

**HEIFER INTERNATIONAL PROJECT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN
RWANDA
A CASE STUDY OF GICUMBI DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to elaborate on the role of Heifer Project International to the socio-economic development in Rwanda. The research is expected to make a significant contribution to policy makers and implementers of good governance and suggest how socio-economic welfare in Rwanda can be improved. In addition, the study is a stepping stone for other researchers who would be interested in the same problem. The objectives of this study have been to assess the role played by Heifer Project International towards the promotion of dairy farms, to examine changes brought by HIP to the socio-economic living conditions of the beneficiaries, to identify challenges encountered towards socio-economic development of Rwanda. As methodology, descriptive and analytical designs were used. The descriptive design involved gathering data that describes events and then organized, tabulated, illustrated and described the data. The researcher used description as a tool to organize data into patterns that emerge during analysis. The researcher also used visual aid such as graphs to aid the readers. Analytical design, in this study the research also employed the analytical design. The researcher sought to analyze the actual contribution of HIP towards socio-economic development of Rwanda. The findings revealed that the activities of Heifer International Project (HIP) improved the socio-economic conditions in Gicumbi district and this is evidenced by the majority of respondents 91%. The study also indicates that HIP has had a significant contribution towards socio-economic improvement by improving nutrition to beneficiary families, increased income to the beneficiary families through provision of employment, increased food security to the families, improved soil fertility through use of manure and nitrogen fixing fodder trees, Sustainable and friendly use of environment, and reduced soil erosion through construction of terraces. It is therefore important that the researcher made some recommendations. The farmers' cooperatives should be empowered to improve their farming practices, Agro-vet shops must be increased and in proximity of farmers so that they easily access drugs and other agricultural supplements. It is recommended that farmers be trained to prepare and store animal feeds in anticipation of the dry season.