Good Governance and Decentralization in Rwanda
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# LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABREVIATIONS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANSP+</td>
<td>National Association for Supporting People living with HIV/AIDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>ART</td>
<td>Anti-retroviral Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD4</td>
<td>Activated helper T cell or T4 cell</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHWs</td>
<td>Community Health Workers</td>
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<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
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<td>FSWs</td>
<td>Female Sex Workers</td>
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<td>FVA</td>
<td>Faith Victory Association</td>
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<td>GoR</td>
<td>Government of Rwanda</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>i.e.</td>
<td>It means</td>
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<tr>
<td>KPs</td>
<td>Key Populations</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBTs</td>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual and Intersex</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSM</td>
<td>Men who have Sex with men</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWID</td>
<td>People Who Inject Drugs</td>
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<tr>
<td>RBC</td>
<td>Rwanda Biomedical center</td>
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<tr>
<td>RGB</td>
<td>Rwanda Governance Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for Social Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>STIs</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Infections</td>
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<td>TG</td>
<td>Transgender</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRAC plus</td>
<td>Treatment and Research AIDS Centre Plus</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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<td>JADF</td>
<td>Joint Action Development Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>MINALOC</td>
<td>Ministry of Local Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAR</td>
<td>Never Again Rwanda</td>
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<tr>
<td>MINECOFIN</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>RALGA</td>
<td>Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>AEE</td>
<td>African Evangelical Enterprise</td>
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ALLOCATIVE EFFICIENCY IN RWANDAN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: Does JADF\(^1\) Matter?

Author: Innocente MURASI

Abstract

Since the year 2000, Rwanda embarked on the process of decentralization with the aim of involving citizens, considered as main actors in poverty reduction and economic growth. The type of decentralization adopted by Rwanda was built on a number of its cultural practices. With the intent of building a citizen centered governance, various programs to empower local populations were implemented. The expected results was to have citizens who are able to manage their Social-economic development process through participation in the identification of their priorities, implementation of development projects as well as holding accountable local authorities.

Recognizing the importance of citizen participation in the poverty alleviation process, particularly in efficient allocation of resources, relevant frameworks to engage citizen have been established and among others include the Joint Action Development Forum (JADF).

The purpose of this article is to assess whether JADF has enough capacity to attain the above aim. The study was conducted through a desk review of its legal frameworks and other relevant documents. In addition, a rapid field visit to JADF committees in five Districts, one per province and the City of Kigali was also conducted. Despite a number of practical challenges, which vary from District to District, JADF has a considerable level of potential capacities to drive the efficient allocation of resources. However, a more systematic rethinking is needed to reorient the available capacity.

\(^1\) Joint Action Development Forum
I. Introduction

The pursuit of allocative efficiency in service delivery has been at the heart of adopting decentralization systems by a number of countries. This move was supported by incapacity of centralized states to provide quality public services to citizens. It is in that perspective that, since the early 1980s, the enhancement of local governance has been adopted by a number of African countries through the transfer of a number of central government functions to jurisdictions which are closer to citizens (Steinich, 2000). As demonstrated by some scholars, including Azfar et al (1999, 5-6), Kauzya, 2007 (in Rugo 2014:3), decentralizing public functions to local governments improves allocation of services only when it is accompanied by enabling mechanisms. These are the mechanisms which on one side allow local governments to allocate available resources according to the real local needs and preferences. On the other side the mechanisms have to help in attaining productive efficiency which is built on the capacity of citizens to hold accountable service providers. These mechanisms which are the intrinsic features of local governance include mainly citizen participation structures.

In the case of Rwanda, such participation and engagement frameworks at the local level have been established especially to ease the process of decentralization launched in 2000. One of the mechanisms is the Joint Action Development Forum (JADF), which is, according to its regulatory framework, a multi-stakeholder platform and a channel of citizen participation. It was established to be a space of promoting accountability; improving service provision and increasing socio-economic welfare of the local populations (Office of the Prime Minister 2015). As presumed by Agrawal and Ribot, (1999:4) there is a potential positive link between engagement and allocative efficiency. In fact, through engagement, local governments and other local service providers acquire necessary information concerning local groups’ needs or preferences and provide services accordingly (Azfar et Al 1999: 2). In the case of Rwanda, the link has not yet been thoroughly explored. The purpose of this paper is to investigate whether these mechanisms are designed in a way that they can contribute to the improvement of allocative efficiency. The research unit is the Joint Action development forum (JADF) one of the platforms operating in all the districts2. From the assumption that JADF contributes to the promotion of allocative efficiency through the engagement and accountability, our research query is

2 The local government in Rwanda is made of Districts, Sectors, Cells and Villages.
to assess whether the structure, functioning and procedures of this forum are designed and implemented well enough to promote allocative efficiency in the Districts.

II. Contextual background and the state of the problem

2.1 Decentralization in Rwanda

The adoption of decentralisation in Rwanda was materialised by the adoption of the decentralisation policy in 2000. The policy actions were built on three goals which comprise the promotion of good governance; the reduction of poverty as well as the promotion of efficient, effective and accountable service delivery (RGB, 2013). With the aim of building a citizen centered governance, various programs of people’s empowerment were implemented. The expected results consisted in having citizens who are able to take care of their destiny through the participation in the identification of their priorities, implementation of local projects as well as holding accountable local authorities. This explains the reason why the first phase of the decentralization was mainly focusing on establishing “partnerships between communities, local governments, central government, private sector, non-governmental organizations and international development partners, to engage in projects and programs for improving local development and delivery of services (MINALOC, 2007). The JADF was therefore created to reinforce those partnerships, enhance coordination but also to materialize citizen participation at the local level.

The platform is regulated by the Prime Minister’s Instructions No. 003/03 of 03/07/2015 which describe its mission and responsibilities. The forum was established also with a purpose of allowing local stakeholders to be aware about peers interventions for an improved coordination. The forum is intrinsically built on principles which enhance allocative efficient as described in its mission. These principles comprise the promotion of dialogue, active participation and accountability as well as coordination for quality service delivery. Members of the forum are made by communities, local and international non-governmental organisations as well as the public and private sector representatives operating in the District (Office of the Prime Minister, 2015).

As far as participation is concerned JADF members have to be engaged in the whole process of planning, budgeting but also in monitoring and evaluation of every district’ projects. Since JADF constitute a great channel of participation at the local level, any weakness in citizen engagement would put in question the capacity of the platform to guarantee the allocative efficiency.
Other participation frameworks created include Inteko z’ Abaturage (citizens’ assemblies), Local Councils (Inama Njyanama), National Dialogue Council (Umushyikirano), and other socio economic programs(Ubudehe), performance contract (Imihigo) and Community Public Works (Umuganda) which will be described in forthcoming sections (RGB, 2014).

The following section describes some findings as far as citizens’ participation in Rwanda is concerned.

2.2 Citizen participation in Rwanda

As far as the status of participation and holding accountable local leaders is concerned, the Rwanda Governance Board, reports the level of satisfaction to be relatively good with 61.93 % and high with 81.60% respectively (RGB, 2016). However, the level of satisfaction in participating in key stages which matter a lot for the improvement of allocative efficiency scored less. For instance, the level of participation in preparation of District budgets/plans and in performance contracts (Imihigo) are both in red color with 7.40% and 27.30% (RGB, 2016) respectively. Participation in decision making is proven also unsatisfactory with 59 %. (RGB, 2016).

The results are confirmed by Never Again Rwanda (NAR, 2016) which has reported a less effective citizen engagement at the local level especially in various key stages of local decision making including the identification of local priorities and the planning NAR (2016: 27). For NAR (2016) the weak participation is due to the fact that local leaders do not just assign enough time to listen to groups they represent but also to the inadequate representation. In addition, most of the time, citizens assume that their elected leaders and other representatives know their needs and therefore decide not to participate. As far as accountability is concerned, some citizens are reported not to feel free to report unsatisfactory cases hence the low level of willingness to denounce low performance (NAR, 2016:44). Since participation mechanisms are in place and given that the participation is reported to be weak, this paper assumes that the problem is at the effectiveness of these mechanisms. This constitutes the reason why it is judged important to review the conduciveness of each mechanism. This paper will focus on JADF to judge whether it is designed and functions in a way it allows local governments to improve efficiency in the delivery of local services by allowing effective participation.
III. Concept clarifications

3.1 Allocative efficiency

The concept of allocative efficiency is mostly used in firms to mean the point where resources are efficiently allocated to get a product or a service meeting the real need of the consumer. The term was adopted in the public sector administration with the purpose of optimizing public expenditure to produce public goods. The concept gained more support with the paradigm shift from the classic public management to the new state management in the early 1980s. In public governance, the concept implies the provision of services which match the exact preferences of the population. (World Bank, 2001: 1).

In the Rwanda Decentralisation Policy, the term is not defined in a straightforward way but it is presented as the objective of the policy consisting of empowering people to make better choices toward effectiveness and efficiency in planning, monitoring, and delivery of quality services (MINALOC, 2012).

III.2 Local Governance

While local government refers to a sub-entity of government which is legally recognised and created to deliver a range of specified services to a relatively small geographically defined area, local governance is considered as a system of managing local affairs that has been defined differently depending on the contextual situation considered.

In the context of Rwanda, the decentralisation policy, defines local government as type of government where citizens manage affairs of their locality (MINALOC, 2012). Any local governance is characterised by the normative recognition of the role and the voice of the community and other local organisations including civil society, private sector and other relevant groups. It is mandated to deliver local public services and to promote local economic development (MINECOFIN, 2012). According to Ndreu (2016), there are two main characteristics differentiating local governance from other types of governance, these are “management of public services” and “representation of citizens” Ndreu (2016:5). Nevertheless, as described by Anwar and Shah (undated), the complexity associated with all these features constrains analysts to think local government beyond the small circumscription. This has therefore created a distinction between local governments depending on aspects they put emphasis on. Bailey (1999) (in Anwar and Shah, undated: 2,17) has distinguished four types of local governance. The first type named “benevolent despot” is characterised by leaders who focus mostly on the maximisation of citizens
welfare. Local governance where local governments try to match services to citizens preferences is the “the fiscal exchange model”. The “fiscal transfer” model, which is the third, is characterised by local governance which provides public services for free for social purposes, while the fourth type consists in self-centered governance by the leaders without caring about citizens voice. It is the “leviathan” model. It is the public choice about the type of local governance which determines the structure of local government institutions and consequent mechanisms (Anwar and Shah, 17-19). In the ideal model, the one which is citizen centered, local governments need to exercise a relatively high level of autonomy in both decision making but also in the financial allocation and management.

IV. Allocative efficiency in local governance

4.1 Participation and allocative efficiency

Local citizens are made by different categories including service providers, consumers, taxpayers, voters…. The status of most of these categories provides them with the authoritative powers to be consulted during the decision making process but also to exercise the control over the use of local resources. Any decision taken at the local level without their consent is likely to fail capturing some important aspects concerning their lives and this would hamper the attainment of allocative efficiency. In fact, participation by all the groups of citizens in local governance affairs contributes to the minimization of information asymmetry. In addition, their participation in implementation or provision of services contribute potentially to the improvement of efficiency in the utilization of resources through the increase of ownership, peer monitoring but also through the enhancement of accountability.

As argued by the United Nations (2008), there are two main causes of allocative inefficiencies. These are both “hidden information” and “hidden action” caused by information asymmetry (United Nations, 2008). The first is due to the lack of necessary information by local decision makers about people’s preferences while the second is caused by the provision of substandard services. Engagement of public service users in both the identification of needs and priorities but also in the implementation of local projects would be the only way to minimize them. The second solution is the creation of accountability mechanisms allowing citizens to hold accountable leaders and other service providers. However, it is not obvious that the suggested solution provides positive impacts on provision of services. This was empirically proven by Burki, Perry, and Dillinger (1999). They argue that the correlation can go in either direction if not absent. This
elucidates the reason why some Latin American countries have decided to adopt a controlled or partial decentralization through a closely controlled earmarked transfer. For instance, in Mexico, devolution of some sectoral services like health and education services requires local jurisdictions to be certified after the assessment of its capacity to ensure efficiency. For Edita (Undated) participation is theoretically an existing initiative which is never implemented effectively.

The empirical link between allocative efficiency and decentralization is also challenged by Cheema and Rondinelli (2016). They argue that though the empirical evidence differs from country to country and from the nature of services considered, it is generally weak. They also demonstrated that the expected level citizen participation is rather not as easy as thought due to a multifaceted political and social-economic environment. Burki, Perry, and Dillinger, (1999) claim that the main reason behind weak relationship is the lack of enough capacity to understand local dynamics by local authorities. In an attempt to also identify factors behind the failure of local governance to improve allocative efficiency, Burki et al (1998) and Junaid et al (2005) came to the conclusion that there are both endogenous and exogenous factors. They include the lack of devoted political leadership and the absence of enough policies and regulations designed to facilitate citizens to exercise their rights. In some cases, the partial decentralization of key services was also identified as a restraining factor. In Pakistan, for instance, where only education services were decentralized but not the management of teachers, the link was found to be weak. In the case of Uganda and Tanzania, the cause of the weak results as argued by Junaid (2005) was rather the incapability of local authorities to soundly manage public funds. Though the asymmetric information has been identified as a major problem in service provision, it is also argued that the access to information and its accuracy need to be supported by the capacity to analyze it. And this capacity is guaranteed when citizens are empowered and when they have timely access to the information about local plans. (Kugonza and Mukobi, 2015)

4.2 Accountability relationships and allocative efficiency

Accountability promotes allocative efficiency in two ways. First, it compels local public service providers to focus on service delivery that is consistent with citizen preferences. Second, accountability leads to the decrease of corruption. Theoretically, subnational levels are more accountable to local citizens than they are to the central level since they are able to closely monitor their actions. Consequently, local governments need to provide adequate and detailed information about the quality, quantity, cost and any other necessary
information about local public services. As described by Junaid et Al. (2005) there is a need of a framework which can guarantee a strong accountability relationship between stakeholders who constitute actors in the chain of service delivery. They are mainly policy makers, service consumers and service providers. Depending on each country’s choice, key accountability mechanisms can range from surveys, local meetings, hot lines and open days. Direct community involvement of and especially civil society organisations and private people in service delivery, project planning, and management is considered as the most important way to promote accountability.

In the service delivery chain, the accountability framework is simple when the concerned services are fully decentralized. In this case, the only government side to be accountable is the local authority. But in the case of partial decentralization, the accountability task becomes more complex. In this case, the success and responsibility in case of failure is shared between the local government and the central government and the accountability is not limited only to the local government performance. It is also extended to other aspects including regulatory frameworks as well as administrative processes.

V. Local governance and service delivery in Rwanda

5.1 Local governance and decentralised services in Rwanda

While the drives of adopting decentralization differ across countries, the willing of service proximity has been commonly raised as a shared concern. In the case of Rwanda as well, the decentralisation policy has been implemented since 2000 and one of driving purposes of the policy is the improvement of efficiency in accountable service delivery. Strategies to achieve it was to ensure empowerment of local citizens and allowing them to participate in the planning and management of local affairs. The local governance system is regulated by a number of legal and regulatory frameworks including the constitution of Rwanda as revised in 2015, the law governing decentralized administrative entities and other several frameworks. All these regulatory and strategic documents have put a great emphasis on the role of local population and local groups in fostering local development (MINALOC, 2011).

Generally, the number, the types and the extent of services to be decentralized are decided depending on the normative judgment of the country. Given the complexity of the sectoral reforms which constitute the prerequisites of the decentralization of the sectoral services, it would be difficulty in any case to adopt a radical decentralization once for all. From the literature review, in most of the countries, sectors which have been the most prioritized
are those providing basic services especially health, education, water and sanitation, infrastructure but also agriculture in some cases. In Rwanda with the gradual implementation of the decentralization policy, the decentralisation of service delivery has been also depending on their type, the readiness of the concerned sectors in terms of legal and regulatory framework as well as the readiness of local jurisdictions in terms of capacity (RGB, 2013).

Although there has been gradual decentralization of service provision, the country has recorded some tremendous progress in taking key services closer to citizens. From the LG service charter, main services consist in providing authorizations, permission, and documents for different activities, facilitating payment of fees and taxes and advisory services. These services cut across all sectors.

As far as sector services are concerned, the distinction of responsibilities regarding financial and human management has not yet been clearly defined. In fact the complexity associated with the sectors especially health and education have compelled the sectors to process through a gradual decentralization. For instance, in education sector, curriculum design, quality standards assurance and the management of teachers are still managed by the central government while their recruitment, deployment and payment is undertaken by districts. However it is worth to recognize that there are many initiatives undertaken by sector ministries to improve efficiency at the local level. In addition, in each sector, a number of initiative preparing local governments to the readiness have been continuously undertaken. These are the joint planning and the institutional reforms in sector ministries through the revision of policies and creation of agencies to support Districts (RGB, 2013).

In the recent Rwanda Governance Score card, although there was a slight improvement in service delivery, it was the least performing across sectors with 72.93% (RGB, 2016). Weaknesses in service delivery at the local level are also recognized by local government leaders as testified by the Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities. In 2014, the association has collected a number of views of various senior local government leaders about the status of the services delivery they provide. They claimed that a lot has been achieved but recognize that the fulfillment of that objective is still refrained by a number of gaps including low caliber staff, non-commensurate financial resources as well as some sectoral ministries which have not yet effectively decentralized some key services. (RALGA 2015)
5.2 Citizen Participation and allocative efficiency in Rwanda.

So far, Rwanda has registered substantial progress toward the enhancement of citizen participation and accountability platforms. The frameworks have been designed to allow service beneficiaries to play as the main custodians of the efficiency in service delivery. The frameworks provide them with the power to hold accountable service providers as far as the availability, the quantity and the quality of the services are concerned. The pursuit of allocative efficiency requires citizens to be involved in the whole process but mainly in the planning phase where needs and preferences are timely expressed. The following paragraphs list key participation mechanisms.

**Local Councils** (Inama Njyanama): Local councils are the most legitimized participatory structures composed by elected representatives and regulated by the low governing the functioning of decentralized entities. Through the councils, local citizens participate indirectly in the local decision making processes. By reinforcing the role of the councils the paper assumes that Rwanda is paving a way toward the attainment of allocative efficiency at the local level. In fact, comparing two terms of office of local councils, the previous (2011-2015) and the current (started in March 2006), a recent study conducted by Bangwanubusa (2017) revealed an increase of the level of satisfaction of both local councilors (58.9% up to 77.2%) and constituents (29.3% up to 42%) when it comes to the citizens participation in defining their priorities and preferences. According to the study, the improvement is due to the use of a number of existing participation platforms by councilors as supported by following collected testimonies by the same study.

