the use of female-intensive export-oriented manufacturing industries. In fact, a significant share of their high growth was based on the use of such export-oriented female-intensive manufacturing industries. In order for such competitive export industries to emerge and grow, women need to be educated and there must no barrier to their employment in such sectors. Gender inequality in education and employment would reduce the ability of countries to capitalize on these opportunities (Seguino, 2000; World Bank, 2001).

A fourth argument is that gender gaps in employment impose a similar distortion on the economy as do gender gaps in education. It artificially reduces the pool of talent from which employers can draw upon, thereby reducing the average ability of the workforce. A fifth argument relates to the importance of female employment for their bargaining power within families. There is a sizable literature that demonstrates that female employment and earnings increase their bargaining power in the home (World Bank, 2001). This not only benefits the women concerned, but their greater bargaining power has been shown to lead to greater investments in the health and education of their children, thus promoting human capital of the next generation and therefore economic growth (World Bank, 2001).

A sixth argument relates to governance. There is a growing literature that has suggested that women are less prone to corruption and nepotism than men (World Bank 2001). Improving access to women in the workforce is therefore likely to improve governance in business and government. It is important to point out that it is theoretically not easy to separate the effects between gender gaps in education and employment. Gender gaps in education might automatically lead to gender gaps in employment, particularly in the formal sector, where employers will prefer educated workers and thus will not consider applications of uneducated women. Conversely, if there are large barriers to female employment, rational parents might decide that education of girls is not as lucrative which might therefore lead to lower demands for female education and resulting gender gaps in education.

Thus gender gaps in education and employment are closely related to each other. They are not measuring the same thing, however, and thus are important to investigate separately. For one, it might be the case that the two issues are largely driven by institutional factors that govern education and employment access and do not therefore greatly depend on each other. For example, one might think of an education policy that strives to achieve universal education and thus reduces gender gaps, while there continue to be significant barriers to employment for females in the labour market. This might be particularly relevant to the situation in the Middle East and North Africa (World Bank 2001).

Moreover, the externalities of female education and female employment are not the same. For example,

female education is likely to lead to lower fertility and child mortality of the off-spring, while the effect of female employment on these items is likely to be much smaller and more indirect (working mainly through greater female bargaining power; and there may be also be opposite effects including that the absence of women in the home might in some cases negatively impact on the quality of child care). Conversely, the governance externality applies solely to female employment, not to female education. On the empirical evidence, there is a considerable literature now that documents that gender gaps in education reduce economic growth (World Bank 2001).

## 2.6 Summary

The preceding sections reviewed the relevant literature pertaining to the effect and relationship of the various variables that affect the livelihoods of women. The literature review covered gender and development approach, confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality, how during design gender analysis is not linked to the expected results, relationship between gender and business failure as well as professional status and gender disadvantage. It was revealed that the key factors affecting gender equality in employment relate to the level/stage of economic development, globalization, demographic factors, macroeconomic factors, infrastructure availability, education, cultural and social norms, perceptions and expectations, and political systems. Different researches have established a positive relationship between gender equality and livelihoods of women in developed countries but developing countries have been criticized to fail to uplift the livelihoods of women because there is a lack of gender equality.

## 2.7 Research Gap

A number of studies have examined various aspects pertaining to uplifting the livelihoods of women. Such studies include those analyzing key factors affecting gender equality in employment by Anyanwu & Darline (2012), those focusing on income and substitution effects as gender equality was studied by Boserup (1970), Goldin (1995), Mammen and Paxson (2000), Bloom, Canning, Fink & Finley (2009), Tam (2011), King & Hill (1993), Knowles et al. (2002) and Eastin & Prakash (2013), those focusing on globalization and gender equality by Richards & Gelleny (2007), Oostendorp (2009), Parpart, Connelly & Barrideau (2000), Forbes (2000), Appiah & McMahan (2002), Klasen (2002), Barro (1991), Klasen (1999), Seguino (2000) and Ward (1984), those focusing on participation of women in paid employment by Tseloni, Tsoukis & Emmanouilides (2011), Bloom et al. (2009) and Cardoso (1992). All of those researches and many others have established a positive relationship between gender equality and livelihoods of women in developed countries. Developing countries have been criticized to fail to uplift the livelihoods of women because there is a lack of gender equality. So, gender equality was supposed to help them to uplift the livelihoods of women.

Finally, it is clear from the reviewed literature, especially from NISR (2011), United Nations Human Development Index (2014) as well as from Munyaneza & Bayisenge (2016), that Rwanda, which is a developing country, has been successful in promoting and empowering women. It was praised by several studies to be a model of gender equality but there is a need to assess the effectiveness of that initiative, especially in rural areas. This study was carried out in order to boost the capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in all development sectors.

### 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology that was used in this study. Areas which are covered in this chapter include the research design, target population, sampling technique and frame, data collection procedure, data analysis and ethical consideration.

#### 3.2 Research Design

A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Selltiz, 1965). In this study,

descriptive approach was used and the mean calculated for better interpretation. Mean,  $\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{n}$ . In addition, numerical data analysis was made to find out the relationship between the variables and answer to the research questions.

#### 3.3 Study Population

The target population comprised the inhabitants of Gicumbi district. They were estimated to 395,606, with 86,075 households. There were no exclusion criteria.

#### 3.4 Sampling Design

The ultimate goal of sample design is to select a set of elements from a population in such a way that descriptions of those elements accurately portray characteristics of the population (parameters) from which they were selected (Dattalo, 2008: 4). The sample size of this study was selected based on Slovin's formula of determining sample size as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N * (e)^2}$$

Where n = Sample size; N = Total population; e = Error tolerance

Taking the confidence level of 85%, thereby giving a margin error of 15%, the sample size was determined as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N * (e)^2} = \frac{86075}{1 + 86075 * (0.15)^2} = 44.42151 \approx 45$$

The sample size is 45 households.

#### 3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Data for this study were collected through documentary sources, structured interviews and a survey by questionnaire.

**Documentary sources:** Available documents concerning the study have been consulted, such as textbooks, dissertations and reports. There are also some documents accessed from Internet sources.

**Interviews schedule:** The researcher used the structured interview, where key points related to gender equality and poverty were asked to the respondents and recorded.

**Survey by questionnaire:** The researcher asked the selected respondents (residents of Gicumbi district) views on gender equality and the livelihoods of rural women by addressing to them questionnaires to be filled. Data collection was conducted in different days of the week and varying time periods. The researcher engaged one research assistant to help in data collection.

### 3.6 Validity and Reliability

The researcher made sure that the questions answered by the respondents were clear and understandable, in order to ensure the accuracy and consistency of data. In this perspective, the researcher conducted a pilot test to predict perfectly the effectiveness of research instruments which were submitted to supervisor for comments and her suggestions were accepted and adjustments were made. The combinations of research instruments and methods that were used by the researcher granted the reliability of the data collected.

