

# The relationship between Gender Mainstreaming approaches and the Performance of Rice growers' cooperative in Bugesera District, Rwanda

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## Abstract

To assess the correlation between Gender mainstreaming approaches (gender incorporate prospectus, sex-disaggregated data, and gender budgeting) and the performance of Rice growers' cooperative in Bugesera District, Rwanda. This study is an important tool for government, society, and the researcher by formulating Gender mainstreaming strategies to improve the state of development projects in the country. The descriptive and analytical research was adopted. The sample size of the study is 83 respondents drawn from the selected registered cooperative's members in Bugesera District, Rwanda, and was determined by using Sloven's formula. Data collection instruments were both primary and secondary which include questionnaires; interview guide and documentary review and a purposive sampling technique was used. Data was analyzed using computer software called Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 22. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Chi-square, and multivariate analysis using SPSS v22 while qualitative data was analyzed thematically. Concerning the major findings related to the research question one, the study revealed that there is a positive relationship between Gender Mainstreaming approaches and Success factors of Rice growers' Cooperative as it was confirmed by the Pearson correlation( $r$ ) = 0.787<sup>\*\*</sup>. This means that there is a high positive correlation between the two variables.

## Keywords:

*Mainstreaming, gender mainstreaming, development, cooperative, sustainable development and gender equality*

## 1. Introduction

Globally, the success and sustainability of any development project or priority are determined by a range of factors, including the participation and contribution of both genders. It is in this regard that different development partners in their programs and projects, especially in the developing countries, have acknowledged gender mainstreaming as a severe problem that deserves immediate attention and to create working solutions to subsequent problems therein (Grigorian, 2007). According to the UN Women (2013), one of the major strategies to address this problem, national and international cooperative such as the United Nations, World Bank, and the European Union, and others have advanced "gender mainstreaming" as a strategy for making women as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension. This includes the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and social spheres. Women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetrated in all development programs as it has been practiced for years.

Rwanda adopted the Beijing Platform for Action and undertook strategic actions aimed at tackling challenges that impede the progress of development. It has ratified and adhered to many international and regional conventions, charters, and declarations, including, the CEDAW, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), Southern African

Development Community (SADC), COMESA and among others. All these instruments highlight gender as an important approach for sustainable development (GMO, 2011).

According to the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, (2006), the government has formulated the Rural Sector Support Program as one of the many projects that the country is using to achieve both growth and poverty alleviation. The program is primarily engaged with support to registered NGOs and cooperatives in the country. Rice growers' cooperative in Bugesera District is one of the beneficiaries of the program as part of efforts to increase support towards rural development.

Despite all the initiatives over time to address issues of gender inequality, declaration of human rights, and the celebration of the women's year in 1975, the different world conferences on women (Mexico city conference, Beijing conference, Nairobi conference, etc.) and even the current millennium development goals, significant disparities persist and a lot remain to be done to bridge gender gaps including women's poor conditions and related socioeconomic inequality, such as witnessed in Rwanda, as such it's clear that, the success of development project is strongly affected, (O'Brien, 2011). Overall, many cooperatives mainly work on gender mainstreaming, and several cooperatives work on promoting the rights of persons, women, and vulnerable men. To be able to address the above challenges, this study focused on gender mainstreaming on the performance of Rice growers' cooperative in the Bugesera District, Rwanda.

## 2. Review of Literature

According to Kirimi (2012), to be transformative, the commitment to gender equality should be universal; address the structure of gender-based inequality, including in the three dimensions of sustainable development social, economic, and environmental; and ensure accountability. The author further adds that building on the experiences and lessons learned from the MDGs. Gender equality thus needs to be addressed both as a stand-alone goal and as an issue cutting across all other parts of the agenda, to address gender-based discrimination specific to each development sector and to ensure the meaningful achievement of all other goals (Seniloli, et al., 2016).

As noted by Head et al., (2014), disaggregating data by other vital characteristics along with sex, like geographic location, enables researchers to take account of the interplay between gender and other

individual and structural factors. The rationale of both gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data is that it helps systemically mainstream development priorities where women will feel significantly part of development activities (Kusakabe, 2005).