“In this councillorship mandate there is a “parents’ evening forum” every second week of every month. It helps people to meet with Elected Local Councilors. There is also Community assembly that gathers every Tuesday where Local Councilors take an opportunity to meet with citizens. They even meet during community works.” (An Executive Committee member in Rugarama Sector, Burera District).

“The day where officials listen to citizens’ problems was decided upon. Actually, this is the secret for the improvement. In the past, things could not move effectively because people couldn’t know when or on which day people’s problems would be heard. Nowadays, a specific day for that listening is well known. Everyone knows when to express his/her problems or ideas in the presence of Local Councillors.” (A citizen, Mugesera Sector, Ngoma District), Bangwanubusa (2017).
**Citizens' assemblies:** known as “Inteko z’ Abaturage” attended by Cell residents leaders from various structures who come to provide the citizens with advice and share ideas (MINALOC, 2011).

**Community Work – Umuganda:** The concept of “Umuganda” dates back to the Rwandan tradition of solidarity which consisted in working together to help one of the members of the community. This has inspired the government in the establishment of the Public work framework whereby the members of the neighborhood come together every last Saturday of the month to accomplish a specific task for a common interest or needy neighbors.

**Ubudehe:** The Ubudehe scheme is another participation framework which was also a practice in the Rwandan culture of working together for a common interest.

**Imihigo (performance contracts):** A homegrown solution consisting in pledging to accomplish a certain number of tasks for which someone is held accountable. It is a participatory framework which ensures that citizen priorities are identified by themselves from the household level and that they are taken into account in the District annual list of priorities. It is a practice appreciated by the citizens but which raises some criticisms as far as the provision of feedback is concerned.

“Consultations are held at Village level to collect citizens’ priorities; these are consolidated and prioritized at Cell level, and the same exercise is replicated at the District level. At the District level, local priorities are consolidated with national priorities from Central Government (Ministries) and are then approved by the District Council, before they are signed by the Mayor and the President of the Republic of Rwanda. Once District Imihigo are signed, they are returned to Sectors, Cells and Villages for implementation” (Testimony of a citizen in Kigali). By Never again Rwanda, 2016.

There are also other participation mechanisms which include regular meetings with high level leaders, a yearly high level consultative meeting (Umushyikirano) whereby citizens can raise issues concerning their lives. All of these channels allow leaders to be informed about citizens’ preferences and complaints while other allow citizens to participate directly to the planning and implementation of local program which increase the ownership and peer controls.
VI. Allocative efficiency and Rwanda. Does JADF matter?

6.1 Methodology

In order to respond to the guiding question of whether JADF, as a participatory and accountability framework, can contribute to the improvement of allocative efficiency, two aspects were analyzed. The first aspect consists of analysing whether the framework is potentially capacitated to ensure allocative efficiency in terms of its legal legitimacy, structure and functioning as well as capable members.

The used methodology is both qualitative and quantitative. It consisted in desk review by mainly analyzing relevant legal and regulatory frameworks, reports and other related documents. An assessment of theoretical and policy matters characterizing local governance, participation and accountability in JADF was done. The conduciveness of the instructions to ensure an effective participation and equitable representation was also examined.

The second aspect consists of assessing the capacity of the framework to handle the asymmetry of information through an effective participation to the decision making process. It is analyzed through rapid consultations and semi-structured interviews with a sample of JADF committee members.

6.2 Sampling Design and respondents’ characteristics

To gain collective opinions on the issue, JADF committee members from five (5) districts namely Gasabo, Rwamagana, Nyabihu, Gicumbi, and Kamonyi were consulted. One District per province/the City of Kigali was selected purposively. From the sampled districts, sample respondents (interviewees) were also purposively chosen from JADF committees3. Thus, the following formula was used to determine the sample respondents to be interviewed (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970)4:

\[
n = \frac{X^2 * N * p(1-p)}{(M * E^2 * (N-1)) + X^2 * p(1-p)} \]  

[1]

Where:

n: sample size,

---

3 JADF Committee consists of six people who are also members of the forum.

X2: Chi-square for the confidence interval (C.I) of 95% at 1 degree of freedom (3.841),

N: Population size (N=30: 6 JADF committee members per district),

p: Population proportion (assumed to be 0.50 as no additional information about the population characteristics was provided and since this would provide the maximum sample size),

ME: Desired Margin of Error (5%).

Therefore, the sample size for this study will be:

\[ n = \frac{X^2 \cdot N}{p \cdot (1-p) \cdot ME^2} \]

A contingency of 5% will be applied in anticipation of non-respondents. Then, the actual sample size will be:

\[ n = 27.89 + (27.89 \times 0.05) \approx 29 \text{ JADF Committee members} \]

As far as respondents’ characteristics are concerned, it was found that their ages range from 28 to 60 but those from private sector tend to be older than others. To assess the role and capacity of JADF members, there was need to know their level of education as a potential element of high level of understanding the local planning cycle. The majority of JADF members are Bachelor’s holder (47%), and even Masters (53%). 30 % of whole sample were female.

6.3 Findings

The field findings are confronted to the rational consideration as discovered in the literature review and for that purpose each considered aspect is analyzed basing both the theoretical aspect but also on the fact findings.

A. Rational considerations

From the analysis of the legal instrument governing the forum, i.e “Prime Minister’s Instructions N° 003/03 of 03/07/2015” following observations are made:

*Clarity of JADF mandate and functioning*: The instrument provides enough details as far as the mission, the functioning and responsibilities are concerned. The forum consists in supporting districts in the “implementation of the decentralization policy, fostering local economic development, ensuring an effective participation of citizens through their representatives. It is also described as a framework of facilitating coordination of local
stakeholders’ activities and promoting dialogue and accountability. As provided for in the instrument, the paper argues that forum constitutes a potential platform to promote allocative efficiency since, from the instructions; it has to comprise members from all groups of local society. As far as the functioning is concerned the instrument defines its structure, the frequency of the meeting and all prerequisites. Though the forum’s mandate is described by the instructions, it is too broad to get measurable indicators which can allow the forum to track its performance in terms of effective membership and active participation.

**Legal legitimacy of JADF:** This paper argues that for such forum to act legitimately it has to be supported by a binding legal instrument or to provide the maximum incentive to stakeholders. It has to be endowed with a binding legal legitimacy of claiming the right to participate but also to hold accountable leaders. The prime minister’s instructions provide a to the forum legitimate power of coordinating local stakeholders through the promotion of active participation but also to exercise accountability to local stakeholders including the local government authority. This structure constitutes a great potential opportunity of improving the allocative efficiency since it gives it the right of gathering service providers and services consumer as well as the local authorities to discuss about their local priorities. The legal legitimacy is efficiently exercised only when members are aware of this right. This allows them to freely express their views about any inadequacy. Unfortunately, the field visit has revealed that some JADF members especially from private, 66% of the respondents were not aware of the existence of the instructions.

**Adherence and participation:** In this paper we argue that, for members of the forum to adhere and be much more involved, there has to be either some legal enforcement measures or significant incentives to keep the willingness of stakeholders to participate in the whole decision making process. Another pushing factor would be the creation of a normative solidarity among stakeholders. However the legal instrument does not provide any enforcement measure in case of non-adherence and irregular participation. In addition, they are also silent about the unwillingness of local authorities to engage citizens in local processes. This increases the risk of accentuating the asymmetry of information which is a counter factor of the allocative efficiency. The lack of enforcement measures is the probable of the reported law level of participation. As it was observed during our field visit most of interviewers (46.15%) have claimed to be much more involved in the implementation than in other stages.

**Legal legitimacy to exercise the accountability right:** The instrument provides to the forum the right to hold accountable stakeholders including local authorities. However,
accountability relationships are not clearly defined. Besides, it does not provide some enforcement measures in case of failing to provide reports concerning the provided services.

**Representation and equity:** Equitable and effective representation is an important element to consider for such a participatory framework. It allows local government to collect needed information about citizens’ preferences in an inclusive way and to equitably distribute available resources. It also allows members to decide on equitable allocation of resources. Nevertheless, it is important to notice that the United Nations (2008) highlighted that there is always a tradeoff between efficiency and equity.

The prime minister’s instructions provide a list of different groups’ representatives including community, civil society, private sector and any other stakeholders’ operation in the District. Every sector is also represented by its focal person. Besides, they allow Districts to extend the list when the need arises. Though the groups composing JADF members are specified, the geographic distribution of JADF interventions and representation is not specified by the legal framework. An effective representation requires representatives to have regular communication with the constituents to collect their views but also to provide feedback on performance. In addition, in order to increase the trust, citizens have to designate their representatives. However, these practices are not prescribed by the instructions and this can hamper the representativeness. As far as inclusiveness and equitable distribution of resources, the instrument is also less straightforward. Moreover, it does not define how stakeholders should fairly intervene in different sectors mainly because their plans are guided by their mandate and where their interests are. This implies that interveners can pay focus on some sectors to the expense of others. For instance, in the case of Nyabihu District, in 2012, most of JADF interventions were concentrated in social and economic sector compared to environment with respectively 42.2 %, 34.9 % versus 4.8 and the reasons behind this distribution were not documented. (District Report 2012). During the same year, Rwamagana District reported 10 actors in economic sector against 9 in health sector and 1 in justice. However, it is important to highlight that Districts have the right to examine if the areas of intervention match with citizens and local plans priorities without diverting stakeholders from their main focus. In order to guarantee the equity and fairness, the paper argues that more conditionality with regard to the geographic area, the domain needs to be thoroughly considered.
B. Field study findings

For the allocative efficiency to be achieved, the functioning of the framework need to be effectively designed to allow the flow of information between concerned group in order to match available resources to the real preferences. For this purpose, the paper assessed the level of members of JADF to acquire and analyze necessary information. For consistency and accountability purposes it also assessed whether stakeholders are involved in the whole process of decision and whether they able to timely express needs and to make sure they are considered.

As far as the capacity of members of understanding and expressing their views during the meetings is concerned, the majority of interviewees, 84.62%, was optimistic. They claimed to have enough capacity to analyze and understand people’s views and to express their opinions. To support the answers, members were asked about their level of education. It was found that the majority of representatives are university’s degree holders.

Concerning the level of participation, respondents were asked whether they are engaged by local authorities at every stage of the decision making process. Almost a half of interviewed people, 46.15%, affirmed to effectively participate in the implementation of projects and provision of services than in planning, making them unable to express preferences on time. Concerning the capacity of exercising the accountability right majority of people claim that they are not engaged in monitoring and evaluation despite the open days organized by the forum every year. It was affirmed that these open days are only useful for information sharing through exhibitions. This threat to allocative efficiency was also discovered by the World Bank observation in case of Indonesia. As it is reported by the World Bank (2001), in Indonesia, a study of about 48 decentralized entities, where the accountability relationship between local councils and citizens is low, it was found that the District budget only comprise only 3 percent of local people’s suggestions( in Junaid et Al 2005).

VII. Conclusion and recommendations

The efficiency of service delivery has been considered as the driving force of decentralization movement adopted by a number of African countries since the early 1980s (Steinich, 2000). Consequently, countries have devolved a number of their functions to local governments which have access to local information, a key element to improve both the allocative and productive efficiency. In fact, it has been argued that only
local governments are able to tailor made available resources to the exact needs of local citizens. Since the year 2000, Rwanda has also initiated decentralization process whose one of the main driving purposes was the efficiency of accountable service delivery. One of the strategic actions to achieve that objective consisted in creating platforms for empowering citizens and allowing them to get involved in local decision-making as well as in the development processes. As it was reported by the Rwanda Governance Board, the participation level in local government is still weak despite a non negligible number of participation frameworks. This challenge has guided the paper to question the conduciveness of these platforms to promote allocative efficiency. The research unit was the Joint Action Development Forum (JADF), a participatory framework operating in all the Districts. The article assessed whether the structure, functioning and procedures of this forum are designed and implemented well enough to promote allocative efficiency in Districts. Two aspects have been assessed. One aspect focussed on the potential capability provided by its legal instruments including legal legitimacy, structure and the clarity of responsibilities while the other analyzed the capacity to get and to process needed information about local preferences. On the first aspect, the main observation is that JADF is an ideal concept as far as the promotion of allocative efficiency is concerned. Theoretically, there are no other mechanisms enjoying the legal privilege of promoting coordination of interventions at the local level while strengthening accountable partnerships between local stakeholders. However, the practice reveals a constraint at this level which prevents the forum to allow allocative efficiency. In fact, the enforcement of the legal instructions is still at the low level since there are no provisions regarding non-compliant parties. There is need of reinforcing the operationalization of the forum through the provision of enforcement mechanisms. In addition, it is recommended to every jurisdiction to build a solidarity partnership trough incentive to keep the participation momentum. It is recommended to the central government to make the expected outcomes from the forum more specific and measurable.

Concerning the second aspect, the paper concludes from the filed visits that stakeholder engagement is not as effective as it has to be. It was found that many of them do not participate effectively in phases which matter a lot for the promotion of the allocative efficiency. These are the planning and the evaluation phases. It is recommended to follow up about the relationship between groups’ representatives and the constituents to know whether their interactions are effective. There is need for the local government to provide more capacity to local citizens to hold their representatives accountable but also to guide them in the selection of representatives who have the capacity to understand local dynamics.
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HORIZONTAL DECENTRALIZATION ENHANCED BY ACCOUNTABILITY IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE:
The role of the Joint Action Development Forum in Rwanda

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Abstract
Decentralization is usually referred to as “the transfer of powers from central government to lower levels in a political-administrative and territorial hierarchy” (Crook, R. and Manor, J., 1998). Rwanda’s decentralization has been designed with a policy framework that enables the government and its partner development actors to place citizens at the centre of decision making on development programs in their areas. Appropriate structures for coordination and citizens’ participation mechanisms were established for integrated management of development activities. For instance, Through Districts Councils local governments are accountable to the center under vertical and to democratic forces and civil society through JADF under horizontal decentralization.

Joint action development Forum (JADF) is in the intersection between coordination and participation. Under JADF partnership service-provider organizations seek to bring their members in the wider system of checks and balances, by reinforcing mutual accountability between service providers and between services providers and the beneficiaries in the community. In each district, JADF brings together local government authorities, international development NGOs, Civil society, faith based organizations and private sector for enhanced performance in delivering development at local level.

Mutual accountability, synergies’ building and enhanced delivery at local level are among the key performance indicators of JADF. The same indicators are informative about state of horizontal decentralization if applied to research questions like: To what extend is JADF contributing to national transformation and inclusive governance in Rwanda? Do CSOs and development NGOs negotiate their space in policy processes at local level through JADF? Does private sector use JADF to influence local leaders in adopting market-friendly approaches? What new insights is JADF bringing in the governance balance? This paper will seek to shed light on these questions and many more about the role of JADF in local governance.

Keywords: Horizontal decentralization, Local development, Home-grown solutions, Participation, Accountability, Rwanda.
I. Introduction

Since the late 1980's and 1990's, Africa entered a far-reaching process of political, economic and institutional reform, which has transformed the institutional and policy environment within which development takes place. In different countries, this reform process has resulted in the gradual dismantling of the centralist model of development, and in so doing has created conditions for a more participatory development approach through vertical and horizontal decentralization.

“In vertical decentralization, the central government is the principal; the local government is the agent. In horizontal decentralization, the community is the principal; the local government is the agent”. (Gustav, 2012).  

That new governance approach has included the shedding of functions to non-governmental actors, and has given rise to a wider recognition of the potential benefits of a more participatory approach to development management. The legitimate role of civil society and of the private sector in participating in the formulation and the execution of policy has been increasingly accepted. Mainstreaming non-state actors in municipal management became one of the implementation modalities.

Countries that adopted joint action between local authorities and non-state actors, of which Rwanda is a case study in this paper, see that partnership as a way to realize horizontal linkages, to contribute to more sustainable development at the local level based on democratic participation and effective task division, and to more effectively use external resources. Furthermore, they believe it can also help achieve greater policy coherence allowing local governments to fulfill their statutory responsibilities and enabling the participation of other actors.

In countries such as Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa joint actions exist but are associated with implementation of projects in specific municipalities to address a challenge which the project identified as main threat. For instance: lack of local ownership and participation in development processes, inadequate attention paid to building capacities outside of the government sector, or pervasive inefficient use and misuse of aid resources by government bureaucracies. Rwanda is a unique case in joint action because JADF has a national coordination, operates all over the country, and holistically tackles issues pertaining to local development though governance.

It is in the perspective the above review that this paper seeks to discuss\textsuperscript{6} “Accountability enhancement through participation in local governance” which is regarded as an outcome of horizontal decentralization.

A particular focus will be put on the role of JADF which is regarded as the home-grown mechanism to enhance horizontal decentralization that boosts mutual accountability between service providers and the beneficiaries in the community.

**Horizontal decentralization**

1.1 Definition

Decentralization is usually referred to as “the transfer of powers from central government to lower levels in a political-administrative and territorial hierarchy; (Crook, and Manor, 1998). Where there is democratic local governance, decentralization translates the vote power of citizens into an effective voice. The underlying benefit of decentralisation is that citizens have increased opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes that are brought closer to them.

From analysis of decentralized governance reforms across the world, UNDP distinguishes the forms of decentralization by hierarchy and function\textsuperscript{2}. According to this new "territorial decentralization" refers to the transfer of centrally produced and provided public goods and services to local-level units in the government hierarchy of jurisdictions. "Functional decentralization" refers to the transfer of such central responsibilities either to parastatals under the control of the government or to units outside governmental control, such as NGOs or private firms.

Horizontal decentralization refers to the functional perspective. It implies the vesting of decision-making authority in the specialized units by the central agency. It adds value in the sense that the scope for decentralization is greater in a multi-functional organization than in a uni-functional organization. Functional or horizontal decentralization responds to the demand for people’s participation in the administration of development programmes, the pressure of interest groups, the need to strengthen grass-roots democracy. Both by the hierarchy and function traits of territorial decentralization characterize the local governance system of Rwanda.

\textsuperscript{6}Joint UNDP - Government of Germany evaluation of the UNDP role in decentralization and local governance, 1999
Rwanda’s decentralisation policy is about citizens’ participation and empowerment, and has been designed to enable the government and its partner development actors to place citizens at the centre of decision making on development programs in their areas. As decentralisation has underpinned most of the progress made in the last decade, deepening decentralisation continues to be a priority, with a focus on transferring more powers, resources and capacities to sub-national actors. Indeed, this incentivises local actors to be more responsible, more motivated, more innovative and more accountable for service delivery (MINALOC, revised national decentralization policy, 2012).