### 3.7 Data Processing

Data collected from respondents is usually in a raw form, which is not easy to interpret and analyze for conclusions. Data processing is the transformation of respondents' views into meaningful text. As a result, time is a need to process it before proper analysis can be made. Therefore, editing, coding and tabulating of the data were done in order to be able to handle them easily.

**Editing:** After the collection of data, editing to discover items that were misunderstood by the respondents was exercised. In case of unclear responses, the researcher probed more from the respondents so as to make them clear before taking them.

Editing was done to ensure completeness, accuracy, uniformity and legibility in interview guide after data collection, the inspection followed in order to discover items that should be misunderstood by the respondents to detect gaps and other weaknesses in data collection methods.

**Coding:** This was used to summarize data by classifying the different responses given into categories for easy manipulation.

**Tabulation:** In this study, after eliminating errors, codes were assigned to each answer. This stage helped the manual construction of statistical tables showing the frequency distribution of answers to questions addressed to the respondents.

### 3.8 Data Analysis

Data collected were both quantitative and qualitative. Qualitative data were entered into a compilation sheet from which themes were identified. Each theme was transferred into a master sheet from which the analysis was done in relation to objectives of this study. Qualitative data were presented in form of narratives with verbatim reporting so that some strong feelings of respondents can be reported as they are, otherwise called content analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. For descriptive statistics, frequency tables and percentages were applied. Descriptive statistics provided simple summaries about the sample and about the observations made.

### 3.9 Ethical Consideration

The research ethics is the domain of enquiry that identifies ethical challenges with a view to developing guidelines that safeguard against any harm and protects the rights of human subjects in research. In this study, the researcher assured that the informed consent was the cornerstone and important aspect. This also implied that the subjects were free to withdraw from the study at any point. The right to confidentiality was essential and was taken care of.

## 4 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1 Introduction

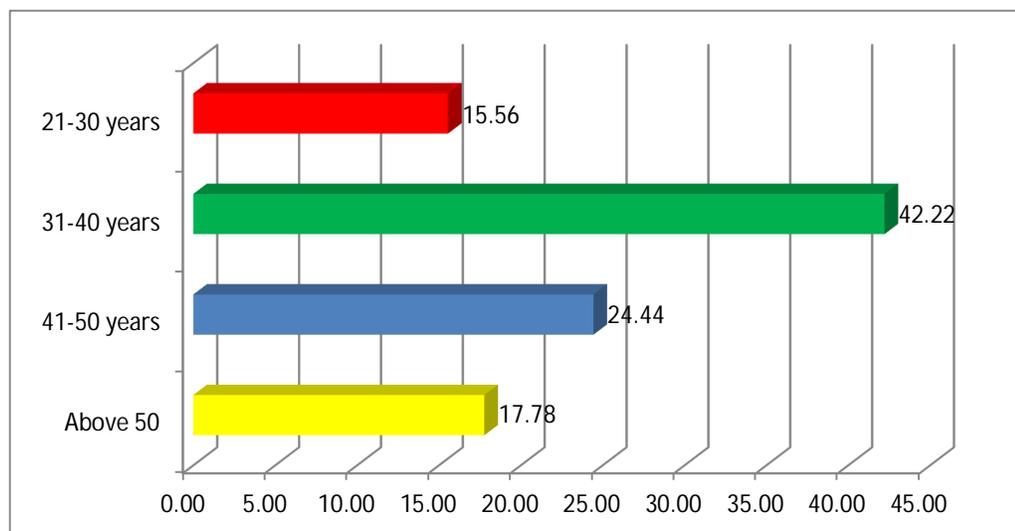
This chapter represents the empirical findings and results of the analysis of the variables using techniques described in chapter three. It focuses on the characteristics of the respondents and the discussion of study results.

### 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

There was an interest in probing what the people's demographic characteristics were in order to indicate variations of respondents based on age group, sex, marital status, size of households, level of education and occupation.

#### 4.2.1 Age Group of the Respondents

From the findings of the study, most of the respondents (19/45 which represent 42.22%) were aged in the range of between 31-40 years, 24.44% were in the range of between 41-50 years, 15.56% were in the range of 21-30 years while 17.78% were aged over 50 years of age.



**Figure 4.12**Category of the Respondents by Age Group

These results reveal that the majority of the respondents belonged to the 31-40 years age group whereas the smallest percentage belonged to those under 31 years of age. This means that the majority of the respondents are mature enough to know the benefits of gender equality and they are positioned to show the difference

between the two periods (before and after gender equality was put on more emphasis by the Government of Rwanda).

#### 4.2.2 Sex of the Respondents

From the result of the study, majority (31/45 which represent 68.89% of the respondents) were female while only 31.11% were male.

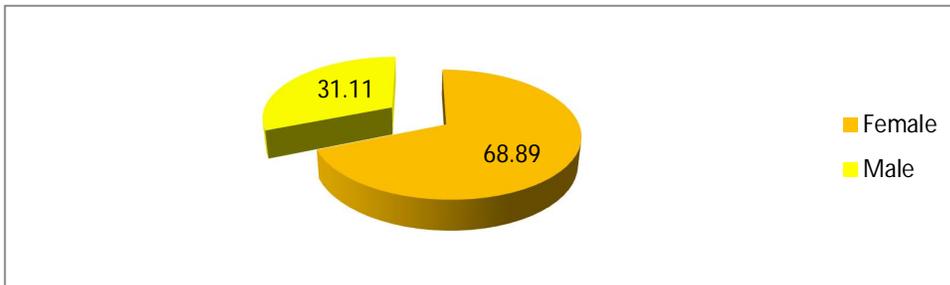


Figure 4.23 Category of the Respondents by Gender

This reveals that, because the female respondents were more targeted by this study, the representation of the respondents of both groups was fair. Moreover, as it appears that the percentage of female is greater than the one of men, it is basically due to the fact that this reflects the situation of Gicumbi district in particular and the country in general, where more than 50% of Rwandan people are female.

#### 4.2.3 Marital Status of the Respondents

The majority of the respondents (28/45 which represent 62.22%) said they were married, 11.11% were single, 8.89% were divorced while 17.78% were widows and widowers.

