

**CHALLENGES OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN ATTAINING SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT IN RWANDA
A CASE STUDY OF GASHAKI SECTOR IN MUSANZE DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

This study was set out to assess Challenges and Opportunities of Rural Communities in Rwanda in Attaining Sustainable Development using a case study of Gashaki Sector in Musanze district. The research questions focused on challenges hindering development among Rwandan rural communities in Gashaki Sector, opportunities found among Rwandan rural communities in Gashaki Sector to be used in order to fast track sustainable development, role of the government and Community Based Organizations in rural communities' sustainable development of Gashaki sector. The targeted population was 13,630 residents of Gashaki Sector made by 6,502 males and 7,128 females in Musanze District out of which a sample of 100 respondents was chosen using the simple random sampling technique. The study employed a descriptive research design using a case study area and both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. Sources of data included both primary data which were gathered using self-administered questionnaire and a structured interview and secondary data which were gathered from different text books, journals and existing documents of Musanze District. The data collected were analyzed using SPSS version 17 and statistical tools like numbers, frequencies and tables were used in the exercise. The findings of this research revealed that low level of income, insufficiency in commercialization of agricultural production, rural poverty, lack of investment in tourism, insufficient allocation of budgets and credits facilities, lack of basic infrastructure, limited access to financial facilities, weakness in rural natural disaster management, unqualified work force, lack of social justice in providing socio-economic facilities among rural and urban areas, weakness of people's participation in projects implementation, low NGOs' participation and rising food and energy prices were some of the challenges faced in the course of sustainable development. On the other hand, fair agribusiness opportunities, enough rain for agriculture, community cooperatives, enough security and peace in the area, government support, were found to be some of the opportunities. The researcher recommends that civil societies, government, nongovernmental organizations, community based organizations should provide assistance of whatever sort so as to address revealed and even other non-revealed challenges. There should be a decentralized planning so that local communities participation in developmental projects can be high, there should be proper allocation of developmental facilities among urban and rural communities, there should be enough budget allocated in disaster management, there should be trainings to the rural communities on the new production technologies and sustainable development. Thus interested parties should take their role in addressing challenges if Musanze particularly Gashaki and Rwanda in general are to achieve a sustainable development. This research helped the researcher in getting new knowledge and skills in conducting different researches and fulfilling the requirements for the degree of master of business administration, it added value to the existing literature for students and other

researchers, it informed the public and policy makers about challenges and opportunities of rural communities in Rwanda in attaining sustainable development.