1.2 Accountability in local governance

Decentralisation in Rwanda has established appropriate structures for coordination and integrated management of development activities. Through Districts Councils local governments are accountable to the center under vertical and to democratic forces and civil society through JADF under horizontal decentralization. A balanced combination of holding the local government vertically and horizontally accountable puts Rwanda in a unique position to leverage its experience of rapid development, including public sector efficiency, and using home-grown solutions to build social cohesion and extend essential services to citizens.

In general terms, decentralized and accountable local governance refers to levels of local discretion and accountability in political, administrative and fiscal domains, taking into consideration enabling factors such as the quality of institutional relations. In this paper where collaborative accountability through JADF is the central factor in horizontal decentralization enhancement, analysis of local governance will use the lens of Rwandese traditions and customs promoting a spirit of collaboration and communal actions for solving of social problems. Indeed, JADF follows the philosophy of traditional institutions such as ubudehe (participatory planning), umuganda (community services) or imihigo (local performance contracts) that encourage community members to frequently interact, discuss issues, jointly find solutions and work together to implement them.

The Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) provide avenues for donors, NGOs, faith-based organisations, private enterprises and various government ministries and agencies to jointly identify priorities and coordinate intervention activities with the facilitation of local authorities. Mutual accountability, synergies’ building and enhanced delivery at local level are among the key performance indicators of JADF.
1.3 Joint Action Development Forum

Ministerial Instructions No. 04/07 of 15/07/2007 defined JADF as follows “The Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) is a multi-stakeholder platform that was put in place to facilitate and promote full participation of citizens in the decentralized and participatory governance and improve service provision processes with representatives from the public sector, private sector and civil society”. JADF builds on the traditional values of solidarity and mutual support towards a common agenda of ensuring the social welfare of people. JADF applies the traditional practice that any activity or pressing duty that could not have been handled without the help of the community could be assisted upon. JADF exploits positive aspects of culture heritage which have proven their worth in community development. Traditional practices used to engage people individually in the past, they are replicated at institution level today by JADF after combining them with modern participatory concepts, such as: creating a space for inclusive dialogue, synergy and accountability, establishing a shared agenda of development in the District and determining outcomes to be monitored and peer-reviewed.

Figure 1: JADF as governance innovations SOURCES

Source: Primary data
Benchmarking JADF through literature review to similar policy tools applied in countries of East Africa and beyond reveals that, there is sufficient evidence from country case
studies that joint action is a viable approach to local development. In all the cases, there are tangible benefits.\footnote{Decentralized Cooperation and Joint Action, European Centre for Development Policy Management, 2001}

“For example, the credibility of local government has been heightened, resulting in improved revenue collection, effective privatization of service delivery, and resurgence of the spirit of volunteerism and communal support which used to characterize African culture. Furthermore, bridges of confidence and trust are firmly emerging, attitudinal barriers that have traditionally strained relations between Councils and communities are gradually disappearing, and in some cases, pooling resources has reduced donor dependency. In addition, there is increasing recognition of the comparative advantages and skills that each actor can bring to the relationship”.

JADF across the country fuels civil society and private sector participation in decision-making, planning, implementation and monitoring of local development processes. In each district, JADF brings together local government authorities, international development NGOs, Civil society, faith based organizations and private sector for enhanced performance in delivering development at local level.

1.4 Conclusion

Decentralization in Rwanda took a major stride since 2006, under a reform that devolved authority and resources to the local government entities, making them responsible for good governance promotion and local economic development. In a parallel trend, the JADF, which started as an ad-hoc initiative, evolved towards being institutionalized in 2007. It was given the legal authority that facilitates, guide and inform Local Governments and their stakeholders in establishing a functional and harmonized development forum. It was raised to be a platform used by the Central Government to monitor the participation of non-state actors with efficiency through encouraging peer review and harmonized regulation of JADF operations across Districts. It was also empowered to give confidence to development stakeholders contributing to local economic development initiatives through effective alignment with Districts Development Plans (DDPs). Thus, there is increasing awareness that a balanced approach is needed to strengthen local government institutions and to promote the participation of non-state actors- non-government organizations (NGO's), faith-based organizations (CBO's), the private sector - in the development process.
II. The role of JADF in local governments accountability

2.1 What new insights is JADF bringing in the governance balance?

The JADF Strategic Plan states its mission as follows: “The mission of JADF is to ensure sustainable socio-economic development and improved service delivery to the Rwandan community through active participation, dialogue, accountability, information sharing and coordination of stakeholders’ interventions in local governments” (RGB 2012). The underlying logic behind that mission statement was that JADF as a governance mechanism facilitates greater participation of citizens in the local development processes by way of their public, civil and private sector representatives.

2.1.2 Flashback in the early existence of JADF

A flashback in the early stage of existence JADF and decentralization in Rwanda reveals to what extent JADF is an effective tool to reinforce horizontal decentralization. The Decentralization Policy was approved in 2001 and JADF evolved from a localized and ad-hoc initiative in some local government entities between 2002 and 2005. It was given the institutional and legal framework to become a policy instrument of horizontal decentralization in 2007.

I will pick one example from my personal experience with JADF where participation, dialogue, accountability, information sharing and coordination of stakeholders using JADF approach impacted much service delivery is health sector.

In 2003, the average rate of utilization of modern health services in Rwanda was 0.28 new cases per inhabitant per year, representing 50% of the WHO standard of 1 new case per inhabitant per year in urban areas and 0.5 to 0.6 new cases per inhabitant per year in rural areas in development countries (MINISANTE, 2007). One of the most frequent reasons for the non-utilization and failure to meet health services is the high cost of health care. Indeed, financial barriers to access to care result in different forms of exclusion, including total exclusion or poverty, seasonal exclusion, temporary exclusion and partial exclusion. The risks of total exclusion or poverty are higher among the extremely poor population. The risks of seasonal temporary and partial exclusion are higher among population groups living on low and irregular income, the majority of which are in the rural areas. Mutual health insurance was thus adopted as a mechanism for reconciling the improvement of financial accessibility to health care and the need to mobilize domestic resources to enhance the financial viability of health services. However, mutual health insurance structures experienced significant loss of membership and low level of subscriptions. Low
membership numbers was a big threat to their sustainability. Indeed, as soon as disease cases with very high costs occur, this can mean the end of the health insurance scheme due to insufficiency of pooled resources.

Several problems were identified as part of the factors contributing to the loss of membership and decline in the number of subscriptions, notably: limited quality of health services, poor performance of mutual health insurance structures, low level of appropriation by the administrative authorities who perceived mutual health insurance schemes as a purely medical and health program. There was a challenge called adverse selection where the beneficiaries to join a voluntary scheme are most likely high-risk individuals such as the chronically ill, who anticipate a high need for care. Indeed, due to this self-selection, the claims made to the scheme would exceed its revenues by far if premiums are based on the average risks in the community. Consequently, premiums would have to be raised and insured persons with a relatively lower risk than other members would drop out of the scheme, and would therefore again increase the healthcare cost per insurance member. These problems required a solution, which was found using the joint action approach.

1.1.3 JADF and the adherence to the Mutual Health Insurance Scheme

I was appointed the Executive Secretary of Gitarama Province to pioneer implementation of the decentralization policy. Indeed the policy was adopted in 2000, and a territorial administration reform followed in 2001 creating the Province as a deconcentrated entity of Central Government responsible for unfolding the intent behind the new policy. I contributed largely to the establishment of the first joint action forum in Rwanda and used it to address a critical problem I found on the ground. The newly created local government entities were unable to provide health services to citizens where households benefiting from mutual health insurance scheme were only 17% in 2003. By making horizontal decentralization work, we developed a result-based management system which could enable us hold accountable the District Mayors on addressing the low coverage of mutual health insurance scheme as well as monitoring their performance in engaging other local actors such as: the health facilities, the micro-finance institutions, NGOs and opinion leaders in the community including those running social welfare programs in different churches.

Low level of ownership by the local administrative authorities who perceived mutual health insurance schemes as a purely medical and health program was identified as a critical problem limiting the capacity of mutual health insurance to develop. Therefore, the
response to the ownership problem was obviously to involve them. However, engagement of local administrative authorities would not bear significant outcomes if the designed solution did not have a strategy to address the financial sustainability aspect.

Mayors were requested to initiate and lead a dialogue with NGOs and Churches on setting a plan to jointly identify the most vulnerable households that deserve to be exempted from paying the subscription fee and be covered by a social protection intervention because they cannot afford. Collaborative efforts of those entities provided solutions to meet the cost of that needed intervention. They were also assisted by the Province which negotiated a financial arrangement with Union des Banques Populaires du Rwanda to maximize the access of mutual health insurance credit to the members who had difficulties to pay their subscription. As a result of that collaboration we made the massive subscription happen because it was easier to convince a person, to whom insurance is a strange notion, to pay one dollar per month rather expecting payment of eight dollars full annual subscription fee at once. It is important to note that in reality the credit system was a pre-financing arrangement for the mutual health insurance annual budget aiming at assuring predictability. Therefore, the incentive played a very significant role in making the new scheme work. Furthermore, efforts to strive for clean audit in financial management, to which the Banque Populaire branches across Districts participated actively, uplifted the credibility of the scheme.

Close monitoring and evaluation of quality assurance of care in health facilities was also a key strategy. Indeed, people accepted to join the new scheme because the change they wanted to see in service delivery was emerging. Collaboration happened through regular meetings, through work plans development and review meetings, through quarterly progress report meetings, and through monthly update meetings with Districts. At the quarterly progress report meeting, we would invite officials in the Ministry of Health and credit managers in the Union of Banques populaire to share insights. Their expert knowledge and capabilities would definitely add value to the deliberations in the meeting and influence the resolutions. Decision taken were informed by a rigorous consideration of M&E data gathered and analyzed by the technical support unit which was established at the Province with the mandate to assist the coordination in the evaluation process with a result-based monitoring approach.

Methods employed to track and monitor results in terms of the new behaviors or changes include the following:
• We tracked change through reviewing reports and analyzing data provided by Districts, the Provincial Health Directorate and the ‘Banque Populaire’;
• We monitored satisfaction of citizens with service delivery using beneficiary interviews;
• We developed a participatory approach in objectives setting and review through briefing sessions;
• We monitored implementation impact through review of statistics collected in the Heath Information Management System
• We eagerly and regularly sought the input and feedback of a wide array of stakeholders, including church leaders, NGOs, security personnel etc;
• We adjusted the mix and timing of activities to reflect lessons learned and feedback from stakeholders;
• We monitored sensitization activities through daily exchange of telephone text messages on numbers of people recruited and we conducted a weekly review of results achieved;
• We tracked improvements in financial management performance through audits.

Based on the solidarity underlying collaborative efforts of stakeholders, the activities around the intervention facilitated partnerships among existing mutual health insurance structures, and partnerships among mutual health insurance structures and community-based health care organizations, NGOs and faith-based organizations, the banques populaires and micro-credit enterprises at the local level in a District-led Joint Action Development Forum.

Indeed, the networking of mutual help structures and their associations ensured efficient distribution of disease risk over a wider population. The intensification of partnerships between mutual health insurance structures and health care organizations helped to improve aspects relating to the quality of care to be provided to members of mutual health insurance, the rational use of care services, price fixing and billing for health care and services, which were all vital elements for sustaining mutual insurance experiences. Finally, the intensification and monitoring of the partnership with decentralized financial institutions like the Banque Populaire helped to enhance the soundness of this partnership, while avoiding accumulation of outstanding payments in repayment of loans granted to pre-finance membership contributions. Institutionalization of this approach made it so easy for the population to join mutual health insurance.

We reached the best increase score of coverage in the country because we improved the management tools and the quality of service. Using JADF approach, we undoubtedly
nurtured a community dynamics in the search for solutions to the problems of financial accessibility to health care and protection against financial risks associated with diseases.

The table below shows the level of mutual health insurance coverage per province, which increased significantly in 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coverage rates per province</th>
<th>Number of mutual health insurance (per sphere of influence of health centers)</th>
<th>Target population</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Rate of subscription</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BUTARE</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>689.618</td>
<td>172.404</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYUMBA</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>672.396</td>
<td>188.270</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CYANGUGU</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>577.120</td>
<td>92.339</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIKONGORO</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>465.242</td>
<td>41.871</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GISENYI</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>821.158</td>
<td>270.982</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GITARAMA</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>849847</td>
<td>382.431</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIBUNGO</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>667.135</td>
<td>306.882</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIBUYE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>445.565</td>
<td>71.300</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIGALI NGALI</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>749.863</td>
<td>202.463</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIGALI CITY</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>572.896</td>
<td>120.308</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U MUTARA</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>400.541</td>
<td>40.054</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUHENGHERI</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>810.745</td>
<td>202.686</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>7.722.126</td>
<td>2.101.034</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Ministry of Health*

The figures above were achieved under a strategy to scale up and build technical capacity adopted in 2002 and implemented by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Local Government up to 2005 when community-based health insurance (CBHI) attained the
coverage of the entire. Rwanda’s health system reforms started in 1999 when the Ministry of Health implemented a pilot program of 54 community-based health insurance (CBHI) schemes across three districts within the country. Each scheme collaborated with a health center and local populations began to enroll. Management of each scheme was placed in the hands of its members, who elected a five person executive committee. Each district had a District Federation of Prepayment Schemes (DFPS) with responsibility over district policies.

Today, about 90% of citizens subscribe, thanks to a national campaign organized by the Government of Rwanda every year to encourage citizens in different corners of the country to join the community-based universal health care scheme commonly known as ‘Mutuelle de Santé’. The Government caters for 23% of the population who cannot afford to pay insurance fees. JADF participates to the sensitization campaign and it caters for about additional 10% of the population who may be needy do to unforeseen circumstances.

2.2 Legal, policy and institutional framework for JADF

Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) was officially established in 2007 by the Ministerial Instructions No. 04/07 of 15/07/2007 to serve as a consultative forum for District Development Stakeholders (CSOs, NGOs, Development Partners, Private and Public Sectors and Local Government).

Today JADF operates in all the 30 Districts where at every District there is a JADF Secretary in charge of day to day operations of JADF. In the beginning, JADF operational framework was chaired by the Vice Mayor in charge Economic Development but with time as JADF evolved in its operations at District level, members opted for the possibility to elect any competent member to chair JADF outside of the District administration and influence. Today, out of 30 JADFs Chairpersons, 26 come from Civil Society, 2 are Districts’ Vice-Mayors, while 2 originate from Private Sector.
Dynamics in the growth of horizontal decentralization triggered the imperative to propose that a Prime Minister’s Instructions should establish this Forum, determine organization, responsibilities and functioning of its organs. These Instructions were issued and published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Rwanda No. 29 bis of 20/07/2015, empowering and giving authority to the Forum in its mandate of promoting participatory planning, dialogue, information sharing, ensure equitable distribution of development activities and avoiding duplication of efforts in Local Governments.

In the light of these evolving policies, JADF is acquiring an increasing mandate and potential to steer and promote local economic development, involving public and private stakeholders, and engaging the citizen as participant rather than mere recipient in development. The new Prime Minister’s Instructions governing JADF were developed under a review exercise that was conducted with the aim to have in a place a strong and efficient JADF institutional and operational framework both at Central and Local levels. The Instructions were revised in consultation with key stakeholders to ensure responsiveness of the Instructions to the needs of stakeholders.
As a result of the extensive consultations made during the process, adoption and the dissemination of the new Prime Minister’s Instruction governing JADF, its National Coordination Secretariat in Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) understood the way to create and sustain a win-win situation where interests of different stakeholders are accommodated and catered for. JADF General Assemblies in Districts and the existing thematic commissions are being revamped to ensure that various categories of JADF members (District, CSOs, and Private Sector) negotiate their space in policy processes as active stakeholders of horizontal decentralization in Rwanda through JADF.

2.2.1 JADF for enhancing Voice and Accountability

With the financial support from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Rwanda, a three year Joint Action Development Forum Strengthening Project was initiated in 2010. The project enabled the JADF to conduct several activities related to the promotion of Voice and Accountability across a wide range of JADF member organizations. Such activities include the following:

- Training the local organizations at sector and district levels to voice, rights and obligations of the citizenry
- Supporting local organizations and local governments in delivering responsive and accountable service provision
- Training selected NGOs at the District level in multiple stakeholders processes (participative and joint planning, budgeting and performance monitoring).

JADF Strengthening Project phased out in 2013 with the evaluation of outcomes which include the following: (JADF Project Evaluation Report 2013)

- Achieving confidence and reciprocal trust between the different stakeholders: emphasizing JADF as a learning platform, not on control but by working on the same agenda and shared plan;
- Achieving coherence through ownership and leadership: discuss and have a consensus on common development issues for the District to be owned and led by all member organizations which is different from discussing and approving the District Development Plan for alignment;
- Achieving credible incentives: for all stakeholders involved and who fulfill their obligations both in JADF as well as being accountable within their organization through providing transparent and timely reports, positive incentives could be:
possibilities for networking, having an overview of needs and activities in the District, promoting their organization, receiving acclaim for performance, etc.

✔ **Enhancing community participation:** JADF members understood that without community buy-in and participation, deployed efforts were unlikely to produce significant results. In a number of their interventions, they invested time and energy engaging in dialogue and negotiation with the community, and listening to different members and groups. Joint outreach activities of church leaders together with local community leaders were reportedly instrumental in shaping the active citizenship attitude.

According to information collected from various JADF stakeholders during coordination workshops, JADF has been beneficial to both its members and the general public. For its members, this has led to result-based planning and joint planning that promote mutual accountability, which in turn leads to better performance through cooperation. To the public, for example, in the 2011 SNV Annual Report, it was indicated that fifteen out of twenty-four (63%) service provision-related issues raised through JADF in the General Assembly and/or commissions were addressed in the Districts’ *Imihigo*. These include construction of health and education infrastructures.

JADF members come from distinctly different backgrounds (local government, civil society organizations, private sector, other local development partners), together they form JADF as a non-hierarchical discussion platform in which every member has equal role to play: representing their constituency, provide open, complete and transparent information about their development activities and results, discuss progress made in the District towards sustainable and inclusive local development, to learn and eventually improve. Thus, JADF meetings are a key platform facilitating the implementation of effective horizontal decentralization by providing a forum for service provision and development planning accountability.