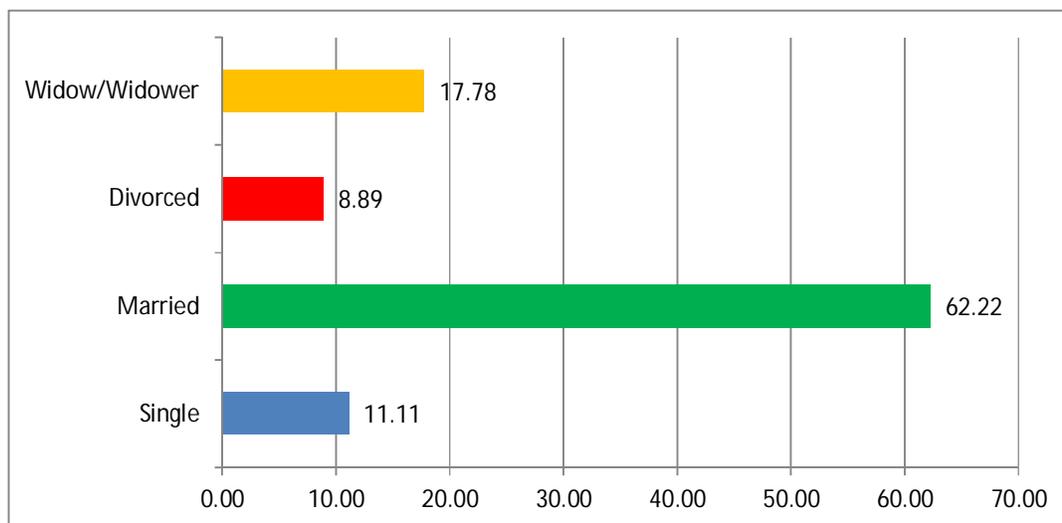


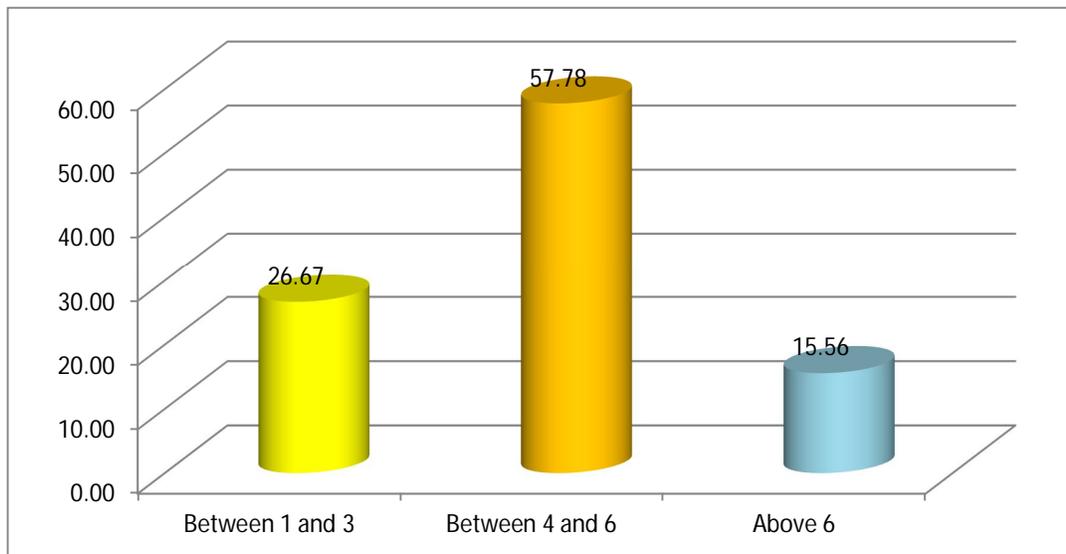
Figure 4.3 Category of the Respondents by Marital Status

This means that the majority of the respondents is stable in terms of family relationship and needs to struggle for more equal income distribution and higher growth rates so that they can provide basic needs to

their family like shelter, foods, etc.

#### 4.2.4 Size of the Household

On the size of their households, results showed that most of the respondents (26/45 which represent 57.78%) had between 4 and 6 members, 26.67% had between 1 and 3 members, while 15.56% had above 6 members of household.

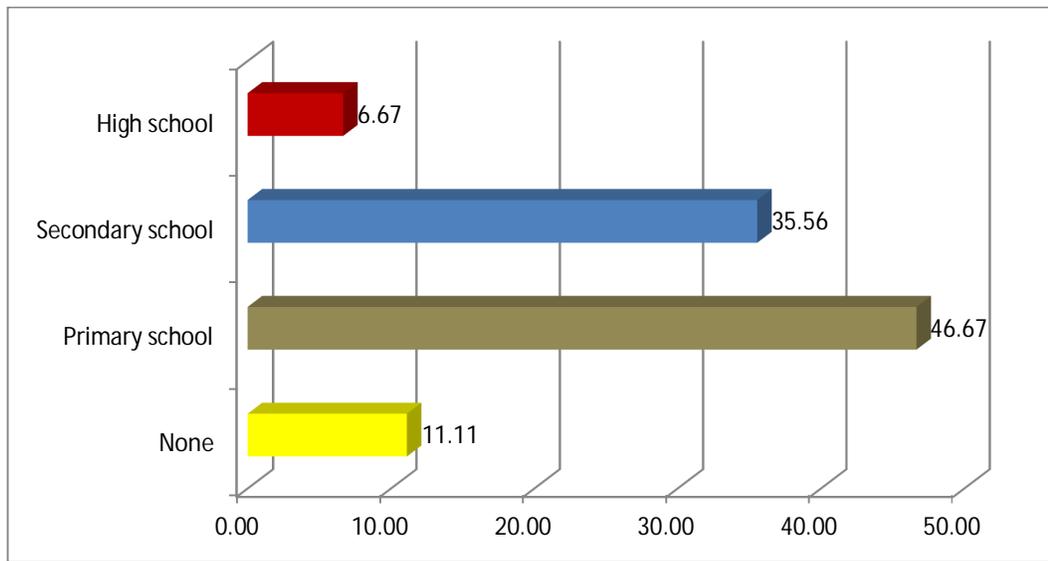


**Figure 4.45** Category of the respondents by Size of Household

This situation of high percentage of family members' big number is due to continued rapid population growth resulting from an increase in fertility combined with a decline in infant mortality. This has a negative effect on their livelihoods because they have too many mouths to feed.

#### 4.2.5 Levels of Education of the Household's Bread Winner

On respondents' level of education, 21/45 (46.673% of the respondents) had primary school as their highest level of education. In addition, 35.56% had secondary school level, 6.67% had high school certifications while 11.11% had no educational qualification.

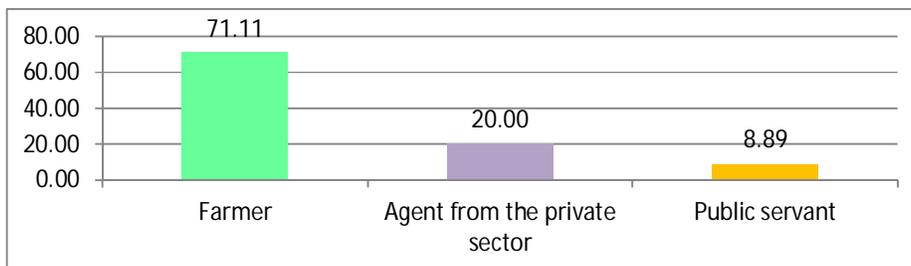


**Figure 4.56**Category of the respondents by Educational level

Although there is a significant number of the household's bread winners who have only primary school qualification, there is a relatively small number of illiterates. This means that there is better educational participation which may provide new employment opportunities for them.

#### 4.2.6 Occupation of the Household's Bread Winner

On respondents' occupation, majority (32/45 = 71.11%) were farmers, the agents from the private sector were 20.00% and the public servants were 8.89%.



