

**RURAL ELECTRIFICATION AS A STRATEGIC DRIVER FOR RURAL
COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN RWANDA
A CASE OF BUGESERA DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

This research was focused on rural electrification as a strategic driver for rural community transformation and development in Rwanda. Rural electrification means the process of bringing electricity to rural areas, thus rural development generally refers to the process of improving the quality of life and economic wellbeing of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. This research project tends to correlate community transformation and development to rural electrification. This study reviewed the role of electrification in rural development, the effects of electrification in rural community and challenges Government faces in promoting rural electrification. A conceptual framework for this research was developed, putting under review rural electrification as independent variable and community transformation and development as dependent variable. The respondents in this study are Local citizens, local Leaders, civil society members and CBO/NGOs members. Using the simple random sampling and purposive sampling, a sample of 92 was drawn from the population of 1800 basing on Mauris' formula for calculating the sample size. Interviews, questionnaires and direct observation was used in data collection where by frequencies, percentages, graphs and tables was used in data presentation and interpretation, data was analyzed using SPSS Software. To achieve the desired objectives of the study, 92 persons received each a questionnaire and all returned back responded. A quantitative element like tables was used to give more meaning to data analysis and interpretation. The findings in this study show that RURAL ELECTRIFICATION plays the great role in Rural Community transformation and Development. As it is demonstrated in table 4.11, first and foremost rural electrification improves income by empowering smalls businesses at the rate of 30.4%. Secondly, it improves quality of education as it enables more hours for revision for students 28.3%. Finally, it opens up the community to rest of the world through improved communication 6.5%. As recommendations, the government of Rwanda must enforce the rural electrification via distribution of power lines on a local power grid and mobilizing funds from development partners. There should be more sensitization with different means such as media, awareness messages during community meetings so that people use available electric power to change the livelihood to better by using it to income generating activities exactly with their health status. The results from this study will help the decision makers to know benefit from rural community after getting electricity.