Understanding and acting as equal members is crucial for effective mutual accountability. Also holding the Government accountable follows as an outcome of the right to engage collectively across tiers of Government with one Voice of JADF. Individual member organization find it more efficient and effective to play their advocacy role because discussions in JADF improve the quality of ideas to sell while also creating more political space for them to influence policy.
2.2.2 Information flow among JADF stakeholders

In JADF, accountability starts with the purpose of planning to achieve district goals. In this regard, an integrated approach is used whereby the different District partners participate in the design of development plans, strategies and action plans. Subsequently, they commit themselves to goals and activities aligned to their operations. That is why every beginning of District budget year, all partners signs performance contracts with the District. Later in the year, they submit themselves to performance reviews.

Partner in JADF also undergo annual participatory reviews with a peer learning approach. The process requires that reasons be given for underperformance. New action steps are then set and programmed into the coming year. These activities and processes provide a framework for JADF members to hold themselves accountable for their commitments to the public.

Furthermore, the organizational chart of JADF is designed hierarchically based on its objectives and strategy. JADF has its lines of communication and authority within the hierarchy, and allocates its stakeholders defined duties and rights accordingly. Within each hierarchy are specified roles, responsibilities and power. The hierarchy also shows how information flows as well as how responsibilities are delegated and coordinated. Below is the flow chart showing the flow information in JADF Mechanism as set in the Prime Minister’s instructions of July 20th, 2015.
**Source: primary data**

The Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) is the institution in charge of coordination of JADF activities at national level, through stakeholders’ consultative Forum and National JADF coordination secretariat. It plays a significant role in spearheading the coordination of JADF activities at national level. Thus, the Prime Minister’s Instructions improved the structure of coordination and information flow to support the decision making value-chain from (i) the national steering committee (strategic orientation), (ii) RGB coordination using the operational oversight through the national secretariat coordination unit and the consultative forum with stakeholders at national level, (iii) Governance strengthening at District level, (iv) defined role of Sector level in reporting the ground activities.

### 2.2.3 JADF at the intersection between Coordination and Participation

The National Coordination Secretariat of JADF documents regularly best practices country-wide in order to help JADF actors to improve their understanding of joint action process, and as a result, achieve better outcomes and higher rates of success. JADF proves
to be a great achiever as a result of the openness of District authorities, the positive and constructive attitude of non-state actors engaging through JADF, the growing culture of inclusive decision making, dialogue and negotiation, as well as the strong belief in joint planning for community-sensitive interventions. A description of three experiences on the role of local governance is given here bellow for illustration.

In Burera District, Compassion International, an international NGO, facilitates access to health services by covering the cost of healthcare for children from the most vulnerable households. However, District authorities and Compassion International disagreed on the way this assistance should be provided in line with the National Health Insurance Policy. On one hand, Compassion International policy is about children “sponsorship” where it manages funds donated by charitable organizations to support the sponsored child’s education and health until they become self-sufficient. On the other hand, sponsoring children alone violates the national insurance policy that urges development partners to take charge of health care costs for an entire household rather than one child. On October 25, 2011, members of JADF Social Commission initiated a discussion over the issue with determination to reach a consensus on the way forward. Following JADF-mediated discussions over the issue, Compassion International agreed to revise its development assistance strategy and align it to the National Mutual Health Insurance Policy. They communicated to their donor about the conceded policy framework change. JADF mediation process was facilitated by the Forum’s moral authority and credibility. It has the credibility and the capacity to be heard because of its merit.

The African Evangelical Enterprise (AEE), a local faith based-organization that promotes socio-economic development initiatives for vulnerable groups, donates cows in one of its intervention schemes. In its annual action plan of 2012, it was considering to donate cows to poor families in Nyarugenge, Nyakabanda and Rwezamenyo Sectors within Nyarugenge District. However, when the action plans of JADF member organization were discussed in the general assembly of JADF for peer review, participants welcomed the good intention but questioned the viability of such an intervention. Instead, JADF suggested using available budget to facilitate the access of motorcycles for youth in Kimisagara because in the city, motorcycle transport is a reliable source of employment and income. It took three month, from April to June 2012, to make the final decision because AEE had to convince all its stakeholders and donor on the relevance of the JADF-suggested alternative. In December 2012, ten motorcycles had been purchased and distributed to self-help youth groups of 15 to 20 members. AEE concluded an arrangement with ASSETAMORWA (the association of motorcycle taxi operators which is JADF member also) where the association operates and manages a motorcycle and pays a self-
help group 30,000 Frw on weekly basis. From this amount of 30,000 Frw, a member gets a loan of 20,000 Frw per week to run a small income generating project of his choice. This means that within four month, at least 150 self-help group members’ accessed funds to run a small business. AEE was satisfied with its development action because it has efficiently enabled vulnerable youth groups to get loans. It is important to note that it took time of dialogue and negotiation, as JADF was trying to convince AEE, which in turn took time to persuade its donor and stakeholders for change in the previously agreed approach. This shift in course of action was facilitated by regarding JADF as a platform that genuinely defends and promotes the interests of the community. AEE recognized that the issue raised by peers was relevant and meaningful. Moreover, they accepted the change because it originated from peer organizations with shared membership to JADF.

In 2013 JADF solved a big problem at Rubavu Hill which was recurrently hit by vicious erosion due to agricultural activities. Erosion frequently destroyed property and roads, often taking human lives in its wake. Despite the danger and several warning by authorities, the Rubavu Hill residents were reluctant to leave their home village for resettlement to an unfamiliar yet safe ground. The issue was analyzed by the JADF Coordination Committee of Rubavu District and later discussed in the General Assembly. The latter took it with great concern and decided to act by mobilizing all resources at hand to resettle the Rubavu Hill residents to Kantembwe, a place where agriculture could be practiced without conflicting with environment protection. JADF initiative was successfully carried out in a five month process that featured well planned and coordinated joint efforts. The JADF Economic Commission was tasked to do the preparatory work. They started with needs inventory. A census of the population to be relocated was conducted. The number of houses to be built on the resettlement site was determined. The types and quantity of materials required was identified. Space for houses, roads, and other basic infrastructure was established. Finally every contributor’s roles and responsibilities were defined. JADF members undertook an extensive sensitization campaign. The local administration and church leaders held dialogue and consultations within the community to convince the residents of Rubavu Hill of the many benefits of relocating to a place where basic amenities will be available. Through those consultations leaders were able also to persuade community members of different socio-professional groups to support the initiative by contributing financially, physically or with construction materials. The outcome was 120 new houses and basic amenities constructed in Kintembwe. Rubavu Hill was protected and transformed into a tourist attraction. This was achieved through the complementary contributions of several actors. The District allocated the resettlement place and provided planks. Members of local private sector contributed money. Churches
not only mobilized their followers to own the initiative but also provided iron sheets for roofing. Community members contributed manpower and construction materials such as wood and stones. The JADF Economic Commission conducted frequent field visits to assess the ongoing progress, make recommendations on the forthcoming steps, and share performance information with stakeholders and partners. These frequent field visits and subsequent meetings and exchanges of information helped to ensure that the activities were implemented according to plan. Joint planning increased commitment, while regular reporting reinforced mutual accountability among contributors. The initiative was supported massively due to the motivation of being part the decision making process. NGOs accompanied the adaptation of the relocated population in their new settlement; while the local association of Reserve Forces (demobilized soldiers) took on the task of ensuring the maintenance of terraces made and trees planted in protection of Rubavu Hill. To that end, the association was franchised to collect revenues from visiting tourists.

JADF promotes domestic accountability within member organizations and develops mutual accountability among JADF actors. JADF used to be perceived as an administrative control mechanism to make sure that non-state actors operating in the Districts comply with local development strategies and policies. Over time, this has evolved into the District becoming regarded as one of the members of JADF. This assisted JADF in moving towards a platform for discussion and learning and mutual accountability where every member is accountable towards other members for their actions in the District.

2.2.4 Growing capacities in local governance through JADF

Members from civil society organizations vie for and obtain leadership positions in JADF. The fact that those organizations are active in JADF affairs is a sign of growing recognition, trust and credibility invested in them; which in turn make a positive effect on their capacity enhancement, self-confidence, and increased Voice of non-State actors in the framework of partnership for development at the District level. JADF members are joining with enthusiasm and partnering with others to promote their mutual interests. Service providers are attentive to being responsive to the needs and interests of citizens because they are aware that they can be directly challenged and held accountable for poor service provision.

Feedback reports from JADF general assembly and JADF commissions meetings across the country affirm that discussion and interactions between Districts and their development partners over implementation of development plans have become more structured, open, positive, pragmatic, and equitable. Such close interactions lead to a
dialogue on improving service delivery by providing direct feedback to service providers in a peer review spirit. Civil Society and Private Sector constituencies highlight important strides in good working relationships with the local authorities; not only to legitimate their actions, but also to have administrative facilitation and back-up. On the other hand, local government administration value the contribution of JADF stakeholders to the success of districts development plans implementation, and in effect their performance contracts.

Assessment of JADF meetings reports and observation of workshops held show that currently JADF meetings are of great quality than before. The quality is seen in various characteristics like: pre-established agenda, efficient facilitation that considers everyone’s inputs, rich discussion with focus on the agenda items, wide representation and participation from different sections of the society, mutual respect among participants etc. Similarly, performance monitoring through JADF commissions had led the members to become more performance conscious and result-oriented. Stakeholders, including the Districts authorities, are encouraged to be more open and take into consideration the feedback and inputs from their counterparts. As levels of commitments rise, goodwill increases and JADF see more involvement in sensitive missions that Central Government assigns to the decentralized entities. It is that context that today the social protections programs are owned and implemented through an all-inclusive support mechanism that involves the Government, the private sector, Development partners, Faith-based and Civil Society organizations.

**2.2.4 Political space through JADF**

JADF primarily involves processes where dialogue and negotiation between the district authorities and their development partners (two actors with different but complementary interests) are important. To engage in a meaningful dialogue and negotiation, both parties must have positive attitudes towards each other by remaining willing to give and receive feedback on their work and on their partnership, as well as on how they can support each other. Much has been said about common interest between JADF stakeholders to enhance collaboration, where local authorities respect, encourage and support their non-state partners in development, and where the latter respond positively to the former’s requests for advice or assistance. Together, they regularly organize open-days as an opportunity to inform the general public about how they deliver on their respective service delivery mandates and eventually obtain feedback and view points on those services. However, it is important to note that JADF doubles also as a platform where individual and group interests compete for space.
For instance, as mentioned earlier, in 26 out of 30 Districts’ JADF, Chairpersons come from Civil Society organizations. They influence policy through setting the agenda of general assemblies and implementation of resolutions, by the legitimacy entrusted to them to engage with Districts’ authorities and the District Council, by their mandate to co-represent JADF in many national consultations with Rwanda Governance Board. The space for interests of Civil Society organizations in their policy influencing role is provided also by how much they are represented in the different JADF thematic commissions. Here bellows, the diagram gives a consolidated picture of how different categories of JADF members are represented within those commissions.

**Figure 4: JADF Commissions’ members per categories of stakeholders**

![Bar Chart]

*Source: compiled from the JADF membership database of RGB*

Civil Society members are the majority in all commissions. In Southern Province, their insightful contribution in the Provincial Partners Forum (FPP) informed a provision in the Prime Minister Instructions governing JADF to create the Stakeholder Consultative Forum in JADF structure as an oversight organ. The provision was an impetus to its influence in this category which will apex when provincial bodies are legally installed in the JADF structure.

In JADF, Private Sector is not as active as Civil Society because the former uses the framework of Public-Private Dialogue (PPD) to engage Districts authorities on issues
related to local taxes and those related to trade licenses. Similarly, local authorities engage with business operators through the Private Sector Federation (PSF) in their capacity of key stakeholders for Local Economic Development (LED) plans of the Districts. However, there are business issues which are of general interest in nature, and in that case, Private Sector finds in JADF the best platform for handling such issues.

It is in that context that the JADF of Rubavu is very much involved in defense of interests of the people in cross-border trade. For instance, from October 29-30, 2014 the JADF of Rubavu convened a workshop that brought together key social actors of Goma and Rubavu, mainly members of civil society, members of the private sector and the local political authorities of two cities, to exchange views on the prospects of collaboration in economic, political and socio-cultural matters. The respective Mayors of the two twin Cities of DRC and Rwanda were among the participants.

The participants acknowledged all the role civil society and the local private sector must play in peace-building and development in both cities by defending together the cause free movement of people and goods at the two sides of the border. Among other resolutions adopted to address the difficulties encountered, the following were highlighted in particular:

- The measure to close the border at 6 pm should be lifted,
- Harmonize the administrative procedures of travel documents,
- Harmonize laws on trade in milk and other agricultural products,
- Consider building cross-border stocks or markets,
- To overcome stereotypes and negative perceptions of each other,
- Strengthen the partnership between civil society and the State, emulating the JADF model

As National JADF Coordinator, I was invited and participated to this workshop. When I traveled back to Rubavu in April 2017 to inquire about progress in implementation of the resolutions, I found impressive strides that were referred to as outcomes of a private sector-led local diplomacy with the support of all social actors under JADF Coordination. Private sector leaders in Rubavu and their Goma counterparts kept consulting each other to exchange views on how to deal with matters pertaining to cross border trade. Such dynamics empowered the private sector to clarify the aspirations of people, while also enlarging the vision of its members and delivering better on its Mission. Partly because of such forums, the border which used to be closed at 6 PM is now open on both sides up to 10 PM and illegal business activities are on the decrease. The problem-solving process in which the JADF of Rubavu involved their respective counterparts in Goma inspired the latter to re-think their municipal governance in terms of decentralization and horizontal accountability.

According to the PSF members interviewed, “A private sector that seeks to serve communities and carry out its tax obligation as well as be law abiding deserves to be listened to and their advice taken seriously. Several changes have been made because of this relationship between the private sector and the authorities. More taxes are being collected with ease, migration processes and procedures have been modified, the border is opened longer etc. because of private sector /Government engagement and dialogue, in this regard, and private sector has helped Government to be more market friendly with profound positive consequences on people’s welfare”.

2.3 Conclusion

JADF meetings are a key platform facilitating the implementation of effective decentralization by providing a forum for service provision and development planning accountability. Continuous self-evaluation within JADF is transformed into a process of continued dialogue and negotiations looking forward to establishing a shared agenda of development.
To build accountability, commitment and ownership of results obtained under that development agenda is a process that demands a number of pre-requisites to be achieved, like the building of trust and understanding among different stakeholders, being open to learning, having common values in relation to development, taking responsibility and strengthening partnership. These prerequisites set a scene for an iterative process consisting of:

I. *A shared agenda*: agreement on development strategies articulated in the District Development Plan and results to solve development challenges in the District;

II. *A framework for monitoring and reviewing*: joint monitoring of progress towards the agreed agenda by different stakeholders;

III. *A process comprising dialogue and negotiation*: to define the agenda and review the process to establish trust, reputation, mutual relationship as incentives to carry out commitments.

IV. *The establishment of a shared agenda of development in the decentralized entities*: to institutionalize a process of continuous dialogue and negotiations, so as to know what is to be monitored and reviewed, and accounted for in a given period of time by different stakeholders.

3. Lessons learned

3.1 Gaps

Genuine decentralisation requires that there is respect for the principle of subsidiarity. This means that tasks are performed at the most appropriate level and that the legitimacy of all actors (central state, local government, and local non-state development stakeholders) is acknowledged and respected. The principle of subsidiarity encourages actors to take on responsibilities and to specify their comparative advantages.

Joint action, as such, is defined as "cooperation between different institutions in order to implement local level development activities in partnership". It subscribes to principles of open dialogue, equal partnership and shared accountability. It uses a process approach, and recognizes capacity building as a critical element.8

Conceptually, JADF should be understood as an approach influencing the way in which local development actors cooperate. However, for many years it has been used on an ad-hoc basis to mobilize local resources to address specific problem areas that the District

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8 Decentralized Cooperation and Joint Action, European Centre for Development Policy Management, 2001
cannot solve alone. It experienced the challenge to find ways for development actors who have traditionally worked separately, to work together around common interests. JADF member organizations joined with a role limited to primarily on service delivery and were given a role in programme design as well as in wider policy dialogue. Even though appreciated, it has raised questions concerning mandates, representativeness and legitimacy vis a vis formally elected Councillors, and concerning the roles of different actors and stakeholders in policy formulation and implementation.

RGB must further develop and maintain conceptual clarity of how to approach the understanding of JADF. Its capacity building interventions in JADF should pay attention to situations whereby activities in districts are carried out in quite different and often ad-hoc ways to serve different purposes. Generally, what is practiced is strongly influenced by local contextual factors, as well as by the interpretations of key individual and institutional stakeholders that champion the approach. Absence of conceptual clarity may undermine core aspects of the practice and raise different expectations.

### 3.2 Achievements

The context in which JADF built its strength was the time donors have gone too far in switching their support to non-state actors, especially NGOs, and in so doing have undermined the credibility and legitimacy of state institutions at all levels. The actions of NGO's were falling outside any agreed policy or planning framework, leading to duplications or conflicts in service provision. By promoting intensive and systematic interaction between governmental and non-governmental actors through a structured partnership, bridges of confidence and trust emerged, attitudinal barriers that have traditionally strained relations different local development stakeholders gradually disappeared, and in some cases, pooling resources has been effective under the JADF and District joint Imihigo. In addition, there is increasing recognition of the comparative advantages and skills that each actor can bring to the relationship.

Joint action also encourages a participatory approach to monitoring and evaluation. Stakeholders agree on expected results and what needs to be measured. Appropriate indicators have to be selected with standards required which address the needs of the different stakeholders and ensure that there is an adequate exchange of information. The case made for JADF is that it is able to provide an effective and accountable institutional framework for addressing local development needs by strengthening horizontal linkages.
The maturing of JADF is mainly a result of the regular organization of JADF General Assembly meetings in all Districts. These serve the function of providing an overview of the different development activities in the District following a more in-depth discussions held in the sector commissions. This assures better priority setting, enhanced resource mobilization, and more effective implementation. It promotes mutual accountability through explaining, harmonizing and coordinating planned activities, resulting in a communal plan in which each member has a defined role. JADF member organizations hold one another to account, and build trust and better understanding.

3.3 Way forward

Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) collaborated with Districts to develop a tailor-made and simplified database of their stakeholders that identifies the number of partners in each District with different areas of interventions and scope of operation in a district. This enables local government to know who is doing what and where to avoid duplication of interventions thus promotion of synergy as per the core objectives of JADF. To ensure sustainability, RGB aligned the mandate of JADF to socio-economic development and improved service delivery with key national policies and frameworks in a collaborative
mechanism. JADF is cognizant of, and builds on the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, the National Strategy for Transformation, the decentralization policy and the governance sector strategy.