**Figure 4.67**Category of the Respondents by Occupation

As land is scarce and the use of it is constrained by the absence of a well-defined land administration system and poor settlement patterns in Gicumbi district, these people are unable to control their own destiny.

### 4.3 Presentation of Findings

This section of findings is based on three specific objectives of the study: Examination of the behavior change processes and uplifting the rural livelihoods of women; Appraisal of the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in terms of gender equality; Assessment of the gender mainstreaming in Gicumbi district.

#### 4.3.1 Examination of the Behavior Change Processes on Uplifting the Rural Livelihoods of Women

This subsection starts with the understanding of gender concept by people from Gicumbi district. Then, it focuses on the benefits from gender equality in that district.

#### *4.3.1.1 Understanding of Gender Concept by People from Gicumbi*

In order to examine the behavior change processes, the first question was formulated in such a way that the respondents explain if they understand the meaning of gender concept. Table 4.1 shows that 15.56% of the respondents understand the meaning of gender concept while 84.44% don't.

**Table 4.1 Respondents' Views on the Meaning of Gender Concept**

<b>They understand the meaning of gender concept</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	7	15.56
No	38	84.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

The respondents have argued that it is common for the word "gender" to be used as a synonym for "women", and men are missing from most evaluations reports related to gender. This confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality testifies the ongoing challenges of gender equality to reduce poverty. This means that there is still little or no focus on gender relations, how these relations influence women's capacity to participate or benefit, and on the impact that development activities may have on gender equality.

The study was also interested in what local authorities do to empower rural women to access formal jobs. The results from the interview conducted with the authorities of Gicumbi district revealed that Rwanda has finalized the preparation of its second Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS II) to guide the country's medium-term development aspirations over the period 2013/14 to 2017/18. The overall objective of EDPRS II is to increase the quality of life of all Rwandans through rapid and sustainable economic growth (11.5% per annum) and accelerated poverty reduction (to below 30%). To meet these objectives, EDPRS II has been developed around four strategic thematic areas (Economic Transformation, Rural Development, Productivity and Youth Employment, and Accountable Governance), which are supposed to drive rapid and sustainable economic growth, as well as fast poverty reduction. EDPRS II was implemented through a set of District and Sector Strategies, which are linked and fully aligned to the district priorities that are elaborated and set out clearly in the District Development Plan (DDP).

Specifically in Gicumbi District, the targeted overall objective of its DDP (2013-2018) is to increase the revenue of each home and the better quality of life of the population in general but particularly that of the majority poor. The district focused primarily on the five sector priorities that are deemed to be the fundamental sector for the development of the district. These priorities include agriculture and livestock, transport, roads construction and maintenance, energy, water and sanitation.

#### *4.3.1.2 Benefits from Gender Equality in Gicumbi*

Although there is poor understanding about gender concept, Rwanda as a country is praised to promote gender equality countrywide. Gicumbi district is not excluded. Therefore, this subsection starts with the advantages of gender equality in Gicumbi district as expressed by the respondents.

From table 4.2, it is clear that 51.11% of the respondents agreed that Gender equality improved as greater educational participation and technological advancement provided new employment opportunities for women, 28.89% of the respondents stated that gender equality encouraged the evolution of new social institutions and norms that overcome prior discriminatory practices while 15.56% of the respondents argued that there is more equal income distribution and higher growth rates thanks to gender equality. No one mentioned increased opportunity costs of staying home or a decline in fertility, which could exert a large positive effect on the labor force participation rate across the country. However, 4.44% of the respondents argued that there is not any benefit from gender equality.

**Table 4.2 Respondents' Views on the Advantages of Gender Equality in their Region**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Gender equality improved as greater educational participation and technological advancement provided new employment opportunities for women.	23	51.11
It encouraged the evolution of new social institutions and norms that overcome prior discriminatory practices.	13	28.89
There is more equal income distribution and higher growth rates.	7	15.56
There is not any benefit from gender equality	2	4.44
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

The results from these answers are not conclusive. Additional data are provided in the following subsections. Subsequently, the respondents were asked to explain if their basic needs for food, clothing and shelter are met. Table 4.3 shows that 31.11% of the respondents agreed that their basic needs for food, clothing and shelter are met while 68.89% of the respondents disagreed.

**Table 4.3 Respondents' Views on their Basic Needs for Food, Clothing and Shelter as result of access to formal employment**

Basic needs for food, clothing and shelter are met	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	14	31.11
No	31	68.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

This means that despite gender equality in their district, most of the rural households can not afford to pay school fees, to get a mutual health insurance, to construct their own decent houses, to buy enough food and lack support and orientation on what to do. However, this is not enough to determine their level of poverty.

It is important to mention that Gicumbi District is one of 5 districts composing the Northern Province of Rwanda. It is located in the East of the province and spread over 867 km<sup>2</sup>. With 395,606 inhabitants (418p/km<sup>2</sup>), that district is composed of 21 sectors, 109 cells and 630 villages; the population is more rural than urban. Despite impressive economic growth in Rwanda, and with sustainable growth trends in Gicumbi district, the study results revealed that limited progress has been made in meeting social development goals oriented towards rural development.

Therefore, the respondents were further asked to explain if their household is able to meet the cost of a reference basket of food goods chosen to provide adequate nutritional energy of 2200 kilocalories per day, with the cost estimated to 100,000 RWF per adult equivalent person per annum.

Table 4.4 shows that 22.22% of the respondents asserted that they live in a household that is able to meet the cost of a reference basket of food goods chosen to provide adequate nutritional energy of 2200 kilocalories per day, with the cost estimated to 100,000 RWF per adult equivalent person per annum. On the other hand, 77.78% of the respondents stated that they don't.

**Table 4.4 Respondents' Views on their Household Ability to Meet the Cost of a Reference Basket of Food Goods as result to access to formal employment**

<b>The household is able to meet the cost of a reference basket of food goods</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	10	22.22
No	35	77.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

It is unfortunate to learn that, as the majority of the respondents asserted, there is not any significant difference between before and after gender equality processes. There is a prevalence of extreme poverty because there is a significant number of adult-equivalent persons whose annual consumption of food products is lower than the extreme poverty line, expressed as a percentage of total adult-equivalent persons in Rwandan society.

According to Liberatha NIYONSABA, the then Director of public health in Gicumbi district during the research process, 44% of the children suffered from stunting because of a lack of adequate nutrition. The poverty levels in the district are high compared to the national levels, with 49.3% of the population under poverty line and 33.9% of the population in extreme poverty.

The local leaders have identified various challenges contributing to the high rates of poverty in the district, such as a high percentage of Female Headed Households (more than 25% of the households), a high increase of the population, inadequate water and poor sanitation, high rates of soil erosion, poor waste management and high unemployment rates where 71.8% are unemployed as small scale farmers. In *illo tempore*, there is a low productivity of agricultural and animal production, weak organization within commodity agricultural value chain development, low levels of agricultural research and lack of demand-driven research for farmers, a lack of access to finance by farmers in financial institutions and a low involvement of the private sector investment in agriculture sector.