In the context of gender prospectus and strategy, equality ensures more of the macro level of how development priorities benefit men and women without leaving anyone behind. Women should be at the hierarchies of development priorities like men, and development frameworks and priorities must be strictly gendered sensitive (Baden, 2009).

Meanwhile, Ford & Parker (2008) argue that the quantitative aspect of achieving gender equality and ensuring the success of development refers to the desire to achieve equitable representation of women, increasing balance and parity. The authors further add that the qualitative aspect refers to achieving real influence on establishing development priorities and outcomes for women and men without compromising the preferences of any of the gender. Equality involves ensuring that the perceptions, interests, needs, and importance of women and men are given equal weight in planning and decision-making and are treated equally. Building on the experiences and lessons learned from the MDGs, gender equality needs to be addressed both as a stand-alone goal and as an issue cutting across all other parts of the development agenda that would address the challenges faced by both women and men with greater emphasis on the priorities of women (Sraboni et al., 2014).

According to Jones, et al. (2010), women have critical roles in creating social and economic development for their households. However, although women make substantial contributions to household well-being, the inability to value their work reduces women to virtual non-entities in monetary transactions, the allocation of household resources, and a wide range of decision-making. Much as the Daly (2009) studies show that there is growing interest in supporting development projects to enable the vulnerable female to secure sustainable livelihoods.

Although Mogue et al., (2013) note that some gender gaps have narrowed, such as by increasing the numbers of female agricultural extension workers and developing women-specific support packages, new land certification policies favoring joint ownership as indicated by Kumar & Baden (2009) and increased investment in women and girl education as noted however, not enough is being done to help women access resources, services, and capacity building opportunities needed to equitably participate in farming projects. Women still face

periodic discrimination as relates to accessing public resources as well as the household levels. Most like the agriculture sector are being used to mainstream women's priorities as men (Chayal et al., 2010).

Meanwhile, researchers have not adequately tackled the barriers of gender mainstreaming to the success of development projects. They are yet to establish the factors that influence gender mainstreaming and the success of development projects and establish the correlation between gender mainstreaming and development projects. There have been several studies done that primarily considered the political aspect of gender mainstreaming and the equal participation of both men and women in decision making and leadership—the socioeconomic characteristics of mainstreaming lack if not researched. The researcher uses these theories as they integrate all the necessary elements required for effective gender mainstreaming. The approaches are vital for the study's theoretical framework to outline and analyze the expected results as pertains to gender mainstreaming, and the models have been selected as they outline a better framework for investigating factors that affect gender mainstreaming in Non-Governmental cooperative. Through these appropriate gender mainstreaming mechanisms and policies, both men and women are the stakeholders of development projects, like in the case of the success of development projects in Rwanda. Therefore, it is in this regard that the study was conducted to assess the influence of gender mainstreaming and the success factors of Rice growers' cooperative in Bugesera District, Rwanda.

### 3. Materials and Methods

The researcher adopted a descriptive research design. These methods were used because descriptive design helps to systematically ascertain and describe the

characteristics of the variables. The evaluative research design helped establish the Gender mainstreaming approaches such as Gender incorporate prospectus, Gender budgeting and Sex-disaggregate data and the performance of Rice growers' cooperative in Bugesera District. Kothari (2014) defines descriptive research studies as those concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or a group. The study was carried out within Rice Growers Cooperative, which consisted of respondents selected from 491 registered members of Rice-growers' cooperative and the key informants in such as 18 RSSP staff in Bugesera District. The study involved project registered members and CDF staff with a target population of 509 respondents.