As a result of that concerted mobilization around development ownership where horizontal decentralization plays a key role, even citizens acquire the capacity, knowledge and power to demand accountability. JADF promotes the reciprocal commitment to account across state and non-state development actors at local level. Accountability is looked as a process through which people entrusted with responsibility, in both in the public or private sectors and civil society, are kept under check when carrying out functions or tasks assigned to them with the purpose of securing responsive, efficient and effective behavior. It means that actions are answered for, performance is evaluated and that consequent steps are taken. Thus, Horizontal decentralization is enhanced through empowering local communities to play an active role in local governance and economic development processes where JADF serves as the accountability booster.
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RWANDA’S DECENTRALIZED HEALTH SERVICES AND KEY POPULATIONS

Case study: Kigali City and Towns of Huye, Karongi, Musanze, Rusizi, Nyagatare and Rubavu Districts

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Abstract

The UNAIDS seeks to reach Zero HIV new infections, Zero HIV related deaths and Zero stigma & discrimination by 2030\(^9\). Like different worldwide researches concluded, the HIV epidemic cannot be controlled if the Key populations are left behind. As the most HIV spreading agents, Rwanda characterized the Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) and Female Sex Workers (FSWs) as the most key population vulnerable groups on HIV\(^{10}\).

Subsequent to the decentralized process, Rwanda marks remarkable decentralized and supported health facilities\(^{11}\). With this initiative, the question now is to know at which level Key Populations are accessing decentralized health facilities as one of key responses to HIV in Rwanda. This is why the National Association for Supporting People living with HIV/AIDS (ANSP\(^+\))/Rwanda has conducted a research entitled *Rwanda’s Decentralized Health Services and Key Populations, Case Study of Kigali City and Towns of Huye, Karongi, Musanze, Rusizi, Nyagatare and Rubavu Districts.*

With discussions and records collected using a questionnaire and after analyzing qualitative and quantitative data by the software called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), 86.3% of respondents revealed that the quality of services is too low at nearest health facilities, specific materials for HIV prevention are insufficient and all respondents confirmed a high level of stigma and discrimination for Key Populations. All local leaders contacted are not aware of existence of MSM and their high vulnerabilities towards HIV.

Following the findings, despite overlapping triumphs in fighting against HIV/AIDS in decentralized entities, it was discovered that the level of accessibility of Key Populations to health services is at low level and it constitutes a barrier to the achievements of HIV related sustainable development goals.

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\(^{10}\) Rwanda National Strategic Plan on HIV 2013 – 2018, p.6.
\(^{11}\) Ministry of Health 2015, Health Sector Policy, Kigali, p.6.
I. Introduction

1.1. Background

ANSP\(^+\) stands for “Association Nationale de Soutien aux Personnes vivant avec le VIH/SIDA”. It is a Rwandan local Non-Governmental Organization created in September 2000 by People Living with HIV themselves, and obtained the National legal entity through the national official gazette No.011 of 14th /03/2011 and it got its official accreditation by the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) on the 03\(^{rd}\)/07/2013. As the Civil Society Organization (CSO) striving for the HIV infected/affected beneficiaries’ wellbeing development, ANSP\(^+\) is a Non-profit organization working in three areas:

- Fighting against HIV/AIDS and other epidemic diseases and their spread;
- Poverty reduction mostly in HIV/AIDS infected/affected people for better life; and
- Promotion of beneficiaries’ human rights.

Our potential beneficiaries include HIV infected/affected people, very poor people running a high risk of getting HIV, Key populations (KPs) and domestic workers. Key populations, as identified in national context, are made of four major categories starting by the Female Sex workers (FSWs), Men who have sex with men (MSM), Transgender persons (TG) and People who inject drugs (PWID).

A study carried out by Treatment and Research AIDS Centre Plus (TRAC Plus) Rwanda (2010) on FSWs revealed that condom use was found to be inconsistent among FSWs either with paying or regular partners, which is a very risky behavior for HIV acquisition and transmission. According to Faith Victory Association (FVA) research report (2012), FSWs are unlikely to change their risky behavior and those who are HIV-positive lose opportunities for treatment that could improve their own health and decrease their infectiousness\(^{12}\). Therefore, FSWs act significantly as a bridge of infection to the general population. According to the same source, despite the sex work, a big majority of FSWs reported their life as poor and their children do not attend the school (67.5%) with very poor adherence to health insurance “Mutuelle de santé” at low rate of 20.4%.

Considering this HIV-alarming situation in FSWs as part of key populations, ANSP\(^+\) has taken a prominent initiative of conducting a M&E based research with main ambition of identifying the structural barriers which continue to keep Key Populations at the margins of the HIV/AIDS response in Rwanda. Starting by June 2015, the research has reached 49 KP groups located in nine Districts from all provinces and Kigali city. The visited groups

include 35 associations of Female Sex Workers (FSWs), 9 groups of Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) and 5 groups of Lesbians, guys, Bisexual, transsexual and Intersex people (LGBTI).

1.2. Problem statement

Although HIV prevalence has been stable since 2005 and remains at 3 percent among adults age 15-49 as reported by Rwanda Demographic Survey of 2014-2015\(^\text{13}\); the Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC) through the Gender Assessment of Rwanda’s National HIV response (RBC 2013) revealed that HIV prevalence among female sex workers is especially high at 51% nationally and limited data on HIV prevalence for the remaining key populations groups\(^\text{14}\).

Considering their HIV running risk due to Anal Sex, Sharing of injection equipment in unsafe time and place, Unprotected Sex intercourses, Social factors leading to marginalization, and Multiple sexual Partners; KPs are still the most HIV spreading agents and constitute a huge challenge to the national and global commitment of ending AIDS epidemic by 2030.

The AIDS response can only be Fast-Tracker by promoting the right of all people to access High-quality HIV services without discrimination. Scaled-up action is necessary to address the specific barriers faced by adolescents, young people and key populations in protecting themselves from HIV and accessing HIV-related services.

This research was conducted with leading purpose of knowing the current unmet need for HIV prevention, care and treatment programs and services among KPs throughout existing health facilities network. In addition, it seeks to identify their needs and priorities for effective participation to the national HIV response framework and develop key recommendations.

\(^{13}\) NISR (2016), Demographic and Health Survey 2014-2015, p.225

\(^{14}\) RBC (2013), Gender Assessment of Rwanda’s National HIV Response, P.V
The research questions for this study were:

1. Is there any relationship existing between HIV new infections and poor adherence to antiretroviral treatment therapy observed in key populations?
2. How do poverty, stigma and discrimination influence KP healthcare service accessibility?

The research work intended to verify the following hypotheses:

The research questions for this study were:

1. There is positive correlation between new HIV infections in general population and poor adherence to antiretroviral treatment therapy observed in key populations;
2. If the poverty, stigma and resentment against key populations are addressed, their healthcare service accessibility will be increased thereby limiting the spread of HIV in the country.

1.3. **Significance of the research**

The substantial research aim was in fact to discover the KPs scattering all over the country and assessing their healthcare service accessibility at decentralized health facilities. Moreover, this research is not only expected to serve as evidence based data, but it also constitutes a mobilization and advocating tool for raising awareness of the community on existence of KPs and their vulnerability to HIV epidemic.

1.4. **Research area and population**

The research was carried out in major and second cities of Rwanda; i.e. three Districts of Kigali City and six bordering Districts which are expected to have more people movements than the others. These are Rubavu, Karongi and Rusizi Districts of Western Province, Musanze District of Northern Province, Huye District of southern Province and Nyagatare District of Eastern Province. In total, 28 sectors sheltering 49 groups/associations of Key populations were covered. Specifically, 153 representatives of targeted KPs groups/associations performed to respond to designed research questionnaires.
II. Theoretical Literature Review

2.1. Notion

The decentralization as transfer of decision making power and assignment of accountability and responsibility for results, it is the perfect opposite of centralization, in which the decision-making powers are delegated to the departmental, divisional, unit or center level managers, organization-wide.

2.2. Decentralization in Rwanda

Decentralization has been a key policy of the Government of Rwanda (GoR) since 2000 when the National Decentralization Policy was adopted. The main thrust of the policy was, and is, to ensure equitable political, economic, and social development throughout the country, and to be a cornerstone of the fight against poverty by increasing people’s participation in the planning and management of the development process. By 2000, the Rwandan Government shifted its health policy towards decentralization, leaving health service supply and demand to market forces\(^\text{15}\).

Since inception of the policy, the GoR decided that the implementation of the strategy should be carried out in phases. The first phase (2001 to 2005) aimed at establishing democratic and community development structures at the District level and was accompanied by a number of legal, institutional and policy reforms, as well as democratic elections for local leaders\(^\text{16}\).

The second phase (2006 to 2010) was conceived after a territorial restructuring in 2005, which considerably reduced the number of administrative entities (from 11 to 4 Provinces, 106 to 30 Districts, 1,545 to 416 Sectors, and 9,165 to 2148 Cells). It aimed at consolidating progress on national priorities, such as Vision 2020 and deepens the decentralization process by enhancing effectiveness in service delivery to communities\(^\text{17}\).


\(^{17}\) MINALOC (2011), Decentralization Implementation Plan (DIP) 2011-2015, p.3.
2.3. **Decentralization in health sector in Rwanda**

The decentralization of healthcare service delivery since 2005 was made possible through a strong and interdependent network of health facilities all over the country. The Rwanda health system is comprised of a network of 5 referral hospitals, 42 district hospitals, 30 district pharmacies, 5 blood transfusion centers, 466 health centers, 16 prison dispensaries, 60 health posts, 45,000 Community health workers at household level and 60 private sector health facilities including clinics, 114 dispensaries, laboratories and pharmacies(14).

*Table 1: Administrative structures by level with their public health facilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Administrative structure</th>
<th>Health infrastructures</th>
<th>Number of health facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villages / Imidugudu</td>
<td>14,837</td>
<td>CHWs</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cells / Utugari</td>
<td>2,148</td>
<td>Health posts/ Fosa communautaires</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sectors / Imireng</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>Health centers</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Districts / Utworere</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>District hospitals</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National / Igihugu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>National Referral Hospitals</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Public Health Facilities** | **513**

*Source: Third health sector strategic plan (2012-2018).*

2.4. **Contribution to the global targets**

The overall objective of the health sector of ensuring universal accessibility of equitable and affordable quality health services contributes plenary to different socio-economic global targets. For instance, according to the universal declaration of human rights, article 25, everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. Similarly, among seventeen sustainable development goals to be reached by 2030, the third seeks to ensure health and well-being for all, at every stage of life. The Goal

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(14) MINISANTE (2014), Health Sector Policy, p.11.
addresses all major health priorities, including reproductive, maternal and child health; communicable, non-communicable and environmental diseases; universal health coverage; and access for all to safe, effective, quality and affordable medicines and vaccines.

2.5. **HIV/AIDS and the World sustainable development agenda**

One of many resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS, taking place in New York, United States of America, from 8 to 10 June 2016 stipulates that efforts to end the AIDS epidemic and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are interdependent and inextricably linked and can lead to a wider, people-centered social transformation.

According to the same source, in setting out a Fast-Track approach to end AIDS, the UNAIDS 2016 – 2021 Strategy firmly acknowledges the need to root the HIV response in Agenda 2030, recognizing the interdependence between HIV and the SDGs, from ending poverty (SDG 1) to promoting inclusive societies (SDG 16) and strengthening partnerships (SDG 17). The UNAIDS 2016 – 2021 Strategy is a bold call to action to get on the Fast-Track and reach people being left behind. It is an urgent call to reach the 90–90–90 treatment targets, to close the testing gap and to protect the health of the 22 million people living with HIV who are still not accessing treatment.

Countries are encouraged to work with service providers in health-care, workplace and educational settings to eliminate HIV-related stigma and discrimination, including against people living with HIV and key populations. Countries are further encouraged to remove punitive laws, policies and practices that block an effective AIDS response, including travel restrictions and mandatory testing, and those related to HIV transmission, same-sex sexual relations, sex work and drug use\(^1^9\).

According to this source, the AIDS response can only be Fast-Tracking by promoting the right of all people to access High-quality HIV services without discrimination. Scaled-up action is necessary to address the specific barriers faced by adolescents, young people and key populations in protecting themselves from HIV and accessing HIV-related services.

The Rwanda HIV and AIDS National Strategic Plan (2013-2018) recognizes Female Sex Workers (FSWs), Men who have Sex with Men (MSM), Youth and Sero-discordant

couples as priority groups to end HIV and they are qualified Key populations\textsuperscript{20}. According to Gender Assessment of Rwanda’s National HIV Response, Gaps and areas for improvement remain in order to ensure an effective, gendered HIV response. Although the response has promoted meaningful participation, more can be done to ensure that women, girls, women living with HIV, key populations and marginalized groups are empowered and facilitated to participate in HIV decision-making\textsuperscript{21}.

### III. Research Methodological Framework

This part presents a number of methods and techniques used to get to the end of this paper. The methods and techniques served in exploring the domain of decentralization, HIV/AIDS and Key populations, collecting data, and analyzing them until the stage of reporting.

On one side, qualitative data analysis and quantitative data analysis methods, the techniques of questionnaire and unstructured interview were used. By using these methods and techniques, we obtained detailed information from local authorities, health centers and Key populations on HIV/AIDS, health services delivery, existence of Key populations and their conditions of living. Quantitative data analysis can be of great value to the researcher who is attempting to draw meaningful results from a large body of qualitative data\textsuperscript{22}. In such a way, the usage of quantitative data analysis method supported in analyzing quantitatively the data gathered from the field in order to generate mathematical information illustrated in this paper. Moreover, the technique of documentation was undertaken based on reading, exploring and analyzing textbooks and electronic data related to decentralization, HIV/AIDS.

On the other side, The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software of research was applied in collecting qualitative and quantitative data from the field, storing, analyzing and presenting them. Finally, analytical results were transferred in this work where they are accompanied with explanations and, conclusions and recommendations were formulated accordingly. That software was selected, first, due to its capacity in analyzing qualitative data and, second, it is what the researcher can easily manipulate.

\textsuperscript{21} RBC (2013), Gender Assessment of Rwanda’s National HIV response, PVII-X
\textsuperscript{22} Mugenda, O., and al. (2003). Research Methods, Quantitative and Qualitative Methods Approaches, ACTS Press, Nairobi, pp. 104
The 153 respondents during this study are shown in the table below according to age and gender:

Table 2: Respondents according to age and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Distribution of respondents by age</th>
<th>Distribution of respondents by sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>Between 18-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyarugenge</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15 (55.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasabo</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kicukiro</td>
<td>3 (33.3%)</td>
<td>2 (22.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubavu</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 (18.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musanze</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8 (38.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyagatare</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 (38.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huye</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (44.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karongi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rusizi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3 (2%)</td>
<td>62 (40.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) campaign 2015-2017.*

IV. Data Analysis And Discussion

4.1. Introduction

This is the substantial part of our research namely Rwanda’s Decentralized Health Services and Key Populations. It deals with data presentation, analysis and discussion. All of this aims at knowing the current unmet need for HIV prevention, care and treatment programs and services among Key Populations (KPs) throughout existing health facilities network.

4.2. Data presentation, analysis and discussion

The tables & diagrams below are made of the data collected from twenty-eight sectors of nine Districts from all Provinces and Kigali city. The research areas have been found to shelter a good number of Key Populations whose very few of them can express their feelings whereas most of their peers are hidden and contracting and spreading HIV due to social stigma, poor and none or limited healthcare service accessibility. They are living in
hiding their conditions because of extreme social stigma and they need to be treated as human and not exceptional people, to be provided with basic commodities for full participation to global and national HIV response.

During the data collection process, the total of 153 respondents from 49 KP groups was given an unstructured questionnaire to deliver the required research information.

4.2.1. Key population groups members

**Table 3: KP Groups membership situation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICTS</th>
<th>FSWs</th>
<th>MSM</th>
<th>LGBTI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>Members</td>
<td>Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasabo</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huye</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karongi</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kicukiro</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musanze</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyagatare</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyarugenge</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubavu</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rusizi</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,582</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) campaign 2015-2017.*

This table shows the research area counting nine different Districts allocated in four Provinces and Kigali city. The most interest was oriented to Kigali City and second cities of bordering Districts as they are viewed as areas of massive movements of people.

The research considered three main KPs groups of Female Sex workers (FSWs), Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) and the community made of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual and Transgender people commonly known as LGBTI in short. During the data collection process, we performed to meet with 153 respondents as the representatives of KP individuals belonging in 49 identified groups/ associations whose 35 of female sex workers, 9 for Men who have sex with men and 5 for LGBTI. According to available data, the total members of all visited key populations groups is 2,193 people and it is dominated by 1,582 FSWs, then comes 397 MSM and 244 persons of LGBTI. In addition to the
information in table above, the respondents told us that for FSWs more than 75% are in age range from 18 to 30 years old whereas for MSM they are more than 90%.

The groups of MSM and LGBTI seem to have limited number of people, not because they are really of small figure but because of social stigma which makes them hardly accessible. Most of them do not come out and any contact engagement requires many strategic approaches. This reality was also confirmed by local authorities of visited Districts, Sectors and health facilities. As it is our working model, the local authorities were involved in research and mapping related field visits. Their involvement was strongly significant in preliminary contacts whereby they were informed all about our planned activities including the targeted audience. For all 9 Districts and 28 Sectors leaders including some heads of health centers, none of them was aware of existence of MSM and LGBTI in their relevant working territories. They were really surprised by hearing from us economic and health matters of MSM and LGBTI after meeting them in form of summary. This lack of being recognized leads to non-specific planning on side of decentralized institutions in favor of MSM and LGBTI. Moreover, the social stigma and discrimination against KPs in general and MSM and LGBTI in particular create the self-stigmatization spirit among themselves hence missing to almost all government programs (like GIRINKA, mutuelle de santé and UBUDEHE) which aim at improving welfare of the general population.

The fact of stigmatization of KPs with pretext of culture, believes and religious reasons as they highlighted make them more marginalized people thereby missing to healthcare service accessibility.