Besides having equal capabilities and equal access to resources and opportunities, the respondents were further asked to explain if the women from Gicumbi district are really able to control their own destiny. Table 4.5 shows that 17.78% of the respondents agreed that the women from Gicumbi district are able to control their own destiny while 82.22% of the respondents disagreed.

**Table 4.5 Respondents' Views on the Ability of Women from Gicumbi to Control their Own Destiny as result of capacity building**

<b>Women from Gicumbi are able to control their own destiny</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	8	17.78
No	37	82.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

The respondents have argued that there is a relatively greater participation of women in paid employment in Gicumbi district, which is evidenced with a greater share of women in its population and more equal income distribution, but lower growth rates and lower level of economic development. Also, gender equality did not encourage declines in fertility, which could exert a large positive effect on the labor force participation rate across the district.

In relation to the behavior change processes and uplifting the rural livelihoods of women, another question was formulated in such a way that the respondents explain if there are capacities, skills, agricultural assets and technologies to transform the agriculture of subsistence into market oriented agriculture for food security and income generation in Gicumbi district.

Table 4.6 shows that only 6.67% of the respondents agreed that there are capacities, skills, agricultural assets and technologies to transform the agriculture of subsistence into market oriented agriculture for food security and income generation in their district while 93.33% of the respondents disagreed.

**Table 4.6 Respondents 'Views on the Existence of Capacities, Skills, Agricultural Assets and Technologies to Transform the Agriculture as result of capacity building**

<b>There are capacities, skills, agricultural assets and technologies to transform the agriculture</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	3	6.67
No	42	93.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

The respondents have stated that agriculture as the main activity of the district has occupied 94.8% of population and has contributed nearly 85% of the total internal revenue in the district. Major crops are wheat, sorghum and maize. Of the total population, 65.9% of the household own farm animals that contribute largely to the dairy production and to the welfare of the population in Gicumbi district. Few

processing units of agricultural products are in place with an aim of increasing the value of certain products like tea that represent a considerable economic potential for the District.

It is important to mention that there is a slackening in GDP growth in Rwanda due to expansion of output in agriculture being constrained by several factors. Especially, in Gicumbi district the land is scarce and the use of it is constrained by the absence of a well-defined land administration system and poor settlement patterns. The level of technology is low, infrastructure is inadequate and human and physical capital is in short supply.

#### **4.3.2 Appraisal of the Gender equality Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms in Terms of uplifting the livelihood of rural women**

In the context of social change work, monitoring is an ongoing program management activity, assessing the implementation of activities and progress made toward meeting outcomes (organizational, programmatic, or policy-related) for the purposes of measuring effectiveness and efficiency. Evaluation, on the other hand, aims to assess the overall impact of a social change intervention against an explicit set of goals and objectives.

For the appraisal of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) mechanisms in terms of gender equality in Gicumbi, this subsection is subdivided into 2 paragraphs: Effectiveness of M&E Mechanisms in Gicumbi District and their coordination.

##### **4.3.2.1 Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms**

In relation to the M&E mechanisms in terms of gender equality in Gicumbi District, a question was formulated in such a way that the respondents explain if those mechanisms are systematic. From table 4.7, 13.33% of the respondents asserted that M&E mechanisms for the effectiveness of gender equality are systematic while 86.67% of the respondents disagreed or were not sure about their answers.

**Table 4.7 Views of the Respondents on the Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms**

<b>Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are systematic</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	6	13.33
No or not sure	39	86.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As it can be observed from section 4.2, most of the respondents were not qualified enough to answer such question. To address that issue, the researcher conducted an interview with the authorities of Gicumbi district to identify M&E frameworks used to capture the complexity of change in women's rights and gender equality.

From the information got from that interview, it was discovered that Logical Framework Approach (LogFrame) has been adopted by most Government partners as standard practice and is often mandatory for reporting program impact. This approach aims to systematize and identify a logical hierarchy, outlining how program objectives will be reached. The process includes multiple analyses and steps, including a cause and

effect problem analysis, a stakeholder analysis, objectives “tree” and hierarchy, and an implementation strategy. The LogFrame is the product of the analysis: a 4 x 4 matrix that details the goals, purpose, outputs, and activities in one column crossed with a row detailing performance indicators, monitoring mechanisms, and main assumptions.

Nevertheless, this study has discovered that the approach adopted for M&E mechanisms in terms of gender does not capture the complexity of the multiple factors that contribute to change actually happening because the assumption is that change occurs through hierarchal and logical cause and effect processes, which can be controlled by the intervening agency and which are directly attributable to an intervention. This approach relies extensively on program implementation in stable organizational settings with well-defined planning structures. There is an embedded logical fallacy in the framework. Namely, it assumes that by implementing program goals and activities, more successful program outcomes will be achieved. This assumption lacks traction, as the process of implementing the program is not made explicit for assessment purposes. Therefore, we only know if a goal was achieved or not, but have no mechanism for understanding how goal achievement was reached or if there was a point of breakdown in the path to goal achievement.

Moreover, the focus on activities and outcomes instead of actors limits understanding of the processes and people involved in change and does not account for power relations and individuals’ voices. This leads to the conclusion that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in terms of gender equality in Gicumbi district are not efficient.

#### ***4.3.2.2 Coordination of Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms***

The respondents were also asked to explain if monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are coordinated. Table 4.8 shows that 13.33% of the respondents affirmed that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the effectiveness of gender equality are coordinated while 86.67% of the respondents disagreed or were not sure about their answers.

**Table 4.8 Views of the Respondents on the Coordination of Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms**

<b>Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms are Coordinated</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	13	28.89
No or not sure	32	71.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

As it can also be observed from section 4.2, most of the respondents were not qualified enough to answer such question. To address that issue, the researcher proceeded as previously indicated.

Therefore, it was discovered that as some Government partners adopt LogFrame for reporting program impact, other Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) use Results Based Management (RBM), which places primary focus on the outputs and outcomes in an evaluation. RBM helps to determine how stakeholders are faring in implementing their program and achieving its intended aims, specifically providing information on whether an intervention is working in relation to the expected results. RBM approach assumes a causal relationship between the program’s activities and its results, meaning that the implementation of the program should produce expected results.

However, this study has discovered that this approach does not adequately assess and explore the role of context, such as exploring the systemic contributions to poverty or gender inequality, or acknowledging the broader socio-political factors that may constrain, advance, or reverse change.

This situation of different M&E frameworks used for reporting program impact leads to the conclusion that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in terms of gender equality in Gicumbi district are not coordinated, and a wider range of frameworks does not help to overcome current M&E shortcomings and drawbacks. Gender equality in that district has painted a negative picture where rural households are still stuck with the same challenges that the gender equality was supposed to address. For instance majority of the rural communities in the area still engage in subsistence farming with little income generating activities evidenced.

#### 4.3.3 Assessment of the Gender Mainstreaming in Gicumbi District

This subsection helps to evaluate the policy functionality and resource mobilization resulting in capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning in all sectors (public sector, private sector and civil society).