The researcher has used of Sloven's Formula as indicated.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Na^2}$$

Where  
 n = number of samples  
 N = total population  
 a = level of significance 0.10

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Sample size:} &= \frac{509}{1 + (509 \times (0.10)^2)} \\ &= \frac{509}{6.09} \\ &= 83 \end{aligned}$$

**Table 3.1: Categories of respondents**

Respondents	Population	Percentage (%)	Sample size	Percentage (%)
RSSP staff	18	3.5	9	10.9
Community Members	491	96.5	74	89.1
Total	509	100.0	83	100

*Source: Researcher own design (2020)*

To get the sample for quantitative data, a simple random sampling method, which refers to a subset of individuals (a sample) chosen from a more extensive set (a population), was used to select the respondents. This method was used because every registered member had an equal chance of inclusion in the sample, and each one of the possible members had the same probability of being selected.

For qualitative data, the RSSP staff were selected using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is acceptable for special situations. It uses the judgmental selection of cases when a difficult-to-reach population needs to be measured or when the targeted instances are few and far. The targeted respondents are specific because of possession of particular characteristics, which is the situation for managers and administrations in the selected cooperative. A non-representative subset of some larger population is constructed to serve a specific need or purpose. These are information-rich cases that facilitated in-depth interviews. The sample size of 9 RSSP staff was considered as key informants.

This method was used because the results are expected to be more accurate.

The questionnaire was the favored tool of my research as it provided a cheap and effective way of collecting data in a structured and manageable form, which was written in a simple language and collected the detailed information required. This method was applied in collecting data from RSSP project registered members. The questionnaire was structured and had closed questions. To ease the processing of data, options for answers were provided where applicable. Data was collected from both forms of primary and secondary sources. Secondary data was collected through desk studies and publications. Closed-ended questions were used to ensure that the given answers are relevant. The questions were developed based on information and experiences gathered from the cooperative. For the Interview Guide, Selected RSSP staff were asked questions to determine their perceptions about gender mainstreaming and the success factors of Rice growers' cooperative

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

**Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents**

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Male	47	55.3
Female	38	44.7
Total	85	100.0

**Source: Primary Data (2020)**

From Table 4.1, the majority of respondents are males (55.3 %), while females are 44.7%. Women's involvement in cooperatives in Rwanda is low compared to the number of males. This has been influenced by cultural factors that did not allow women to participate in cooperative membership and

run a business without the permission of husbands. Instead, they had to stay at home to reproduce and raise children. This helps explain why their involvement is still low, but the government encourages women to be more active in different sectors of the economy.

**Table 4.2: Level of Educational**

	Frequency	Percent
Never attended school	4	4.70%
Primary	43	50.58
Secondary school	25	29.41

Tertiary/College	13	15.29
Total	85	100.0

**Source: Primary Data (2020)**

According to the data collected in Table 4.2, 95.30% of respondents can read and write, while 4.70% remain illiterate. This indicates that most of the respondents have the potential to influence decision making because they have some level of education. However, their overall educational level is

insufficient to stimulate innovation or boost business plan development for the cooperative. Therefore an innovative approach is required to enable the progress of the Rice growers' cooperative with emphasis on women.

**Table 4.3: Ages of respondents**

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Below 25 years	12	14.1
25-30 years	16	18.8
31-40years	32	37.6
41-50	14	16.5
Above 50years	11	12.9
Total	85	100.0

**Source: Primary Data (2020)**

The results in Table 4.3 mean that the majority of respondents were between 31-40 years old, which represented 37.6% of respondents, between 25-30 years old represent 18.8% of respondents, between 41-50 years represent 16.5 % of respondents, below 25 years which represented by 14.1% and above 50

years represent 12.9% of respondents. This means that the majority of the members are adults and family heads who can contribute a lot to the success of the cooperative giving that the required skills are obtained.

**Table 4.4: Working experience in Rice growers' cooperative**

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Less than 1 year	8	9.4
1-3years	29	34.1
4-6years	23	27.1
7-9years	14	16.5
9years and above	11	12.9
Total	85	100.0

**Source: Primary Data (2020)**

The results in Table 4.4 mean that the majority of respondents were between 1-3 years old, which represented by 34.1% of respondents, between 4-6 years old represent 27.1% of respondents, between 7-

9 years represent 16.5 % of respondents, below 1 year which represented by 9.4% and above 9 years represent 12.9% of respondents.