4.2.2. HIV prevalence among Key Populations

**Table 4: HIV prevalence situation among KPs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICTS</th>
<th>FSWs</th>
<th>MSM</th>
<th>LGBTI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Members</td>
<td>HIV+ Members</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasabo</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>67.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huye</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karongi</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kicukiro</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>71.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musanze</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the final report of Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2014-2015, HIV prevalence in general population has been stable since 2005 and remains at 3 percent among adults age 15-49 (4 percent among women and 2 percent among men). The HIV prevalence is higher in urban areas than in rural areas (6 percent and 2 percent, respectively).\textsuperscript{23}

The situation of KPs groups met during the research period in visited Districts seems to be dangerous and fearful one in terms of HIV prevalence. As it is shown by the above table, the HIV prevalence of FSWs is generally 54.9% but it is more than 60% in certain Districts such as Kicukiro (71.7%), Huye (68.4%), Gasabo (67.0%), Nyagatare (62.0%) and Nyarugenge (60.0%). The situation becomes too worse in MSM groups with mean HIV prevalence rate of 55.4%. This high rate is especially influenced by HIV contamination level in MSM of Rubavu (81.2%) and Nyarugenge (65.1%). In additional to MSM groups, Nyarugenge district has the groups of LGBTI whose HIV prevalence rate is 43.0%. As the figures talk themselves, the situation of HIV prevalence among KPs groups remain terrible and requires emergent interventions in context of HIV management and prevention.

\textbf{Some of the reasons behind this high prevalence rate as said by the respondents are:}

1. \textbf{Lack of consistent condom and lubricant use:} None consistent condom use among KPs groups in general and in FSWs in particular is clearly justified by unplanned pregnancies.

More than 80% of FSWs in 35 groups/associations are mothers of more than one child each and most of them do not know the true father of their children. Some respondents raised the issue of inefficient provision of condoms and lubricants at their nearest health facilities. We also met some heads of health centers who know nothing about water based lubricants.

Lack of alternate income: Most of KPs members who are directly engaged in selling sex, FSW, MSM or LGBTI rely only on sex working as their principal source of income. They pass all the night looking for clients and sometimes fail to earn sufficient money for feeding their families. This limited income reduces their deciding power on how of doing sex intercourse. There are some clients who prefer to pay more money for unprotected sex, and in such cases the sex sellers miss other choice since they need that money for their family survival. We cannot ignore that many female and male sex workers have problematic family background (Poverty, orphans, and family holders) and they are oriented to sex working for life.

Poor access to healthcare service accessibility: Both social stigma and self-stigma impact much on poor healthcare service accessibility. Most of our respondents fear the negative attitude of some health providers who find them as sex workers and MSM rather than ordinary patients. For MSM and LGBTI who are likely to develop special Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) which are specific to anal and oral sex, they claim to be victims of public mockery observation. Their specific STIs are considered as abnormal diseases and incite the health providers to call other colleagues for either mockeries or searching for medical assistance. This makes the victims feeling shameful and not returning any more. It is in this context that many of KPs individuals have never been tested, if tested, never treated and prefer using ineffective ways of treatment and using non proper products for coping with different life problems.

Limited awareness of current HIV policies: most of KPs members have not completed their basic studies. However, they meet different people from different cultures, they often have communication barriers and they are sometimes forced to any type of sex (Anal, oral, vaginal) without their commitment or agreement. According to many respondents, their favorable working time is the night and the day time is devoted to sleeping. Therefore, they don’t access to any information channels (radio, TV, newspapers and social media) as a key source of health program information.

Drug abuse: Despite the age, a sex selling person can receive very many clients per day. As anybody can imagine, it is very tough and hard work. For coping with such circumstance, high alcohol consumption and drug abuse occurs to be the best endurance strategy. They become unconscious and no longer control of the situation. Many cases of sex violation and security disturbances occur in such times.
4.2.3. Antiretroviral treatment therapy among KPs

Table 5: Situation of adherence to ART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICTS</th>
<th>KEY POPULATION GROUPS</th>
<th>FSWs</th>
<th>MSM</th>
<th>LGBTI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HIV+ Members</td>
<td>Adherence rate</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>HIV+ Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasabo</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huye</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karongi</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kicukiro</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musanze</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyagatare</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyarugenge</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubavu</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rusizi</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>869</strong></td>
<td><strong>385</strong></td>
<td><strong>44.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>210</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


By reference to the current National Guideline for prevention and management of HIV and STIs (2015); with more than 210,000 people living with HIV in Rwanda, the expansion of antiretroviral treatment to all patients is a priority. This new National Guidelines for Prevention and Management of HIV and STIs are articulated in accordance to treat all HIV+ patients regardless of activated helper T cell or T4 cell (CD4) count and a new service delivery model to support its implementation.\(^{24}\)

In 2015, guidelines have recommended offering immediate treatment to all patients regardless of CD4 eligibility. Despite this grateful offer, the research target group seems to be not aware of it because of limited awareness of current HIV policies due to poor access to communicational channels. If we look at the table above, the general adherence rate of FSWs is 44.3% and it is very poor in MSM people with 36.6% whereas in LGBTI it goes up to 59.0%. The situation becomes very alarming in some Districts like Nyarugenge.

whereby the ART adherence rate in Female sex Workers is 25.9%; 30.3% in Rusizi District and 34.9% in Gasabo District.

The respondents tried to share the major reasons behind this very poor adherence to antiretroviral therapy as they are summarized in:

- **Ineffective nutrition**: The efficient intake of drugs requires balanced diet for successful coping with side effects. The KPs individuals claim to miss adequate food leading to fail of regular intake of drugs.

- **Poor follow-up**: Many of members of 153 respondents are living in isolated corners. In case of falling sick, they stay enclosed at home and miss somebody to care. It is normally the task of peer educators, but those ones are not sufficient enough to cover all areas and few working agents lack appropriate equipment and motivation to complete their large mission. We cannot ignore the hiding reason, which make Key Populations to be far and isolated from surrounding neighbors.

- **Fail to time respect**: As we have mentioned above, the women and men selling sex are busy of their business during evening and night time and spend the day hour sleeping. The time regularity of having drugs is not respected. Some respondent highlighted that they fell debilitated after having drugs and can’t satisfy the clients who provide their survival income. They find better to stop drugs or change the time for not missing food and other family necessities.

- **High mobility**: It is the case in KPs but more likely in FSWs to frequently change their residence for coping with social stigma and discrimination. They are considered as mobile people and not stable in a given place. When they gain new location, it takes time to be integrated and becoming familiar with nearest health facilities for effective accessibility to health services.

### 4.2.4. Appreciation of Healthcare service delivery by KPs

**Table 6: Healthcare service appreciation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATA VALID</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very poor</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>153</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: ANSP+ research, June 2015- February 2017.*
Both high HIV prevalence and poor adherence to ART rates are allied to poor accessibility to healthcare services. According to this research data, one of probably many reasons of the poor accessibility to healthcare services is poor service delivery.

As the research wanted to know the level of appreciation of service delivery at their respective health facilities, only 13.8% of 153 respondents are relatively satisfied of service delivery, 13.1% qualify the service delivery as moderate; 37.3% get poor health service delivery while 35.9% are unhappy with very poor service delivery at their respective health stations. We deeply believe on strong correlation existing between this appreciation of Health service delivery, HIV prevalence rate and poor adherence rate.

The respondents said that poor service delivery is linked to two major aspects:

- **Stigma and discrimination**: The healthcare providers fail to consider KP individuals as any other patient and find them as non-ordinary persons. They think that the suffering illnesses or infections come from themselves; because of sex working hence they do not deserve care and treatment. This attitude leads to non-friendly services and lack of trustiness towards health providers.

- **Limited capacity**: some health providers are not familiar with sexually transmitted infections specific to certain types of sexuality. There are certain infections specific to anal and oral sex intercourses which also require specific treatments. For instance, in a good number of health centers that we performed to visit during data collection process, the responsible agents do not integrate lubricants among the needed commodities as they don’t recognize they uses.
Figure 1: Frequency for appreciation of healthcare service delivery


4.2.5. Major Key population problems/ Challenges

Table 7: KP Problems/Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATA VALID</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor accessibility of Health products</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family exclusion</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stigma and discrimination</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low level of education</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>153</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Key populations are viewed as marginalized groups like people with disabilities whose HIV programs should incorporate strategies to halt and respond to all forms of
discrimination in order to reduce vulnerability to HIV and ensure universal access to HIV prevention, care and treatment and support services. As marginalized people, there are specific problems/challenges that continue to keep Key populations at the margins of global and national HIV/AIDS response.

As shown by that table, the extreme poverty comes on the top of problems that KPs consider as key challenge. It scores itself 34.6% and it is followed the family exclusion (27.5%) as another key problem which make KP more vulnerable persons to HIV. The stigma and discrimination is ranked 15.9% as the third threat to KP as it touches to health, social and economic aspects. The poor access to health products (12.4%) such as antiretroviral drugs, condoms and water based lubricants constitutes the forth problem specific to KPs before the low level of education (9.8%) which completes the total package of five dominant challenges faced by KP community.

Figure 2: Key Populations challenges/problems


It is by this challenging package as clearly indicated by this pie that KPs call up all HIV programs actors to establish the required mechanisms for institutionalizing their meaningful involvement and the provision of technical and financial support to enable them to participate in processes that affect their lives and wellbeing.
4.2.6. Key population needs/ priorities

*Table 8: KP needs/priorities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATA VALID</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income generating activities</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General education</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional trainings</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of Healthcare providers</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising community awareness</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>153</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


After thorough consultation with KPs respondents through our research, the following areas have been determined as key priorities for KPs that combine health, social, economic status and advocacy to create more supportive environment at local, Sector, District and national levels.

As they are ordered by the valuable research respondents, the empowerment in running the income generating activities comes on top priority with 29.4%. They really need to have alternate income hence becoming decision makers on way, when and how doing fun and safe sex. On the second level of priorities, there is a need of professional trainings with a score of 21.6%. This need is highly motivated by a considerable people among Key populations who dropped out school. For FSWs, some got unwanted pregnancies at secondary school and stopped by there. Others did not complete their studies due to poverty, family exclusion, and lack of parents and were engaged in sex working or homosexuality for looking for life. By today, they need to complete their studies through either general education (fifth priority 13.1%) or professional trainings (second priority of 21.6%) so that they can get professional skills for self-reliance.
Figure 3: Frequency for Key Populations needs/priorities


The social integration is also a major concern for KPs and two more priorities are recommended to call relative actions to eradicate social stigma and discrimination against KPs as marginalized people. These are Training of Healthcare providers (18.3%) and raising community awareness on existence of KPs and their specific vulnerability towards HIV epidemic (17.6%). They said that the targeted community should include the general population (especially parents and relatives of KPs), but more specifically local media professionals, community health workers, low enforcement officials, local authorities and religious leaders. These two interventions are expected to contribute to the promotion of legal & human rights and social justice for all persons without any distinction/discrimination.
V. Conclusion and recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

The idea of conducting this ending research paper called “Rwanda’s Decentralized Health Services and Key Populations” was very constructive as it contributed to highlighting the current unmet needs and priorities for effective HIV prevention, care and treatment programs and services among KPs throughout existing health facilities network. As a very known and popular slogan of “nothing about us without us” indicates, the research encourages the total integration of KPs in HIV prevention and treatment programs for effective participation to the national HIV response framework. This present research work covered 28 Sectors of 9 Districts from four Provinces and Kigali City.

On one side, the findings from the research resulted that there is poor adherence rate to HIV related health services mostly in FSW (44.3%) and MSM (36.6%) due to different causes. These are lack of effective nutrition for coping with drugs side effects, stigma which make Key Populations to be far away and isolated from surrounding neighbors, failure to the regularity of drugs intake as they are busy of their business during evening and night time and spending all of the daytime for sleeping and high mobility of KPs from one resident place to another since it breaks down the regular and continuity of adherence to the program. On the other side, there is alarming HIV prevalence rate observed in FSW (54.9%), MSM (55.4%), LGBT (43.0%) hence generating new infections cases. It was found that this high HIV prevalence rate is a matter of a number of potential factors namely lack of consistent condom & lubricant use especially in rural areas, the limited income which reduces KPs deciding power on how and when doing fun and safe sex, the fear of public mockery observations and negative attitude of some health care services providers in case of oral and anal sex allied special STIs, the limited awareness of current HIV policies due to poor access to any information channels and the drug abuse which is here justified as multiple daily sex intercourses endurance strategy.

The observed poor adherence to treatment increases new infections as a negative effect in general population which justifies a positive correlation between poor adherence to treatment and HIV new infections or Sexual Transmitted Infections (STIs). Moreover, poverty, stigma and antipathy against KPs decrease accessibility of KPs to treatment, thus increasing new infections. The ultimate expectation of breaking down these constraints is to increase HIV testing, improve linkage to HIV prevention and treatment services,
suppress viral load, and mitigate the HIV epidemic among KPs, thereby limiting the spread of HIV and contributing to the development of an AIDS free generation.

5.2. Recommendations addressed to different stakeholders

5.2.1. Introduction

ANSP has taken a prominent initiative of working with Key populations since 2009 with the main purpose of preventing HIV/AIDS and raising awareness of the general population on existence of these sexual minority groups and their vulnerability towards HIV epidemic in Rwanda. Nevertheless, the sincere and gritty commitment of each and everybody is highly needed in order to arrive to zero HIV related new infections, zero death and zero stigma and discrimination by 2030. The present research recommendations aim to aware all key partners such as Ministry of Health, Rwanda Government Board, local authorities, other organizations and Key Populations groups members for playing their responsible roles towards the global and national targets thereby ending together HIV epidemic.

5.2.2. The Ministry of health should

- Make a policy which can transform our existing health facilities located all over the country into KPs friendly hospitals, health centers and posts;
- Empower the hospitals, health centers and post in sufficient provision of both condoms and lubricants to their respective patients/clients; and
- Strengthen the capacity of health providers on KPs specific STIs and appropriate treatment capacities.

5.2.3. Rwanda Government Board should

- Start thinking about the legal framework of KPs groups/associations hence allowing them to enjoy their rights and assuming their responsibilities as well.

5.2.4. Local authorities should

- Be aware of the existence of KPs in their respective localities and integrate them in all HIV prevention and treatment programs for good of general population;
- Establish the friendly relationship with KPs as way of increasing their awareness to existing HIV policies;
- Empower KPs peer educators for carrying home based care programs in favor of KPs; and
Sensitize the general population on existence of KPs and their vulnerability towards HIV epidemic.

5.2.5. Civil society organizations should

- Keep continuing doing advocacy for making the voice of voiceless people like KPs more vibrating; and
- Continue to support different Government programs by indicating gaps which require more working efforts for effective fast track agenda to end HIV/AIDS.

5.2.6. KPs should

- Come out, working through the associations and fighting against self-stigma;
- Increase their accessibility to healthcare services;
- Sensitize their peers who are not yet members of groups/associations to join them;
- Develop the positive mindset on consistent condom use at any cost;
- Increase their awareness to different socio-economic government policies;
- Respect the culture and social values of Rwandan society in their daily planning.
VI. References

FVA, (2012), Female Sex Workers Mapping and Needs Assessment, Kigali, Pp13, 26


MINISANTE (2012), *Third Health Sector Strategic Plan (2012-2018)*, Kigali, PP.9


MINISANTE (2015), *National Guidelines for prevention and Management of HIV and STIs*, Kigali, P.1

Ministry of Health (2015), *Health Sector Policy*, Kigali, p.6


RBC, (2013), *Gender Assessment of Rwanda’s National HIV Response*, Kigali, P. v


VII. Annexes

VII.1. APPENDICE: Figure of decentralization in health sector, example of former Cyangugu province

VII.2. Questionnaire

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR SUPPORTING PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

ANSP+, website: www.ansp.org.rw, Tel. (250)0788761985/0788443140, e-mail: ansprwa1@yahoo.fr

ANSP+/RRP+/HIV PROJECT

FIELD WORK DATA COLLECTION SHEET FOR RESEARCH ON RWANDA’S DECENTRALIZED HEALTH SERVICES AND KEY POPULATIONS

Activity focus area (s): Gasabo, Kicukiro and Nyarugenge Districts of Kigali City and Musanze, Rubavu, Rusizi, Karongi, Nyagatare, Huye.

KP group/association (FSW-MSM-TG-PWID):

I. Physical address

Province:        Sector:

District        Main sites/hotspots:

II. Membership

1. Number of KP group/association members by age categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under 18 years old</th>
<th>Between 18 – 30 years old</th>
<th>Over 30 years old</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Number of KP individuals having children at their working site:

3. Number of HIV-positive KP members:

4. Number of HIV-positive KP members on treatment:

III. Approximate condom use frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never use</th>
<th>Rare use</th>
<th>Often use</th>
<th>Usual use</th>
<th>Always use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes:

1. Availability (source) of condoms:
2. Availability (source) of water based lubricants:

IV. Engagement of KP members in other income generating activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farming</th>
<th>Cultivation</th>
<th>Small business</th>
<th>Handcrafting</th>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Appreciation of healthcare service accessibility (in case of need)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

1. Motivating reasons:
2. Relations with local authorities:
3. Suggestion for improvement:

VI. Human Right respect situation

Number of recent criminal cases:                                           Number of recent violence cases:

VII. Daily life challenges and probable solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KP group’s daily challenges</th>
<th>Proposed probable solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>3.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIII. Any other comment (s)

Name & Signature of KP group/association Representative (respondent)
Tel:

Date:
E-GOVERNMENT CHALLENGES FACED BY LOCAL SPHERES OF GOVERNMENT IN RWANDA

Author: Dr Phanuel MURENZI

Abstract

The provision of government services and information to members of the public has traditionally been through face-to-face interaction and the user of government services was obliged to physically visit government offices. Today, however, developments in ICT have brought about many changes in the way government worldwide are able to provide government services and information to citizens. Many countries in Africa, including Rwanda, have now adopted the use of e-government as one of the main delivery channels for government services and information.

While the use of ICT by the central government agencies and the private sector has dramatically improved in the last 15 to 20 years in Rwanda, the utilisation of e-government by local government is still problematic. However, local government, being the centre and cornerstone of service delivery has to be at the forefront of using modern ICT in order to effectively and efficiently address the changing and increasing needs and expectations of citizens of Rwanda. The total failure or partial failure to provide quality service delivery by local government in Rwanda is often associated with a lack or shortage of financial capacity and skills, however, the lack or poor use of e-government in the majority of local government in Rwanda might be another major cause of poor service delivery. In addition, as more government information and services are moved online, there is an increasing concern that a significant portion of the population, especially the poor and rural population will not be able to access and utilise them.