##### 4.3.3.1 Evaluation of Capacities and Technical Skills in Gender Analysis and Planning in Public Sector

For the researcher to assess gender mainstreaming in Gicumbi district, the question was formulated in such a way that the respondents give details about capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in public sector. Table 4.9 shows that the majority of the respondents (91.11%) agreed while only 8.89% disagreed.

**Table 4.9 Respondents' Views on the Existence of Capacities and Technical Skills in Gender Analysis and Planning in Public Sector**

<b>There are capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	41	91.11
No	4	8.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

The respondents strengthened that in public sector concepts and objectives relating to gender equality are clear and when gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was linked in meaningful way to the expected results but gender mainstreaming is treated as a goal rather than as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men.

It was revealed that Rwanda has put more emphasis in promoting and empowering women and it has been successful to the extent that 45.5% of civil servants are women and 54.5% are men. Changes in educational attainment and demographic profile of the population explained changes in the female-male gap in labor force participation in Gicumbi district. Changes in education and literacy also contributed to the explanation of variation in female labor force participation. However, a failure to integrate gender analysis with overall social, poverty and sustainability analysis did not decrease the likelihood that women could still be

marginalized during design and implementation. Integrated social, gender and poverty analysis identified the different vulnerabilities of females and males to becoming poor, the different experiences of males and females living in poverty but did not identify the different options which females and males have to escape poverty, and their priorities.

#### **4.3.3.2 Evaluation of Capacities and Technical Skills in Gender Analysis and Planning in Private Sector**

The respondents were also asked to give details about capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in private sector. Table 4.10 shows that 93.33% of the respondents argued that there are not any capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in private sector. Only 6.67% of the respondents provided a positive answer.

**Table 4.10 Respondents' Views on the Existence of Capacities and Technical Skills in Gender Analysis and Planning in Private Sector**

<b>There are capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	3	6.67
No	42	93.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

Views of the respondents, who pointed their finger to the confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality, are illustrated in table 4.11, which shows that among the respondents who denied the existence of technical skills in gender analysis and planning in private sector, 97.62% stated that there is confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality. Only 2.38% of the respondents were not aware of that confusion.

**Table 4.11 Confusion about Concepts and Objectives Relating to Gender Equality in Private Sector**

<b>There is confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	41	97.62
No	1	2.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>

It was discovered that the ongoing challenges of gender equality to reduce poverty in Gicumbi district is the confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality. The word "gender" is commonly used as a synonym for "women", and men are missing from a number of evaluations reports. This means that there is little or no focus in these evaluations on gender relations (economic, social and power relations between men and women), how these relations influence women's capacity to participate or benefit, and on the impact that development activities may have on gender equality.

The respondents who denied the existence of technical skills in gender analysis and planning in private sector were also asked to clarify if gender mainstreaming is treated as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men.

Table 4.12 shows that among the respondents who denied the existence of technical skills in gender analysis and planning in private sector, 88.10% stated that there is the tendency to treat gender mainstreaming as a goal, rather than as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men. Only 11.90% of the respondents were not aware of that tendency.

**Table 4.12 Tendency to Treat Gender Mainstreaming as a Goal in Private Sector**

<b>Tendency to treat gender mainstreaming as a goal</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	37	88.10
No	5	11.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>

The focus on measuring goals and outcomes, mostly quantitatively, precludes other forms of learning that can provide valuable lessons to the women's movement, such as challenges, unexpected consequences, most effective means of implementation, and the pathways and catalysts of intended change.

The respondents who denied the existence of technical skills in gender analysis and planning in private sector were also asked to give details about the linkage of gender analysis to the expected results. As table 4.13 indicates, 85.71% of the respondents argued that when gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was not linked in meaningful way to the expected results. Only 14.29% of the respondents gave the positive answer.

**Table 4.13 Linkage of Gender Analysis to the Expected Results in Private Sector**

<b>When gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was linked to the expected results</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	6	14.29
No	36	85.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>

This study has discovered that despite the growth of women-owned businesses in Gicumbi district, females still face challenges compared to men. Despite the similarities between male-owned firms and female-owned firms, they take different routes to success based on the owner's preferences. There are potential gender differences in strategic orientation to determine the impact it had on survival for potential mass merchandizing supplies. When deficiencies in human capital render new firms vulnerable, those started up by women are more likely to have higher odds of discontinuation than those started by men. There are many investigated cases of female-owned enterprises that failed unexpectedly in Gicumbi district. However, they could have been succeeded if owned by male entrepreneurs.

#### 4.3.3.3 Evaluation of Capacities and Technical Skills in Gender Analysis and Planning in Civil Society

This study was finally interested in capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in civil society. From table 4.14, it is obvious that 84.44% of the respondents affirmed that there are capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in civil society. Only 15.56% of the respondents disagreed.

**Table 4.14 Respondents' Views on the Existence of Capacities and Technical Skills in Gender Analysis and Planning in Civil Society**

<b>There are capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	38	84.44
No	7	15.56
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

They supported their arguments stating that in civil society concepts and objectives relating to gender equality are clear and when gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was linked in meaningful way to the expected results. Gender mainstreaming is also treated as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men but the problem is the approach adopted for reporting program impact.

As already elucidated in section 4.3.2, this study has found out that a number of NGOs rely on Logical Frame or Results Based Management approaches to conceptualize social change pathways. Both assume a logical and causal perspective in documenting impact, focusing on the logical cause effect relationship that leads to goal attainment if activities, outputs, and project purpose are achieved. The collective outlining of program activities and associated outcomes provides the important role of consensus building for monitoring progress toward program aims and some NGOs place greater attention on the multiple forces at play that can influence development outcomes.

## 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings done with specific reference to the objectives of the study. Data were interpreted and the results of the findings were correlated with both empirical and theoretical literature available. Then, this chapter presents the conclusions and the recommendations.

### 5.2 Summary of Findings

This study sought to assess the effect of gender equality processes on the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda. Specifically, the study examined the behavior change processes and uplifting the rural livelihoods of women, the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in terms of gender equality and, finally, assessed the gender mainstreaming in Gicumbi district. This study has adopted a descriptive approach. The target population comprised the inhabitants of Gicumbi district, estimated to 395,606, with 86,075 households. The sample size of 45 households was selected based on Slovin's formula. Data were collected through documentary sources, structured interviews and a survey by questionnaire. Data processing tools, such editing, coding and tabulating of the data were also used.

The study results revealed that that 84.44% of the respondents don't understand the meaning of gender concept. This confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality testifies the ongoing challenges of gender equality to reduce poverty. This means that there is still little or no focus on gender relations, how these relations influence women's capacity to participate or benefit, and on the impact that development activities may have on gender equality.

Meanwhile, for the authorities to spur behavior changes and empower rural women, they have finalized the preparation of Rwanda's second Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS II) to guide the country's medium-term development aspirations over the period 2013/14 to 2017/18. EDPRS II was implemented through a set of District and Sector Strategies, which were linked and fully aligned to the district priorities that were elaborated and set out clearly in the District Development Plan (DDP).