**Table 4.5: Correlation between Gender Mainstreaming Approaches and Performance of Rice growers' Cooperative”**

		Gender Mainstreaming Approaches	Performance on Rice growers' Cooperative
Gender_Mainstreaming Approaches such as gender budgeting, sex-disaggregated data, and gender incorporate prospectus	Pearson Correlation	1	.787**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	85	85
Performance on the Rice growers' Cooperative	Pearson Correlation	.787**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	85	85

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

1	$r = 1$	<b>Perfect correlation</b>
2	$0.9 \leq r < 1$	<b>A strong correlation (very high )</b>
3	$0.6 \leq r < 0.9$	<b>High correlation</b>
4	$0.5 \leq r < 0.6$	<b>Moderate correlation</b>
5	$r < 0.5$	<b>Weak(low) correlation</b>
6	$r = 0$	<b>Absence of correlation</b>

**Source:** Aggesti& Franklin (2009)

Table 4.5 shows a high correlation between Gender Mainstreaming approaches (Sex Disaggregated Data & Gender analysis, Gender Budgeting, Gender Incorporate Prospectus) and Success Factors of Ricegrowers' Cooperative (Increasing awareness, Sustainability, Lasting outcomes to the beneficiaries). The Pearson correlation( $r$ ) = . 0.787\*\*. This means that there is a high correlation, and it can influence the success and progress of the cooperative. In short, efforts to mainstream gender in all activities have a strong relationship with the performance of the Rice growers' cooperative in Bugesera District, Rwanda. Also, the finding shows a positive relation between gender mainstreaming and the outcomes of development projects, knowing that in order to alleviate poverty, both genders ( men and women) should be captured at all stages of development activities by being gender sensitive

during budgetary allocation and the implementation of development projects.

### 4.3 Discussion

This study was conducted to determine the gender mainstreaming approaches and performance of Rice growers' cooperative in Bugesera District, Rwanda. In this study, Literature agrees with the findings of Cunningham (2015), for effective gender mainstreaming, and the success of development activities, the budgets of development activities must involve gender perspectives at all levels. When gender-responsive budgeting is fully adhered to and facilitates the effective implementation of gender equality policies, the gap between women and men will be closed. It will lead to addressing the priorities of both genders.

According to Table 4.5, the study finds that there is a high correlation between Gender Mainstreaming approaches (Sex Disaggregated Data & Gender analysis, Gender Budgeting, Gender Incorporate Prospectus) and Performance of Rice growers' Cooperative (Increasing awareness, Sustainability, Lasting outcomes to the beneficiaries). The Pearson correlation( $r$ )= 0.787\*\* .This means that there is a high correlation between the two variables. Therefore, Gender mainstreaming can lead to the performance of the Rice growers' cooperative in Bugesera District, Rwanda.

*Respondent: Due to limited skills acquired by women, we have experienced low participation of women relative to our project activities. We are however engaging our partners like the Rural Sector Support Program to direct efforts to training mainly women on basic project management skills. By doing this we can ensure broader participation of both genders.*

## 5. Conclusions

The main focus of this research project was to determine Gender Mainstreaming approaches and Performance of Rice growers' cooperatives in the Bugesera District.

Concerning the significant findings related to research question one, the study revealed that most respondents agreed that Gender Mainstreaming approaches include Sex Disaggregated Data & Gender analysis, Gender Budgeting, Gender Incorporate Prospectus influence the performance of Rice growers' cooperative in Bugesera District.

In line with research question two, most respondents agreed on the success factors of rice growers' Cooperatives that include Increasing awareness, Sustainability, and lasting outcomes to the beneficiaries. The study revealed that there is a high correlation between Gender Mainstreaming approaches (Sex Disaggregated Data & Gender analysis, Gender Budgeting, Gender Incorporate Prospectus) and Performance of Rice growers' Cooperative (Increasing awareness, Sustainability, Lasting outcomes to the beneficiaries) as it was confirmed by the Pearson correlation( $r$ )=0.787\*\*. This means that there is a high correlation between the two variables.

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