Measures aimed at improving utilisation of e-government can only be successful if factors or challenges that impede the utilisation of e-government are fully identified and understood. The main objective of the study is to identify the constraining factors surrounding practical utilisation of e-government by both supply of service side (local government) and demand side (citizens). A mixed methods approach was used. Structured
questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used and the study targeted two types of respondents (Citizens and local government officials).

I. Introduction

The provision of government services and information to members of the public has traditionally been through face-to-face interaction and the user of government services was obliged to physically visit government offices. Today, however, developments in ICT have brought about many changes in the way governments worldwide are able to provide government services and information to citizens. Many countries in Africa, including Rwanda, have now adopted the use of e-government as one of the main delivery channels for public services and information.

According to Bernard, Cloete and Patel (2003:35), the demand for e-government services in South Africa has arisen from requirements to: (i) Improve the efficiency and quality of government services; (ii) Ensure that government services are delivered to all levels of society anytime and anywhere in South Africa; (iii) Enhance government’s portfolio of services; (iv) Consolidate transparency and accountability in the delivery of government services; and (v) Enhance citizens’ participation in decision-making and provide citizens with feedback mechanisms.

Like the government of South Africa, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) also strongly believed that ICT could enable Rwanda to advance the key stages towards industrialisation. The government of Rwanda believed that ICT would help to achieve the Vision 2020 which aims to transform Rwanda into a middle-income country and transition from an agrarian economy to an information-rich and knowledge-based society by 2020. Therefore, the GoR integrated ICTs as a key driver for socio-economic development and to fast track Rwanda’s transformation to a knowledge-based society (Ministry of ICT 2013: 5).

While the use of ICT by the public sector (especially central government agencies) and the private sector has dramatically improved in the last 15 to 20 years in Rwanda (Anon 2015:online), the use of ICT by local sphere of government is still problematic. However, local government, being the centre and cornerstone of service delivery and the channel used by government to improve people’s lives, has to be at the forefront of utilising modern ICTs in order to effectively and efficiently address the changing and increasing needs and expectations of citizens.
The lack of, or poor utilisation of modern ICTs by the local spheres of government has resulted into community dissatisfaction because of poor service delivery, cases of corruption, misuse of public money and lack of or poor community participation in decision making (Tabaro 2012: online).

I. Problem statement and research objectives

Failure to deliver services or poor service delivery in local governments remains a serious matter of concern for the government of Rwanda. The total failure or partial failure to provide quality public services by local government in Rwanda is often and principally associated with a lack or shortage of skills in municipalities. However, the lack or poor utilisation of e-government in the majority of municipalities might be another major cause of poor service delivery and the reason for failing to get the best possible value for money. In addition, as more government information and services are moved online, there is an increasing concern that a significant portion of the population, especially the poor and rural population will be shut off from government information and services and therefore, shut off from opportunities of employment, tenders, bursaries, health care, education and other services. This will probably worsen the existing economic inequalities, digital divide and will generate more community dissatisfaction in the future.

Measures aimed at improving utilisation of e-government can only be successful if factors or challenges that impede the utilisation by both supply side (municipality) and demand side (citizens) are fully identified and understood. The main objective of this article is to investigate the important challenges to the utilisation of e-government in the local sphere of government. The specific objectives are (i) to examine if there are significant differences in challenges between urban district (Kicukiro) and rural district (Kamonyi); (ii) to make recommendations on how to overcome the identified challenges and promote therefore, the utilisation of e-government in the local sphere of government.

II. Literature Review

Since 1990, attention has been given to e-government which is defined as the use of ICTs by public institutions to improve service delivery by promoting more efficient and effective government, facilitating more accessible government services, allowing greater public access to information, and making government more accountable to citizens (Palvia and Sharma 2006:2). Many governments in the developed world embraced the opportunities offered by ICT to improve the performance of their institutions, to accelerate their socio-economic development, to transform business processes and practices, and to
offer value-added services to their citizens through e-government (Thakur and Singh 2013:43). In this regard, the government of Rwanda has understood that e-government is part of various public service transformations guided by the principle of public service for all. E-government is a tool to promote five service delivery principles.

II.1. E-government and service delivery principles

(i) **Consultation**- One of the reasons of citizens’ dissatisfaction in local government is a lack of or poor consultation (Karamoko and Jain 2011:3). However, the utilisation of ICT can improve the ability of local government and citizens to communicate information to each other in an efficient and electronic manner (Heeks 2002:6). The use of ICT can facilitate communication, cooperation and consultation between local governments and citizens, businesses, central government and other stakeholders;

(ii) **Access**- There is increasing expectation of citizens for easier access to more public information and public service from anywhere and anytime. The access principle is addressed in Article 27 of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003 as amended in 2015. It is stated that all Rwandans have the right of equal access to the public service in accordance with their competence and abilities. Public services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitable and without any kind of discrimination (Article 16 of the Constitution, 2003 as amended in 2015). In addition, Article 38 stipulates that freedom of press, of expression and of access to information are recognised and guaranteed by the State. The use of ICT can facilitate gaining access to government information and services that were previously only available to those who were able to go to the service provider and able to wait in long lines. With e-government, government services and information can be accessed by citizens on a twenty-four-hour basis, seven days a week and at all accessible locations.

(iii) **Efficiency**- The use of e-government can enable local administrative entities to achieve efficiency because it helps to raise the internal production efficiency of local government, thus saving taxpayer’s money. According to Moon and Norris (2005:51), the use of e-government can serve to achieve efficiency in two ways: The first is to raise labour productivity and cut employment by means of the automation of administrative procedures and the simplification of processes. The second is to lower the costs of public procurement by means of online procurement.

(iv) **Openness and transparency**- Being open and transparent implies that local government must let citizens or customers know how they are achieving the
promised standards of service delivery and how non-delivery is addressed (Nengwekulu 2009:346). The intensification of information and communication flows that characterise e-government strengthens transparency and openness of political and administrative processes in local government. The more interactions and information flow between local governments and citizens, businesses and civil society, the more openness and transparency are consolidated.

(v) **Value for money** - This principle implies that available resources should be put to good use. Digitising procurement can help to remedy the problems of corruption, irregular and wasteful expenditure in the supply-chain management process in local government. E-government can also simplify the process of tax collection and can help to diminish the level of bureaucracy (Heeks 2002:4).

### II.2. Challenges of e-government development in Rwanda

Rwanda was ranked the best performer in terms of online service delivery among the categories of low-income countries according to the UN e-government survey in 2014 (UN 2014: online). Although tremendous progresses have been made in Rwanda in terms of e-government development, some challenges remain. The government vision was to become an active producer and developer of cutting-edge technology and high value services, but Rwanda is still a consumer of ICT goods and services. The internet is mostly accessed by citizens in urban areas and remains beyond the financial capacity of the majority of citizens, particularly those in rural areas who are limited by low disposable incomes. More than 70 percent of Rwandans are engaged in subsistence agriculture and live in rural areas. Between 70 percent and 80 percent of the population speaks only their mother tongue (Kinyarwanda), making internet content in English inaccessible to the majority of Rwandans (Ministry of ICT 2013: online). Others challenges include amongst others:

(i) **Human capital** - According to Farelo and Morris (2006:6), Africa faces human capital development challenges in building the Inclusive Information Society (IIS). One of the key challenges is the shortage of skilled ICT graduates in the country aggravated by the “brain drain” of skilled ICT personnel and other professionals to developed countries and the turnover from public to private sector. Most likely, there is a shortage of skilled IT staff in local governments compared to central government agencies and the private sector in Rwanda;

(ii) **Adult literacy** – Adult literacy which may indirectly reflect levels of computer literacy is estimated at 75-80 percent (NISR 2014), but there are vast differences between rural and urban areas. In rural areas the adult literacy rate is less than 80 percent. In addition, limited skills in reading and comprehension of English are
limiting a significant number of people of rural areas to utilise e-government services.

(iii) **Income per capita (GDP per capita)** - Income remains a key determinant of access to technology. A study in European countries found that low income was the single most important barrier to acquiring basic technology with a high-income household 4 times more likely to have access to a computer and the internet than a low-income one (UN 2014: online). The GDP per capita in Rwanda is relatively very low, it is less than USD800 per annum (NISR 2014: online). The limited financial capacity of the majority of citizens constrains them to own the necessary ICT devices and to use e-government services.

(iv) **Electricity** - Access to electricity and high costs of electricity are major impediments. Rwanda is among African countries with low capital electricity consumption. Only 13 percent of the population had access to electricity in 2010 but this percentage increased to 17 percent in 2013 and to about 42 percent in January 2018 (www.reg.rw).

(v) **Low ICT awareness and usage** - Low level of ICT literacy limits the majority of Rwandans to be aware of available e-government services and to utilise them. In addition, as most of ICT applications and internet content are in foreign languages (especially English), a large number of the population, especially those in rural areas cannot benefit from ICT and the internet in particular (RURA 2015: online).

(vi) **Lack or insufficient ICT infrastructures, especially in rural areas**. Some rural areas are still struggling to have access to Internet connection and adequate mobile phone network.

Furthermore, as far as the challenges of the utilisation of e-government by local governments in Rwanda are concerned, Table 1 below which contains data compiled from EICV3 and EICV4 shows how much computer literacy, owning a computer and access to internet are among the big challenges in Rwanda.
Table 1: Rate of computer literacy, owning ICT devices and access to internet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Computer literacy rate (%) of population aged 15-24 years</th>
<th>Computer literacy rate (%) of population aged 15+ year</th>
<th>Electricity distributor</th>
<th>% of households with access to internet at home</th>
<th>% of households with access to internet at home</th>
<th>% of households owning at least one Computer</th>
<th>% of households owning at least one Mobile phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Rwanda</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>URBAN/RURAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROVINCES</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kigali City</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>33.2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Province</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Province</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Province</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Province</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data presented in the table above were released in 2014 by National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, and showed to some extent the challenges of e-government development in Rwanda. However, significant progress has been made in expanding electricity and internet access from 2014 to 2018. According to Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (2017: online), the internet users rate has increased from 9.3% in 2014 to 29.8% in 2017 due to the increased availability of broadband networks. As for electricity, figures in 2018 shows that great strides are being made in expanding electricity access whereby access to electricity has increased from 19.8% in 2014 to 42% in February 2018. Also, the mobile-cellular telephone penetration rate increased to 76.3% in 2018.

II.3. Theoretical framework for the use of e-government services

Though the success of e-government depends upon many factors, such as the willingness, commitment and support of top political leadership, the availability of funds and sufficient IT staff, it is principally dependent on citizens’ willingness to accept and use those e-government services provided by public institutions. In this context, Alawadhi and Morris (2008:2) argue that e-government initiative provides no benefit if the intended users fail to use it. In addition, Belanger and Carter (2005:12), Moon and Norris (2005:51) and Sahin (2006:16) all argue that one of the most important factors for the success of e-government services is citizens’ acceptance and use of e-government services.

As far as this article is concerned, it is important for the researcher to gain a better understanding of the factors that would promote or hinder the use of an innovation, specifically e-government. A number of models and theories on technology acceptance exist, but only two technology models are briefly discussed in this article, namely Diffusion of Innovation Model (DoI) by Everett Rogers (2003) and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) by Venkatesh, Morris and Davis (2003).

According to Rogers’s theory of diffusion of innovation (Rogers 2003:20), the innovation-decision process involves five stages: (i) knowledge or awareness; (ii) persuasion; (iii) decision; (iv) implementation; and (v) confirmation. He further maintains that the innovation-decision process starts first and foremost with the knowledge stage. It is difficult for an individual to adopt a technological innovation that he or she is not aware of. In this regard, Ton and Spil (2006:2) argue that technological innovations such as e-government for example, are not always diffused and adopted easily and rapidly, because of a kind of uncertainty created by a technological innovation in the minds of citizens. Therefore, for diffusion of an innovation to be successful a particular type of awareness is
needed. In this context, Rogers (2003:21) further argues that the questions (What? How? and Why?) form the following three types of knowledge which are the pre-conditions for an individual to decide to adopt an innovation: (i) **Awareness-knowledge**: Awareness-knowledge represents the knowledge of the existence of a technological innovation. The knowledge about the existence of an innovation can motivate the individual to learn more about the innovation and, eventually, to adopt it; (ii) **How-to-knowledge**: How-to-knowledge contains information about how to use an innovation correctly. According to Sahin (2006:16), the chances of an innovation to be adopted are increased when individuals have a sufficient level of how-to-knowledge.

As far as how-to-knowledge is concerned, the researcher argues that a district might have ICT tools such as computers with updated software, full internet connection, printers, scanner and photocopy machines, video camera, video conference rooms, etc. However, these ICT tools might not be used at an expected level to serve citizens better because of an insufficient level of how-to-knowledge (ICT literacy) of the staff. Again, district might have created and put in place the Business Development Centres (BDCs) in the villages, but those BDCs might not be used sufficiently because citizens do not have an adequate level of how-to-knowledge. Therefore, the presence of ICT tools in the district is not enough if the district officials, employees and citizens in general do not have a sufficient level of awareness knowledge and how-to-knowledge.

Furthermore, Rogers in his DoI model proposes five attributes of an innovation that determine its rate of adoption, namely relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability. An innovation which has those five attributes will be adopted more rapidly than other innovations. Diffusion scholars have found relative advantage to be one of the best predictors of an innovation’s rate of adoption (Chuttur 2009:38). In this regard, Sahin (2006:18) argues that it does not matter how much designers of an innovation and IT specialists defend and talk about the innovation, but what does matter is whether an individual perceives an innovation as advantageous. The greater the perceived relative advantage of an innovation, the more rapid its rate of adoption will be. As far as relative advantage is concerned, the researcher argues that the rate of adoption and utilisation of e-government services by citizens is determined by their perception of the relative advantages of e-government services over the traditional ways of service delivery.

Another attribute of an innovation that determines its rate of adoption is complexity. Complexity is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as relatively difficult to understand and to use (ease of use). The more an innovation is complicated to learn and to use, the lower the rate of adoption (Rogers 2003:242). In this context, the researcher
argues that the rate of adoption and the use of e-government could increase if hardware and software required for the utilisation of e-government are user-friendly and customer-oriented. In addition, the perceived complexity or ease of use is determined amongst others by the level of education. Less educated people will always perceive an innovation such as e-government as difficult to use and therefore, not useful.

Like Rogers’s theory of Diffusion of Innovations, UTAUT also provides the factors which can influence the intentions to use an innovation, namely performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions. The factors in UTAUT are somewhat similar to those described in DoI, but an additional factor, which is “facilitating conditions”, is a very critical factor that can influence the adoption of e-government by district and the citizens. Facilitating conditions are the degree to which an individual believes that an organisational and technical infrastructure exists to support the use of the system (Alshehri and Drew 2012:13). Therefore, the researcher argues that the use of e-government by district depends among other things on the availability of required resources (funds, ICT devices, ICT infrastructure and IT staff), and the necessary support (training for instance) in using e-government. Facilitating conditions for citizens can be: easy access to computers; easy access to internet connections; access to electricity; access to IT technicians; and the necessary support, for instance regular training sessions in the use of new ICTs.

II.4. Other factors influencing the use of e-government services

The theories and models discussed earlier provided the factors which can promote the use of an innovation in general. However, there are other factors necessary for citizens to adopt e-government services and their absence might impede the use of e-government, namely:

(i) **Digital literacy or computer self-efficacy** - According to Alawadhi and Morris (2008:24), a person will not arrive at the intention to use an e-government system which requires computer knowledge and skills unless that person has competence due to experience in the use of ICTs;

(ii) **Availability of resources** - In the absence of modern ICT devices because of poverty, citizens do not believe that they will receive benefits from using e-government services (Mpehle 2012:111);

(iii) **Quality of online services** - Relevant and updated online government information and services are critical to citizens’ use of e-government services (Shareef, Kumar, and Dwivedi. 2011:26);
(iv) **Quality online customer care** - If citizens and businesses feel that they do not get any customer service in e-government (calls and emails not answered, loss of documents sent online, disclosure of personal information to a third party, etc.) they will suspend the use of e-government (Shareef et al. 2011:20);

(v) **Website design with multilingual option** - According to Matteson and Jaeger (2009:92), if an individual can interact with a website using his/her primary language, he/she might feel more culturally connected and have a more positive attitude towards using the website;

(vi) **Trust, security and privacy** - Users of e-government are always worried about privacy. Therefore, potential users might be reluctant to use the e-government system if they are not sure about privacy and if they are afraid that websites can disclose, share or misuse their personal information or that hackers can intercept their confidential information (Alshawi and Alalwany 2009:201); and

(vii) **Full involvement and commitment of political leadership** - Political leadership involvement and commitment affect the success of e-government (Dzidonu 2011:17).

II.5. Model to assess the challenges of utilisation of e-government by local government

This research model was drawn from all the discussions presented earlier. According to the model, the adoption and usage of e-government by the district and citizens might be determined by 13 factors presented in Figure1, to mention but a few.
Figure 1: Research model to assess the utilisation of e-government

Source: Adapted from Rogers 2003 and Venkatesh et al. 2003.
Though the utilisation of e-government might not be determined by the factors in the figure above only, it is worth to note that the lack or absence of these factors might impede the utilisation of e-government.

**III. Research methodology**

The research, upon which this article is based, was mainly grounded on post-positivism or interpretivism paradigm and used mixed methods approach and that assisted the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Data used in this article was collected in the two selected districts, namely Kicukiro and Kamonyi. Kicukiro was selected as urban district, while Kamonyi was selected as rural district. The aim was to examine if there are significant differences in challenges between urban district and rural district. However, as all urban and rural districts in Rwanda were not covered by this study, it is critical to specify that the findings of this research are specific to the cases being investigated, therefore, cannot be generalized or applied beyond the cases being studied. And this was one of the limitations of the study.

Because two categories of respondents were targeted in this analysis, probability and non-probability sampling methods were used, namely purposive sampling (non-probability) and simple random sampling (probability method). Simple random sampling helped to select 200 members of the general public aged 18 years and older. A structured questionnaire covering a number of issues or factors affecting the utilisation of e-government services was used to collect the data and it was translated into Kinyarwanda, the native language spoken in Rwanda. The rating scale ranged from 1=Strongly Agree; 2=Agree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4=Disagree to 5=Strongly Disagree was used. Field research assistants were used to help in collecting the data and the respondents in the study were approached at different villages. The data were collected between February and April 2016, and at the end of the data collection process a total of 200 responses were obtained, yielding a response rate of 100%. The response rate of 100% was obtained, because the questionnaires were not left for the respondents to complete, but were completed immediately by the researcher and field assistants as the respondents were responding to the questions.