Specifically in Gicumbi District, the targeted overall objective of its DDP (2013-2018) was to increase the revenue of each home and the better quality of life of the population in general but particularly that of the majority poor. The district focused primarily on the five sector priorities that are deemed to be the fundamental sector for the development of the district. These priorities included agriculture and livestock, transport, roads construction and maintenance, energy, water and sanitation.

With regard to the advantages of gender equality in Gicumbi district, the study results revealed that 51.11% of the respondents agreed that Gender equality improved as greater educational participation and technological advancement provided new employment opportunities for women, 28.89% of the respondents stated that gender equality encouraged the evolution of new social institutions and norms that overcome prior discriminatory practices while 15.56% of the respondents argued that there is more equal income distribution and higher growth rates thanks to gender equality. No one mentioned increased opportunity costs of staying home or a decline in fertility, which could exert a large positive effect on the labor force participation rate across the country.

However, 68.89% of the respondents stated that their basic needs for food, clothing and shelter are not met. This means that despite gender equality in their district, most of the rural households cannot afford to pay

school fees, to get a mutual health insurance, to construct their own decent houses, to buy enough food and lack support and orientation on what to do.

It was also revealed that 77.78% of the respondents live in household that are unable to meet the cost of a reference basket of food goods chosen to provide adequate nutritional energy of 2200 kilocalories per day, with the cost estimated to 100,000 RWF per adult equivalent person per annum. Obviously, there is not any significant difference between before and after gender equality processes. There is a prevalence of extreme poverty because there is a significant number of adult-equivalent persons whose annual consumption of food products is lower than the extreme poverty line, expressed as a percentage of total adult-equivalent persons in Rwandan society.

The poverty levels in the district are high compared to the national levels, where more than 44% of the children suffer from stunting because of a lack of adequate nutrition, 49.3% of the population is under poverty line and 33.9% of the population is in extreme poverty. This happened mainly due to the high percentage of Female Headed Households (more than 25% of the households), a high increase of the population, inadequate water and poor sanitation, high rates of soil erosion, poor waste management and high unemployment rates where 71.8% are unemployed as small scale farmers. In *illo tempore*, there is a low productivity of agricultural and animal production, weak organization within commodity agricultural value chain development, low levels of agricultural research and lack of demand-driven research for farmers, a lack of access to finance by farmers in financial institutions and a low involvement of the private sector investment in agriculture sector.

As a result, women from Gicumbi district are unable to control their own destiny. There is a relatively greater participation of women in paid employment in that district, which is evidenced with a greater share of women in its population and more equal income distribution, but lower growth rates and lower level of economic development. Also, gender equality did not encourage declines in fertility, which could exert a large positive effect on the labor force participation rate across the district.

In relation to the M&E mechanisms in terms of gender equality in Gicumbi District, the study results revealed that the Logical Framework Approach (LogFrame) has been adopted by most Government partners as standard practice and is often mandatory for reporting program impact. That approach does not capture the complexity of the multiple factors that contribute to change actually happening because the assumption is that change occurs through hierarchical and logical cause and effect processes, which can be controlled by the intervening agency and which are directly attributable to an intervention. This approach relies extensively on program implementation in stable organizational settings with well-defined planning structures. There is an embedded logical fallacy in the framework. Namely, it assumes that by implementing program goals and activities, more successful program outcomes will be achieved. This assumption lacks traction, as the process of implementing the program is not made explicit for assessment purposes. Therefore, we only know if a goal was achieved or not, but have no mechanism for understanding how goal achievement was reached or if there was a point of breakdown in the path to goal achievement.

Moreover, the focus on activities and outcomes instead of actors limits understanding of the processes and people involved in change and does not account for power relations and individuals' voices. This led to the conclusion that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in terms of gender equality in Gicumbi district are not efficient.

It was also discovered that as some Government partners adopt LogFrame for reporting program impact, other Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) use Results Based Management (RBM), which places primary focus on the outputs and outcomes in an evaluation. However, this approach does not adequately assess and explore the role of context, such as exploring the systemic contributions to poverty or gender inequality, or acknowledging the broader socio-political factors that may constrain, advance, or reverse change.

This situation of different M&E frameworks used for reporting program impact leads to the conclusion that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in terms of gender equality in Gicumbi district are not coordinated, and a wider range of frameworks does not help to overcome current M&E shortcomings and drawbacks.

With regard to gender mainstreaming in Gicumbi district, this study was interested in the evaluation of capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning in all sectors (public sector, private sector and civil society). Thus, majority of the respondents (91.11%) agreed that there are capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in public sector. They strengthened that in public sector concepts and objectives relating to gender equality are clear and when gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was linked in meaningful way to the expected results but gender mainstreaming is treated as a goal rather than as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men.

It was revealed that Rwanda has put more emphasis in promoting and empowering women and it has been successful to the extent that 45.5% of civil servants are women and 54.5% are men. Changes in educational attainment and demographic profile of the population explained changes in the female-male gap in labor force participation in Gicumbi district. Changes in education and literacy also contributed to the explanation of variation in female labor force participation. However, a failure to integrate gender analysis with overall social, poverty and sustainability analysis did not decrease the likelihood that women could still be marginalized during design and implementation. Integrated social, gender and poverty analysis identified the different vulnerabilities of females and males to becoming poor, the different experiences of males and females living in poverty but did not identify the different options which females and males have to escape poverty, and their priorities.

Concerning the private sector, 93.33% of the respondents argued that there are not any capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in that sector because there is confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality, the tendency to treat gender mainstreaming as a goal, rather than as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men. They have also mentioned that when gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was not linked in meaningful way to the expected results.

Concerning the civil society, 84.44% of the respondents affirmed that there are capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in that sector. They supported their arguments stating that in civil society concepts and objectives relating to gender equality are clear and when gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was linked in meaningful way to the expected results. Gender mainstreaming is also treated as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men but the problem is the approach adopted for reporting program impact.

### 5.3 Conclusions

This study has generated several findings, which are in accordance with existing literature and previous research findings. The findings revealed that Gender equality improved in terms of gender sensitivity and resulted as greater educational participation and technological advancement provided new employment opportunities for women, gender equality encouraged the evolution of new social institutions and norms that overcome prior discriminatory practices and there is more equal income distribution and higher growth rates thanks to gender equality. However, there is a lack of a decline in fertility, which could exert a large positive effect on the labor force participation rate across the country. This is because despite gender equality in Gicumbi district, the basic needs for food, clothing and shelter of most of the rural households are not met.

There is a prevalence of extreme poverty because there is a significant number of adult-equivalent persons whose annual consumption of food products is lower than the extreme poverty line, expressed as a percentage of total adult-equivalent persons in Rwandan society. This happened mainly due to the high percentage of Female Headed Households, a high increase of the population, inadequate water and poor sanitation, high rates of soil erosion, poor waste management and high unemployment rates. *In illo tempore*, there is a low productivity of agricultural and animal production, weak organization within commodity agricultural value chain development, low levels of agricultural research and lack of demand-driven research for farmers, a lack of access to finance by farmers in financial institutions and a low involvement of the private sector investment in agriculture sector. As a result, women from Gicumbi district are unable to control their own destiny.

In relation to the Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms in terms of gender equality, the Logical Framework and Results Based Management Approaches have been adopted in Gicumbi district but have been criticized to focus on activities and outcomes instead of actors, which limit understanding of the processes and people involved in change and do not account for power relations and individuals' voices. Those approaches have also been criticized to not adequately assess and explore the role of context, such as exploring the systemic contributions to poverty or gender inequality, or acknowledging the broader socio-political factors that may constrain, advance, or reverse change.

With regard to gender mainstreaming, this study identified the existence of policy functionality in terms of capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in civil society and public sector, but gender mainstreaming is treated as a goal rather than as a strategy. Concerning the private sector, capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming are missing because there is confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality, the tendency to treat gender mainstreaming as a goal rather than as a strategy, and when gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was not linked in meaningful way to the expected results.

### 5.4 Recommendations

For the inhabitants of Gicumbi district, the issue of the confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality should be addressed through dialogue with partners and capacity building within organizations.

For the effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in terms of gender equality, the Government of Rwanda and its development partners should invest more in creativity and flexibility to build assessment systems in new ways. In other words, they should create M&E architectures that go beyond the scope of any one tool or method.

Alternatively, the Government of Rwanda and its partners should adopt the Theory of Change approach, which maps the relationships and steps between program activities, interim goals, and short-term and long-term outcomes, while also accounting for context, key allies, as well as unintended consequences.

All development sectors, especially the private sector should treat gender mainstreaming as a strategy and when gender analysis is undertaken during design, it should be linked in meaningful way to the expected results.

### **5.5 Recommendation for Further Research**

This study is not exhaustive. Therefore, further complementary researches should focus on topics that generate new approaches that push Rwandan society closer towards capturing changes in the lived realities of women throughout the world.

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## 6 Appendices

### Appendix 1: Interview Guide for the authorities of Gicumbi district

My names are MUSHUMBA Leon Victor, an Msc student from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, conducting a research entitled: **Effect of gender equality processes on the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda**. So, you have been identified as one of the people that can provide the information needed.

#### Topic related questions:

- 1) According to you, are there any capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in all development sectors?
- 2) What do you do to empower rural women for formal employment in terms of gender equality?
- 3) Are there any capacities, skills, agricultural assets and technologies to transform the agriculture of subsistence into market oriented agriculture for food security and income generation in your district?
- 4) What are M&E frameworks used to capture the complexity of change in women's rights and gender equality in Gicumbi?
- 5) Are monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the effectiveness of gender equality systematic and coordinated?
- 6) Besides having equal capabilities and equal access to resources and opportunities, are women from Gicumbi district really able to control their own destiny?
- 7) According to you, what are the advantages of gender equality in your region?
  - Gender equality improved as greater educational participation and technological advancement provided new employment opportunities for women.
  - It increased opportunity costs of staying home.
  - It encouraged the evolution of new social institutions and norms that overcome prior discriminatory practices.
  - There has been decline in fertility, which has been found to exert a large positive effect on the labor force participation rate across the country.
  - There is more equal income distribution and higher growth rates.
- 8) Are the people's basic needs for food, clothing and shelter being met?
- 9) What is the percentage of people from Gicumbi district who live in a household that is able to meet the cost of a reference basket of food goods chosen to provide adequate nutritional energy of 2200 kilo calories per day, with the cost estimated to 100,000 RWF per adult equivalent person per annum?
- 10) What do you suggest for gender equality to be effective?

**Thank you for your cooperation**

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire addressed to the residents of Gicumbi district

My names are MUSHUMBA Leon Victor, an Msc student from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, conducting a research entitled: **Effect of gender equality processes on the livelihoods of rural women in Rwanda**. So, you have been identified as one of the people that can provide the information needed.

### A) Identification of the respondent:

1. Age of the household's bread winner: -----

2. Marital status of the respondent:

Married

Single

Divorced

Widow/ widower

3. Gender of the household's bread winner:

a) Male

b) Female

4. Number of persons per household:

1-3

4-6

Above 6

5. Level of education of the household's bread winner:

None

Primary school

Secondary school

High school

6. Occupation of the household's bread winner:

Farmer

Agent from the private sector

Public servant

**B) Topic related questions:**

**B.1) Objective one: To examine the behavior change processes and uplifting the rural livelihoods of women**

1. Do you understand the meaning of gender concept?  
Yes  No
2. According to you, what are the advantages of gender equality in your region?
  - None
  - Gender equality improved as greater educational participation and technological advancement provided new employment opportunities for women.
  - It increased opportunity costs of staying home.
  - It encouraged the evolution of new social institutions and norms that overcome prior discriminatory practices.
  - There has been decline in fertility, which has been found to exert a large positive effect on the labor force participation rate across the country.
  - There is more equal income distribution and higher growth rates.
3. Are your basic needs for food, clothing and shelter met?   
Yes  No
4. Do you live in a household that is able to meet the cost of a reference basket of food goods chosen to provide adequate nutritional energy of 2200 kilocalories per day, with the cost estimated to 100,000 RWF per adult equivalent person per annum?  
Yes  No
5. Besides having equal capabilities and equal access to resources and opportunities, are women from Gicumbi district really able to control their own destiny?  
Yes  No

Explain :

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6. Are there any capacities, skills, agricultural assets and technologies to transform the agriculture of subsistence into market oriented agriculture for food security and income generation in your district?  
Yes  No

Explain :

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**B.2) Objective two: To appraise the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in terms of gender equality**

7. Are monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the effectiveness of gender equality systematic?  
Yes                      No

Explain :

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8. Are monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the effectiveness of gender equality coordinated?  
Yes                      No

Explain :

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**B.3) Objective three: To assess the gender mainstreaming in Gicumbi district**

9. According to you, are there any capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in Public Sector?  
Yes                      No

If no, it is because:

- There is confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality.
- There is the tendency to treat gender mainstreaming as a goal, rather than as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men.
- When gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was not linked in any meaningful way to the expected results.

10. According to you, are there any capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in Private Sector?  
Yes                      No

If no, it is because:

- There is confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality.
- There is the tendency to treat gender mainstreaming as a goal, rather than as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men.
- When gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was not linked in any meaningful way to the expected results.

11. According to you, are there any capacities and technical skills in gender analysis and planning for effective gender mainstreaming in Civil Society?

Yes                      No

If no, it is because:

- There is confusion about concepts and objectives relating to gender equality.
- There is the tendency to treat gender mainstreaming as a goal, rather than as a strategy for achieving equality between women and men.
- When gender analysis was undertaken during design, it was not linked in any meaningful way to the expected results.

12. What do you suggest for gender equality to be effective?

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**Thank you for your cooperation**