As said earlier, purposive sampling was used and helped to select two senior management officials in each district and one technician responsible for website development and maintenance. In addition, in order to gain wide views on e-government issues in the local government, seven local officials in each district were also interviewed. Therefore, at total of 20 local government officials were interviewed, namely 10 interviewees in each district. Personal interviews were carried out in a semi-structured way. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse data collected using the questionnaires.
IV. Findings and discussion

Education is the most important determinant of internet use, which is why developed countries with a solid education and solid human resource base remain far ahead of others in terms of the use of e-government services. In this regard, Prince (2000:12) argues that individuals with better education have higher rates of internet usage than others, while those with lower levels of education tend to show the least interest in learning to use the internet or going online. Table 2 presents findings relating to the educational level of respondents.

Table 2: Educational level of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Kicukiro</th>
<th>Kamonyi</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education level of respondents</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not educated in formal school</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary or high school</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional or Technical degree (Diploma)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters/MBA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research findings, 2016.

The results of Table 2 show that the majority of respondents completed only primary and high school (63.5%). Respondents with high school certificates were in Kamonyi than in Kicukiro, but Respondents with at least a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree were in Kicukiro District rather than in Kamonyi district. Overall, few respondents had a tertiary level of education (Bachelor’s and Master’s degree) and no respondent had a doctoral degree. Taking into consideration the educational level of respondents as shown in Table 2 it can be seen that the educational level of the respondents is a big challenge and might
affect negatively the use of e-government services. In this regard, Montagnier and Wirthmann (2011) quoted (in Kumar et al. 2007:70) indicate in their research that the probability of an individual using e-government and the internet everyday increases 2.4 times in Europe and 3.6 times in the Republic of Korea if they have a university degree and above.

Employment and unemployment may influence the use of the internet and the use e-government services in particular. It is unlikely for an unemployed person to use internet and e-government services as the use of both internet and e-government service requires some money. The Table 3 presents findings relating to profession of respondents.

**Table 3: Profession of the respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession of respondents</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Kicukiro</th>
<th>Kamonyi</th>
<th>Total Frequency</th>
<th>Total Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee in public sector</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee in private sector</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Research findings, 2016.

The results in Table 3 show that unemployed respondents were in Kicukiro compared to Kamonyi, whilst self-employed respondents were predominantly in Kamonyi than in Kicukiro district. Generally, the unemployment rate is low in Rwanda and this is because of the fact that Rwanda is an agro-based economy. As more than 70% of Rwandan people are engaged in subsistence farming, this majority (70%) who live from subsistence agriculture are considered as self-employed and contribute a lot to the decrease in the unemployment rate of Rwanda. The researcher argues that those who are engaged in subsistence agriculture and those working in the informal sector (disguised employment) gain a relatively low income and therefore cannot easily access and utilise ICT, especially the internet.
The monthly income may determine the access and the use of the internet and e-government services in particular. According to Kumar, Mukerji and Persaud (2007:69), a high-income household is four times more likely to have access to a computer and the internet than a low-income household. In addition, a study in the United States showed that one in five American adults who do not use the internet are most likely to be an individual earning less than US $30,000 per year (UN 2014: 123). Table 4 presents findings relating to monthly income of the respondents.

**Table 4: Monthly income of the respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated monthly income of respondents</th>
<th>Kicukiro</th>
<th>Kamonyi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 50,000 Rwf</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000-150,000 Rwf</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160,000-250,000 Rwf</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>260,000-350,000 Rwf</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360,000-450,000 Rwf</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,000 Rwf and above</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Research findings, 2016.

The results of Table 4 show that the respondents whose monthly income is less than 50,000 Rwf were in Kicukiro rather than Kamonyi. The explanation can be that Kicukiro is considered urban areas where more unemployment cases are observed. Respondents whose monthly income is 50,000-150,000 Rwf were in Kamonyi rather than Kicukiro, whilst respondents earning between 260,000-350,000 Rwf and between 360,000-450,000 Rwf were in Kicukiro rather than Kamonyi. Furthermore, Table 4 indicates that majority of 67% of respondents earn a monthly income of less than 50,000 Rwf and 50,000-150,000 Rwf. Only 2% earn a monthly income of 500,000 Rwf and above.

With the constant rise of inflation it is difficult for average Rwandan to make their income cover their monthly expenses and have enough extra money for the internet. In this regard,
Kroukamp (2005:62) argues that half of the total spending for people in urban areas or town is directed towards food (22%), housing (14%), income tax (9%), and transport (10%). Other expenses are added to these major expenses, such as clothing and shoes, sports and leisure, school fees, etc. Therefore, taking into consideration the monthly income of the majority of the respondents (see Table 4) and their estimated monthly expenses, it can clearly be seen that not much is left for ICT-related expenditure. This state of affairs is likely to affect the use of the internet as the internet is not considered a necessity but a luxury.

Generally, for an individual to use e-government services he or she needs to know how to use a computer and the internet in particular. In addition, he or she needs to have the knowledge and the ability to use at least one language among the most used languages on global information networks. In this regard, Kumar et al. (2007: 71) argue that the first step to being ICT literate in today’s information age is to have a certain level of internet language literacy, especially English. Table 5 presents findings relating to level of English literacy of the respondents.
**Table 5: English literacy level of respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Kicukiro</th>
<th>Kamonyi</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to understand and communicate in English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to read in English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to write in English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Research findings, 2016.

The results of Table 5 show that the English literacy level is higher in Kicukiro than in Kamonyi. Kicukiro has the highest number of respondents who are good and excellent compared to Kamonyi district. Overall, the results as shown in Table 5 indicate that 70% of respondents are almost English illiterate. Therefore, they do not have access to internet content presented in English. This is a big challenge as 56% of the content on the internet are presented in English (UN 2014: online). In this regard, De Beer and Mokhele (2004:69) argue that the use of the internet is difficult for most rural people who have limited resources and who are English illiterate. It is very unlikely for one to be an internet user if he or she cannot easily read or write in English, if he or she is very poor and if he or she is unemployed.

Computer literacy and access to the computer are also the factors which may determine the use of the internet and therefore the use of online services. Computer literacy and access to the computer must go hand in hand, because it makes no sense if computer skills are present but there is no computer access. Table 6 presents findings relating to computer literacy and access to a computer.
### Table 6: Computer literacy and access to a computer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Kicukiro</th>
<th></th>
<th>Kamonyi</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer literacy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well can you manipulate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and use the computer (desktop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or laptop)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly well</td>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you have access to the</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>computer (desktop or laptop)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whenever you need it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, always</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is difficult to find</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Research findings, 2016.

The results as presented in Table 6 show that a significant number of respondents (38%) do not know anything about a computer and 38% know how to manipulate a computer fairly well. It means that almost 76% of respondents do not have enough knowledge and skills to manipulate a computer and therefore, cannot benefit from e-government services. In this regard, Moon and Norris (2005:53) argue that a person will not arrive at an intention to use e-government services, which requires computer knowledge and skills, unless that person has gained competence from the experience using a computer. The results of Table 6 on access to the computer indicate that the Kamonyi district has the highest number of respondents who do not have access to a computer. Overall, the results of Table 6 show that more than 46% of respondents do not have easy access to a computer and therefore cannot easily use online public information and services.

Having the skills to use the internet and easy access to the internet are preconditions for the utilisation of online information and services provided by the district websites. Knowledge of the internet is directly and positively linked with the intention to use the internet. The intention to use the internet leads to the intention to search and utilise online information and services. Table 7 presents findings relating to internet literacy and access to the internet by the respondents.
### Table 7: Internet literacy and access to the internet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How good is your knowledge of how to use the internet?</th>
<th>Kicukiro</th>
<th>Kamonyi</th>
<th>Column Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know what internet is</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How do you access the internet when you need it?</th>
<th>Kicukiro</th>
<th>Kamonyi</th>
<th>Column Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don’t need the internet</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use my mobile phone</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use my smart phone</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use my tablet</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use my laptop at the office or modem at home</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use modem on the desktop computer at home</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the desktop at the office</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the desktop at school</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I go to the cyber-café</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I go to the Community Tele-Centre or Business Development Center (BDC)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Research findings, 2016.
The results of Table 7 show that Kamonyi district has the highest number of respondents who do not know what the internet is. The respondents with good and excellent knowledge about the internet were in Kicukiro. These differences can be explained by the fact that Kicukiro district is more urban compared to Kamonyi district. Overall, the results of Table 7 show that 19.5% of the respondents do not know anything about the internet and 15.5% have poor knowledge. Poor knowledge means that they have heard about the internet but they do not know how to use it. Only 22% of the respondents know the internet very well, can use it and advance further. Without sufficient knowledge of the internet it is difficult to use it for e-government services.

In addition, the study investigated the tools or devices used to have access to the internet. The research findings show that a predominant number of respondents (26%) have access to the internet via small ordinary mobile phones, 18 percent utilise smartphones, 17.5 percent utilise laptops at the office, whilst only 3.5 percent utilise tablets to access the internet. None of the respondents have a computer with an internet connection on a regular basis at home. In addition, the results show that public places such as cybercafé, Business Development Center (BDC), public libraries and schools are not often frequented by the respondents for internet access. Overall, mobile devices such as mobile phones and smartphones are mostly used for access to the internet. However, they limit users in terms of help, use and access to some e-government services. In this regard, Basu (2004:108) indicates that some websites do not allow mobile or smartphone utilisation, therefore these websites cannot be accessed, or if they are, cannot show all the content.

The utilisation of e-government services depends largely on the level of awareness. It is difficult for an individual to adopt an innovation that he or she is not aware of. However, according to Mpinganjira (2012: 504), governments often spend a large amount of money ensuring that online information and services are available for citizens’ use but are less willing to spend more on promoting awareness of available online services. Lack or low level of awareness about e-government, available online services and steps or procedures involved to have access to them may limit significantly the use of e-government services. Table 8 presents findings on the level of awareness of the respondents about e-government.
## Table 8: Level of awareness about e-government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Kicukiro</th>
<th>Kamonyi</th>
<th>Total Frequency</th>
<th>Total Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of awareness</strong></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentag e</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentag e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How aware are you of the existence of the website (s) of your district?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very aware</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so aware</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not informed at all</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>If aware, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know the benefits of using the district e-government website (s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the reason (s) why the district decided to use e-government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of online information and services available on the district’s website (s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Research findings, 2016*
The results of Table 8 show that 35 percent are very aware and aware of e-government and of the existence of the district’s website whilst 65 percent are not aware or not informed at all. However, the findings further show that the level of awareness is very limited even for the 35 percent who said they are aware of the existence of the district’s website. This is because the majority of them said that they do not know the benefits of using the district’s website (58%), and they are not aware of online information and services available on the district’s website (75.5%). Overall, lack or low level of awareness is a common challenge for the respondents in the two districts and that limit the use of e-government services.

From the supply perspective, the utilisation of e-government depends firstly on the level of awareness of e-government (its purpose, advantages and requirements) of the district officials and secondly on the level of computer and internet literacy of the district officials. A certain level of knowledge and skills on how to manipulate a computer and to utilise the internet is required for local government officials. Lack or inadequate skills of local government officials on how to use both the computer and the internet negatively affect the utilisation of e-government. Table 9 presents findings on the level of awareness of e-government, while Table 10 presents findings on the level of computer and internet literacy of local government officials.

**Table 9: Level of awareness of e-government of local government officials**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of awareness</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Kicukiro</th>
<th>Kamonyi</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How aware are you of e-government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very aware</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly aware</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Research findings, 2016.

Table 9 shows that only 30 percent were very aware of e-government, 40 percent fairly aware, while 30 percent are not aware of e-government. Overall it can be concluded that awareness of e-government by local government officials is still a challenge and training in e-government is needed.
Table 10: Computer and internet literacy level of local government officials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Kicukiro</th>
<th>Kamonyi</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How very well can you manipulate and utilise the internet for online service delivery purpose?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not well at all</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research findings, 2016.

The results of Table 10 show that only 25 percent of interviewees knew very well manipulating the computer and the internet, 45 percent declared to be well or good, while 30 percent were not good at all in utilising the computer and the internet for online service delivery purpose. From these figures it can be concluded that there is a need for computer and internet training in order to ensure the smooth provision of online services. During interviews in the field one interviewee who was in charge of ICT in the district said: “The level of computer and internet skills of district officials is a matter of concern here. I am always called in their offices to intervene or to fix small things that any person who attended the university should be capable of”.

V. Conclusion and recommendations

6.1. Conclusion

Failure to deliver services or poor service delivery in local governments remains a serious matter of concern for the government of Rwanda. The total failure or partial failure to provide quality public services by local government in Rwanda is often and principally associated with a lack or shortage of skills in local governments. However, the lack or poor utilisation of e-government in the majority of local governments might be another major cause of poor service delivery and the reason for failing to get the best possible value for money. In this regard, it was revealed that the effective utilisation of new ICTs by local governments in developed countries, for instance United Kingdom, helped to streamline local government administration, to promote citizen participation, to enhance efficiency, transparency and accountability in local government, and most importantly, to enhance service delivery to citizens.

Measures aimed at improving utilisation of e-government by local governments in Rwanda can only be successful if factors or challenges that impede the utilisation by both supply side (municipality) and demand side (citizens) are fully identified and understood. The main objective of this article is to investigate the important challenges to the utilisation of e-government in the local sphere of government. The specific objectives are (i) to examine if there are significant differences in challenges between urban district (Kicukiro) and rural district (Kamonyi); (ii) to make recommendations on how to overcome the identified challenges and promote therefore, the utilisation of e-government in the local sphere of government.

From the findings of the research upon which this article is based, it can be concluded that the selected districts are facing numerous challenges in the utilisation of e-government from both supply side (District) and demand side (citizens) perspectives. This is evidenced by: (i) the low level of education of the respondents; (ii) Unemployment and disguised employment; (iii) Low income whereby majority earns less than 50.000Rwf and between 50.000-150.000Rwf monthly; (iv) Almost 70 per cent did not know the most used internet language which is English; (v) Lack of knowledge and skills to use a computer and the internet; and (vi) Majority of about 65 per cent were not aware of e-government and the website of their district. Some important challenges were also identified from the supply side (District): (i) 30% of interviewed local government officials were not aware of e-government. Only 25 per cent of interviewed municipal officials were very good in manipulating a computer and the internet for online service delivery purpose. Overall,
though there were no significant differences in challenges, it was revealed that Kicukiro had less challenges than Kamonyi district.

The effective utilisation of e-government requires the supply side to provide quantity and quality e-government services, but it requires also the demand or consumer side to request and utilise online services provided, because it will be a waste of time and money if the demand side does not request and utilise online services provided by the supply side. Therefore, it is recommended that local governments should be capacitated to provide effectively online services and the capacity of citizens should be enhanced to be able to use e-government services.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the factors analysed, namely educational level of respondents, profession of respondents, monthly income of respondents, computer and internet literacy, English literacy and level of awareness of e-government, the district of Kamonyi had higher challenges than Kicukiro.

These findings have wide implications as they can serve as a tool on which public policy or decision makers can based on to set informed policies aimed at ensuring increased utilisation of e-government by local governments and increased utilisation of online services by the citizens. From the research findings presented in this article, the following recommendations were formulated:

- **Access to ICT infrastructure** - Access to electricity and to the internet with high-speed connection is recommended not only in urban but also in rural areas. BDC, Internet-cafés, public libraries, schools (primary, secondary and tertiary) equipped with computers connected to high-speed internet connection should be increased, especially in rural areas;
- **ICT literacy** - computer and internet self-efficacy is one of the prerequisites necessary for making use of e-government services. People should be provided with training opportunities to ensure that they have adequate skills to use the ICT tools (computer and internet);
- **Awareness** - awareness campaigns should be conducted through interpersonal channels such as meetings between district officials and citizens, workshops and seminars. However, the use of the mass media such as news articles, radio and television is the most effective way as many people can be reached at once. The awareness campaigns should focus on available online services, the benefits associated with the use of online services, the details of the steps involved and the precautions with regard to security and privacy;
Increase of GDP per capita or per capita income - Income remains a key determinant of e-government utilization by the citizens. A large number of respondents do not utilise the internet because for the majority the internet is considered a luxury and not a necessity. In addition, majority of respondents utilise their simple or ordinary cell phones to access online government information and services because they cannot afford the high costs of smartphones, tablets, and laptops. However, previous research revealed the limits of ordinary cell phones concerning access and utilisation of e-government services. It is recommended therefore that the importation or manufacturing of those modern ICT devices by local companies should be subsidised in order to increase the affordability, especially for the poor and rural people. Furthermore Government in general and districts in particular, should find strategies to increase the GDP per capita for their citizens through off-farm jobs creation, especially for young people;

- Increasing the rate of literacy through access to quality education by all;

- Though online services and interactions are recommended, they cannot totally replace traditional ways of service delivery and communication. For example, an ID book or birth certificate can be delivered online, but personal or face-to-face interaction might be necessary for identity authentication. Also, some people (older persons and the illiterate) may for a specific reason prefer to speak to a person rather than to send an SMS or e-mail message. Therefore, multiple channel service delivery mechanisms, such as online channel, traditional channel, SMS text service, social media usage, communication over the phone or mobile phone, communication via television and radio should supplement one another and this will expand the choices of access to public information and service, especially among the disadvantaged and vulnerable citizens in rural areas;

- Putting more trust in ICT to the extent of forgetting managerial functions such as evaluation and control may also open up opportunities for corruption in the public sector. Total trust in computerisation (e-government) and a lack of control of computerised systems will provide staff members, especially computer professionals with a low level of integrity, with opportunities to take advantage of weaknesses in control. Therefore, proper measures to prevent and fight corruption should be strengthened and corrupt practices strongly punished.

- Computer and internet literacy is critical for local government officials.
VI. References


About this Journal

A leading and informative journal for emerging trends in policy and political developments, the *Rwanda Governance Review* (RGR) is devoted to governance analysis in Rwanda and beyond. RGR is bi-annual publishing peer-reviewed research and analysis on policy formulation and implementation in political, public and corporate governance. Edited by Prof. Anastase SHYAKA, a lead expert in the field and Chief Executive Officer of the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), the *Rwanda Governance Review* particularly appeals to Rwanda policymakers, scholars, practitioners, development partners, international experts, and anyone needing the newest and evidence based orientation in Rwanda governance and policies.

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